MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

December 2026 – January 2027

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***December 2nd –** Elders Meeting @ 6:30PM
***December 5th –** WOMO Holiday Party @ 11:30AM
***December 9th –** Leadership Meeting @ 6:30PM
***December 20th –** Mite Sunday
***December 24th –** Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ 4PM
***December 25th –** Merry Christmas!
***January 1st** – Happy New Year!
***January 2nd** – Take Down Christmas Decorations @ 9AM
***January 6th** – Elders Meeting @ 6:30PM
***January 13th** - Leadership Meeting @ 6:30PM
***January 17th** – Mite Sunday
***January 18th** – MLK Day

Preparing for 2027

2026 Church Contributions

All 2026 Church Contributions need to be in the church office by December 31st or if mailed they must be postmarked December 31st, 2026. If received or postmarked after that date, they will be considered a contribution for 2027.

Offering Envelopes

Pick up your 2027 offering envelopes in the Narthex.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

If you earn Choice Dollars on your Thrivent Investments, please call to designate your dollars starting in January 2027 for your earnings from 2026. You're able to designate the Choice Dollars to Mt. Olive or any other non-profit of your choice. Call 1-800-847-4836. If you do not designate your Choice Dollars, Thrivent may have other plans on how to best use them. Designate 2026 dollars by March 31st, 2027.

COMING SOON: MOLC *CREATE-A-CRAFT*

This is a way all members of Mt. Olive can participate and contribute to future WOMO fundraisers (mainly the Annual Bake Sale and Bazaar)
Deb Larson (Kevin's wife) has graciously agreed to teach our first ***Create-A-Craft*** **session on Sunday, January 24th following worship.**
Anyone willing to participate will learn how and will create a craft item in **two hours or less**! The items will be gathered and stored for the 2027 Annual Bake Sale & Bazaar. This is a way to learn a new skill as well as contribute to supporting community organizations and the Mites program by creating items that can be sold to benefit WOMO.
WOMO will provide all needed materials. Come and create, have fun, and enjoy some fellowship!
We are hoping to do various sessions featuring different craft items throughout the coming year and perhaps incorporate a potluck lunch to enjoy at future sessions once our creative session ends! Please plan to come and participate.

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A Message from Pastor Mike

Winter Clothing

What can I share that will help you through the challenging days of December and January in Minnesota? What glowing coal can I bring you from the altar of God's Word that will warm you inside and out? How about this: "*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*" (Psalm 51:7, ESV) In Minnesota you learn pretty quickly how important it is to dress in layers. God starts with the innermost layer. He starts by purging and washing us – the inner self – our minds and hearts, thoughts and emotions.

Then He clothes us with salvation. "*Her priests I will clothe with salvation, and her saints will shout for joy.*" (Psalm 132:16, ESV) He clothes us with the righteousness of Christ. "*he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.*" (Isaiah 61:10, ESV) When we trust in Christ, we are covered with the robe of His righteousness. He lived the sinless life we could not live and died as the only atoning sacrifice which makes us right with God. God raised Him from the dead to show that in Christ, righteousness has been fulfilled. God counts us as righteous because of Jesus Christ.

Covered with His righteousness, we are moved to care for others. The example of a godly woman is given in Proverbs 31: "*She is not afraid for her household when it snows, for all in her household are doubly clothed.*" (Proverbs 31:21, CSB) God gives not only for our needs, but also gives to others through us. We make sure our children are warmly clothed in winter – let's also make sure they learn how to put on Christ every day.

God gives us the inner clothing of Christ's righteousness which protects our souls as well as our outer clothing which protects our bodies. When you put on your coat again and again and again in the next months, thank God for all His gifts. Thank Him for the robe of Christ's righteousness that guards and shields your soul, and for the clothing He gives to keep you warm. Ask Him for opportunities to share God's gift of righteousness as well as His gifts of clothing.

