



MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

February 2024

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TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

And he was transfigured before them,
and his clothes became radiant,
intensely white, as no one on earth
could bleach them.

MARK 9:2-3, ESV

A Message from Pastor Mike

Happy Month of Love! This year Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday both fall on February 14. That doesn't happen very often – it occurred in 1923, 1934, 1945, and 2018. It will happen only once more this century, in 2029. What a wonderful convergence! The day of love is the day we begin Lent, which immerses us once again in the greatest love story ever: God shows His love by giving His life on the cross for our forgiveness and salvation.

You have probably heard that the original language of the New Testament, Greek, has several words for love. The most common term for God's love and for the love of Christians is "agapao" or "agape love" (pronounced ah-gah-pay), which shows up 320 times in the New Testament and 324 times in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint. That's a lot of love!

Every single one of those occurrences of this word for "love" applies to our life together at Mt. Olive. I just want to point out one or two examples.

2 Thessalonians 1:3 (ESV) — *We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.*

Our church is increasing in new members, but at the same time decreasing in numbers as we send dear ones across the goal line into heaven. We are not increasing in ways that can be counted such as the number of activities or number of people who attend worship and Bible Study and other events. But by the grace of God we are increasing in love!

Many people in our families and church family have been facing great trials recently. But there is no trial that has to be faced alone. There is love that empowers us to face our trials with faith and hope in God. There have been a few Sundays recently when I have felt so weak before the worship service, physically and/or emotionally, but after receiving God's love in His Word and in The Lord's Supper and through the communion of believers, I have felt so much better after our worship and fellowship time. I, together with Kathy and our children, have experienced your increasing love for us and for one another. Praise God for His love at work in His people!

Hebrews 10:19–25 (ESV) — *Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus...let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith...let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering...and **let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works**, not neglecting to meet together...but encouraging one another.*

We thank God for you, people of Mt. Olive, for loving and encouraging each other – and for loving and encouraging me and my family! We love you.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Mike Michalk

Treasuring God's Truth, Living Out His Love

- Thank you to all who helped decorate and undecorate the Sanctuary for Christmas!
- Thank you to Arlee, Andrew, Allen, and Joel for the Children's Christmas Program and treat bags for the kids!
- Thank you to our 2023 Altar Society! Debbie Connolly, Heather Berthiaume, Ed & Danette Isaacs, and Darryl & Shelley Frederickson!
- Thank you to the WOMO for all their dedication this past year! Funerals, LWR School Supplies, Bazaar, etc.
- Thank you to Becca Boser for joining our Education Committee!
- Thank you to Jim Merchant for his terms as a trustee!
- Thank you to Linda Verkennes for her terms as Board of Directors!

Joining Jesus on His Mission

- All who have supported by giving to the missions, WeCan, WeCab, Westonka Food Shelf, etc. within our community!

Applying Biblical Teachings

The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 145:16, "You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing." Indeed, God is the great Provider, the One who supplies each of us with what we need to support this body and life. All that we have materially in this life is a blessing from God. In Deuteronomy 8:17-18, we read, "You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth." As Christians we are led to realize that God gives us His blessings for our benefit and for us to serve our neighbor. The way we use these blessings glorifies God. "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). Through the atoning blood of Christ, we are free to use our God-given blessings to God's glory. Through the working of the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacrament, we "store up" for ourselves "treasures in heaven..." for where our treasure is, there our "heart will be also" (Matt. 6:20-21). Through baptism Christ lives in us, and the life we live in this body is by faith in Him. In Christ, we glorify God by giving generously of ourselves, of our possessions and of our money.

Recent Funerals

- Rev. William F. Moeller
- David Skochenski Jr.



***February 2 – Groundhog Day**

***February 7 – Elders Meeting @ 6:30PM**

***February 11 – Transfiguration Sunday**

***February 14 – Ash Wednesday
-Services 10AM & 6PM**

***February 14 – Valentine's Day**

***February 18 – Mite Sunday**

***February 19 – President's Day**

***February 29 – Leap Day**

***March 3 – 4th Quarter
Congregational Meeting**

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A Message from Our President

Sunday, January 14 - I was on my way to church. It was sunny, minus 12 degrees, and the lake wasn't completely frozen. But it was in the process. A cloud of mist was over the freezing areas and the sun was creating awesome rainbows. Wow! Winter is finally beginning. Then at church the changeable message sign reminded people that God keeps his resolutions. And I thought of mine and how the death of friends has caused me to be more and more of a curmudgeon. Not Good. Pastor Lemke was our guest pastor. His sermon was on "Beginnings". He said that throughout the Bible God is always about new beginnings. We should rejoice over our present and about our future. Then I thought about the saying that I carry in my wallet. (I like sayings). "God doesn't give you more than what the two of you, together, can handle".

Happy New Year

-David Miller

Groundhog Day – February 2nd

Celebrated every year on February 2, **Groundhog Day 2024** falls on a Friday. It's a day when townsfolk in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, gather in Gobbler's Knob to watch as an unsuspecting furry marmot is plucked from his burrow to predict the weather for the rest of the winter. If Phil does see his shadow (sun is shining), winter will not end early. If Phil does not see his shadow (cloudy) we'll have an early Spring!



- ❖ **7:00 AM Tuesday's -**
Men's Bible Study
- ❖ **10:00 AM**
Wednesday's -
Ladies' Bible Study
- ❖ **1:00 PM 1st**
Wednesday of the
month - @ Lake
Minnetonka Shores
- ❖ **9:00 AM Thursday's -**
Adult Bible Class
- ❖ **2:00 PM Friday's -**
Harrison Bay Bible
Class

God is good!

MOUNT OLIVE



LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Office Hours

Monday -Thursday 9:00 - Noon
Pastor's Hours: Tuesday &
Saturday 9:00 – 11:00 or by
appointment

Leadership Team

President: David Miller

Vice President: George Betts

Recording Secretary: Lindsey Eccles

Treasurer: Vacant

Elders: Arlee Mueller & Nate Betts

Trustees: Jim Merchant & Darryl Frederickson

Directors: Linda Verkennes, Harriet Gustafson and Michael Peterson

Committees

Education: Arlee Mueller, Andrew Reinitz, Becca Boser, and
Dawn Audette

Finance - Envelopes: Vacant, **Secretary:** Shelley Frederickson, **Thank**

You Cards: Rita Kaiser, **Vanco:** Vacant

Outreach: Vacant

Women of Mount Olive - President: Jan Preble, **Secretary:** Lindsey
Eccles, **Treasurer:** Claudia Bullock

Worship: Sandi Woytcke and Jan Preble