God who in your baptism has washed away all your sin and wrapped you up in the robe of Christ's righteousness will warm you with His love. Even though it's cold outside, we will gather around the warmth of God's Word and Sacraments. Like a fire needs oxygen, our faith needs the Spirit. As we worship and study and devote daily time to Word and prayer, He breathes on us so that we can "*fan into flame the gift of God…for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*" (2 Timothy 1:6–7, ESV)

Praise God for the gifts He gives to enable us to survive the cold of winter! And praise Him for the far greater gifts He gives to rescue us from the eternal flames of hell and bring us into His eternal kingdom. Clothed in the righteousness of Christ, we will see God and serve and worship our Lord forever – and I'm pretty sure that in heaven, the temperature will always be just right!

Yours in Christ, Pastor Mike Michalk

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Don Kohls	12/10
Pastor Michalk	12/10
Debbie Connolly	12/11
Phil Holmen	12/17
Josie Hill	12/18
Michael Mulvanny	12/22
Becca Boser	12/22
Don Woytcke	12/26
Darryl Frederickson	12/26
Kevin Larson	12/27



Jan Preble	1/2
Ryan Frederickson	1/6
Melanie Kamps	1/17
Joel Reinitz	1/18
Trudy Brethorst	1/29
Andrew Reinitz	1/31

***Contact the office if you have a change in personal information.**

Its not too late to print an Advent Devotional!

If you missed getting your devotional by the first Sunday of Advent on November 29th, it's not too late and you can easily start your Advent devotions at any time! You can get *Love's Pure Light* at https://www.lhm.org/advent/ You can also get an audio version if you prefer.

Treasuring God's Truth, Living Out His Love

- Thank you to all who supported our Bazaar!
- Thank you to Jim Merchant and Brian Podratz for moving shelving to accommodate WOMO supplies and property in the quilt room and thanks to both of them and Lindsey Eccles for helping get the quilt room organized and in good order!
- Thank you to all our leadership team members for their work and efforts throughout the year!
- Thank you to WOMO for all their dedication, donations, and running the bazaar!
- Thank you to Sandi Woytcke and Jan Preble for being our worship committee!
- Thank you to our weekly counting committee for their devoted time!
- Thank you to Jan, Don and Sandi for setting up coffee each week for Sunday mornings!
- Thank you to Jean Westergaard for delivering donated egg cartons and bags to the Food Shelf!
- Thank you to Rita Kaiser for writing Thank You Cards!

Christmas Blessings

There are many blessings for which most of us are thankful during the Christmas season; time with family and loved ones, various Christmas gatherings and parties, giving a carefully selected gift to a loved one, enjoying the many sweet treats that seem to appear at Christmas time, admiring festive lights and trees and various Christmas displays, listening to and/or singing beloved and familiar Christmas carols and music, and seeing the joy and excitement expressed by young children throughout the Christmas season.

All of these blessings pale in comparison to the greatest gift and joy of all, the blessing of knowing our Savior, Jesus Christ and what He has done for us. During this season when we celebrate the Savior's birth, and all that the Lord has provided in our lives, give thought as to how you are serving Him and serving the church. You have the ability to be a blessing to others!

Sunday Treats

As most of you know, there is a free will offering jar out every Sunday for coffee and treats. One Sunday, only $1 was collected. On two other Sundays just $3 and $5 was collected. Even on a "generous Sunday" there often isn't even enough to purchase one can of coffee.

The funds collected are used to buy coffee, lemonade, cups, plates, napkins and utensils used for Sunday treats. All of the liquid creamer is currently donated by WOMO members, not paid for using WOMO funds and the treats served are also donated by individuals and are not paid for by WOMO.

Unfortunately, it is nearly always the same people making and/or donating treats. If you are not willing to ever donate treats, a can of coffee, or buy liquid creamer, please consider placing something in the freewill offering jar.

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Applying Bible Principles

General Norman Schwarzkopf once recalled when he was the Assistant Commander for Personnel at the Pentagon. He had been in this assignment for two weeks when his superior left for an eight-week trip to the Orient. General Schwarzkopf expressed concern about his ability, even as a major general, to handle this new responsibility. His superior told him to follow “Rule 13.” When Schwarzkopf asked what “Rule 13” was, his superior told him, “When given command, take charge.” “But what if I don’t know what to do?” asked Schwarzkopf. The reply was that he should follow “Rule 14 - Do what is right.”

Sometimes Christians are in a similar predicament, especially concerning actions based on feelings. We do many things in the Christian life because they are “right,” not because we necessarily want to do them or feel like doing them. Nowhere is this more true than concerning our giving. Even when perhaps we do not feel like giving, mature Christians give because doing so is “right” and because God has motivated our hearts to give.

Unfortunately, some people follow the life principle of giving only when they feel like it. The problem is that they seldom feel like it. Oh, they might give to a special project now and then or respond to a special need that appeals to them. Otherwise, though, they usually fail to give unless they happen to feel like it.

In some ways, such individuals who give only when they feel like it fit Abraham Lincoln’s description of those who achieve financial success but little else in life. “Financial success,” he once said, “is purely metallic. The person who gains it has four metallic attributes: gold in his palm, silver on his tongue, brass in his face, and iron in his heart.”

“In contrast,” writes Randy Alcorn, “the Macedonian believers ‘urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service [giving] to the saints’ (2 Cor. 8:4). When we catch a vision of God’s grace, we will give according to our duty, yes, but far more, we will give beyond our duty, voluntarily captivated by the grace of our ever-giving Lord.”



- **Tuesday’s 7:00 AM -** Men’s Bible Study
- **Wednesday’s 10:00 AM -** Women’s Bible Study (Sep-Apr)
- **Friday’s 10:00 AM -** Adult Bible Class – @ Lake Minnetonka Shores or by Phone
- **Sunday School 10:00 AM (Sept – May)** Ages 3yr-6th Grade
- **Confirmation – Thursday’s - 6:00 PM** 7th Grade and Older



Women of Mount Olive

A word about the WOMO Christmas Party Gift Exchange…..
All women affiliated with Mt. Olive age 18 and older are invited to the WOMO Christmas Party. Participation in the gift exchange is optional. If you choose to participate, bring a wrapped gift item with a value of $15-$20.
At the last WOMO meeting there was discussion about encouraging those participating in the gift exchange to give consumable goods and/or gift cards. One WOMO member expressed one of her favorite gifts from a WOMO Christmas party was a gift card to an area restaurant, and another expressed one of her favorite gifts was a Christmas gift bag filled with peanut butter, jam, honey and hand cream.
Given the makeup of most of our members, very few are seeking items they need to find a place for. Everyone at the meeting agreed they would prefer items they can use, such as postage stamps, gift cards (grocery/restaurant), lotion, hand cream, lip balms, food items, hot cocoa mixes, tea, coffee, or other consumable goods.

WOMO Christmas Party
WHO: WOMO members and any woman 18 and older affiliated with Mt. Olive
WHEN: Saturday, December 5th at 11:30 a.m.
WHERE: Mt. Olive Fellowship Hall
WHAT: Potluck Lunch **PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE**
SCHEDULE: There will be a short devotion, lunch, optional gift exchange, optional cookie exchange
OPTIONAL GIFT EXCHANGE: Bring a wrapped gift with a value of $10-$20 (consumable goods/gift cards recommended)
OPTIONAL COOKIE EXCHANGE: Bring 2-3 dozen cookies/bars/holiday treats to share, and bring an empty container/platter to bring home the treats exchanged with others
SIGN UP TO ATTEND ON THE SHEET/CLIPBOARD IN THE NARTHEX!

ANNUAL BAKE SALE & BAZAAR UPDATE
WOMO members would like to sincerely thank everyone that helped us to have a successful bake sale and bazaar. We greatly appreciate ALL those that donated items to sell, those that worked the sale in various capacities, as well as all of you that shopped! Special thanks to our vendors, to Linda Verkennes that laundered all of our red tablecloths once the sale was over, and to Aaron Boser, Brian Podratz, and Jim Merchant for the many and various tasks they performed to help us!
This was our most successful sale in TEN years. Ten percent of our net revenue will go to the Mites program of LWML and at our January meeting we will determine the amount of funding we will provide to the Westonka Food Shelf, Gillespie Center, and WeCan and issue checks at that time.

RHUBARB JAM
Thanks to Traci Woytcke, there is rhubarb jam available for purchase in the fellowship hall. Money from any sales goes to WOMO.

SPRUCE TIP PLANTER DONATIONS
We will still accept spruce tip planter donations throughout the year. Please keep your eyes out for pots, birch logs, decor for the pots, (think garage sales, end of spring/summer sales, thrift stores, end of Christmas season sales, etc)

2027
- January 11th – Meeting @ 10AM in Fellowship Lounge
- April 12th – Meeting @ 10AM in Fellowship Lounge
- May 1st – Salad Luncheon @ 11AM in Fellowship Hall
- July 12th - Meeting @ 10AM in Fellowship Lounge
- October 11th - Meeting @ 10AM in Fellowship Lounge
- November 1st – Potential Spruce Tip Assembly @ 10AM
- November 5th – Bazaar Set up from 4-6PM
- November 6th – Bazaar 9AM-1PM
- November 15th – Post Bazaar Meeting @ 10AM in Fellowship Lounge
- December 4th – Christmas Party @ 11:30AM (Potluck, Cookie exchange – bring 2-3 dozen if you want to participate. Gift exchange $15-20 optional if you want to participate.)



2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
*Church Contributions must be postmarked Dec 31 or before to be considered for 2026 contributions.		1	2 -Elders Meeting @ 6:30PM	3	4	5 -WOMO Holiday Party @ 11:30AM
6 Second Sunday of Advent	7	8	9 -Leadership Meeting @ 6:30PM	10 *Happy Birthday Don Kohls *Happy Birthday Pastor Michalk!	11 *Happy Birthday Debbie Connolly!	12
13 Third Sunday of Advent	14	15	16	17 *Happy Birthday Phil Holmen!	18 *Happy Birthday Josie Hill!	19
20 -Mite Sunday Fourth Sunday of Advent	21 Winter Begins	22 *Happy Birthday Michael Mulvanny! *Happy Birthday Becca Boser!	23	24 -Candlelight Worship Service @ 4PM Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 *Happy Birthday Don Woytcke! *Happy Birthday Darryl Frederickson!
27 *Happy Birthday Kevin Larson!	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		*Pick up your 2027 offering envelopes in the Narthex!

january



2027

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
*Designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars!					1 New Year's Day	2 *Happy Birthday Jan Preble! -Take Down Christmas Decorations @ 9AM
3	4	5	6 *Happy Birthday Ryan Frederickson! -Elders Meeting @ 6:30PM Epiphany	7	8	9
10	11 -WOMO Meeting @ 10AM	12	13 -Leadership Meeting @ 6:30PM	14	15	16
17 *Happy Birthday Melanie Kamps! -Mite Sunday	18 *Happy Birthday Joel Reinitz! MLK Jr. Day	19	20	21	22	23
24 -Create – A – Craft - Following worship 31 *Happy Birthday Andrew Reinitz!	25	26	27	28	29 *Happy Birthday Trudy Brethorst!	30

MOUNT OLIVE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

5218 Bartlett Blvd
Mound, MN 55364
www.mountolivelcms.org



Looking for a counter! We are looking for a counter to help count the weekly offerings. This would be 1 Sunday a month commitment on a rotation. Please reach out to Kevin if you would be willing to help!

Our giving to God is to be done voluntarily.

**"Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give,
not reluctantly or under compulsion,
for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).**

MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Contact Us

Pastor Mike Michalk –
952.388.3858
Pastor@mountolivelcms.org

Church Office (Lindsey) –
952.472.2756
Church Cell 952-245-5218
Admin@mountolivelcms.org

Website - www.mountolivelcms.org

Office Hours

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

Leadership Team

President: Andrew Reinitz
Vice President: George Betts
Recording Secretary: Lindsey Eccles
Treasurer: Kevin Larson
Elders: Arlee Mueller and Joel Reinitz
Trustees: Jim Merchant & Darryl Frederickson
Directors: Linda Verkennes and Phil Holmen

Committees

Education: Arlee Mueller, Andrew Reinitz
Finance Secretary: Shelley Frederickson
Offering Counters: Shelley Frederickson, Leona Shore, Rita Kaiser, Brian Podratz, Terry Podratz, Jan Preble, Linda Verkennes, and Kevin Larson
Thank You Cards: Rita Kaiser
Outreach: Vacant
Women of Mount Olive - President: Jan Preble, **Secretary & Treasurer:** Lindsey Eccles
Worship: Sandi Woytcke and Jan Preble