VOL. 26 ISSUE 12 • DECEMBER 2026

MOUNT OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH
MESSENGER

A Congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod



Pastor's Ponderings from Pastor Paul

"Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to see Thy people free; From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee"
As we head into December, many of our thoughts are already on Christmas. The lights are hung, trees are going up, shopping is underway, and the sounds, sights, and smells of the season are abundant.

But what about Advent? Don't get me wrong, I love Christmas: singing the carols and hearing again of God's great gift in His Son, Jesus. I'm looking forward to Mount Olive's interactive Christmas program and Concordia St. Paul's Christmas Chorale. But what about Advent?

Advent, the last season added to the church calendar (in the 4th century), is easily forgotten. It lasts only four Sundays and is often gone before we realize it's here. Yet it has a good purpose: preparation. Just as we prepare for Christmas with gifts, meals, and decorations, we need to be prepared for the coming of Jesus.

Advent prepares us for two things. The obvious one is our celebration of the incarnation of our Lord as the baby in Bethlehem's manger. The less obvious is the day Jesus returns in glory, and for the child of God, that preparation is a daily matter.

The Worship Center is decorated for the season, and Mount Olive will hold midweek worship each Wednesday in Advent. These services aren't an "extra" in a hectic season; they are a chance to slow down, set aside the "other stuff," and remember why we celebrate. It's all about Jesus, God's great gift: the baby in the manger who was also nailed to a cross to pay for the sins of the world, and who rose again, winning over the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. One day He will return. He is long-expected, and He has come to set His people free.

As we head into December, remember Advent. Prepare for Jesus: the baby of Bethlehem's manger, the Savior who died and rose again, and the King who is returning so that we may find our rest in Him.

A blessed Advent and a merry Christmas!

What's Inside

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Worship Info

Wed, Dec 2: Advent Midweek
"The Great Reversal"
Luke 1:46-55

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6
"The Mercy of His Delay"
2 Peter 3:8-14

Wed, Dec 9: Advent Midweek
"Breaking the Silence"
Luke 1:67-80

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13
"He Will Do It"
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Wed, Dec 16: Advent Midweek
"Ready to Depart"
Luke 2:25-35

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20
"Established in the Mystery"
Romans 16:25-27

Christmas Eve
"Good Tiding for a Weary World"
Luke 2:1-20

BETTER TOGETHER

Sundays at Mount Olive

8:00 AM | Traditional Worship Service

9:15-10:15 AM | Education Hour
Adult Bible Study | Cana Hall | led by Pastor Paul
Youth Bible Study (8th-12th grade) | Senior Youth Room
Sunday School | Family Center | then split into classes
"The Big Ten" Parenting Study | Jerusalem

10:30 AM | Contemporary Worship Service



Wednesdays at Mount Olive

6:00 AM | Early AM Bible Study (online)
We will continue "Stronghold of the Chosen"
Contact Paulette Lenz (mp.lenz@gmail.com)

9:00 AM | Exploration and Discovery Bible Study
We will meet December 2, 9, 16 at 3:30 PM
Contact Jim Rootes (farmalldork@gmail.com)

5:00-5:45 PM | Midweek Meals
Cana Hall • Contact Ann Maik (763.370.2248)

5:15 PM | Adult Vocal Choir
Contact Rachelle Lapham (rachelle.buuck@gmail.com)

6:30 PM | First Place for Health
No study in December • Contact: Janet Orrick (763.421.3223)

6:45 PM | Bell Choir
Contact Karen Keast (krnkeast@outlook.com)

JOIN US for a fellowship supper at Midweek Meals before Advent Worship!

6:45 PM | Youth Group & Confirmation (not meeting December 23 or December 30)
Youth Group | "Life with Jesus" | Senior Youth Room
Contact DCE Martha (martha@mtolive-anoka.org)
Confirmation | Jerusalem
Contact Pastor Paul (paul@mtolive-anoka.org)

Other Days at Mount Olive

FRIDAY (1st & 3rd Fridays)

9:30 AM | December 4 & 18 | Senior Fellowship & Bible Study
Bethlehem Room • Contact: Lynn Antoine (blantie@hotmail.com or 763.777.0412, by phone or text)
We will be reading through and studying the Psalms. We have active discussion and sharing; please consider joining us. If you have not attended before, please let me know you are joining so we have enough table and chairs.

QUILTING GROUP OF MOUNT OLIVE

OPPORTUNITY FOR HOME SEWERS

The Quilting Ministry Team is looking for volunteers to sew fabric pieces into 10½" or 12½" patchwork blocks at home. Fabric, thread, and pins are provided, and completed blocks can be dropped off at church for the Quilters to assemble into quilts for world relief projects. No need to work alone–the team is available for questions and support!

The Quilters also welcome donations of fabric (½ yard or more) and new bedding sheets. Donations may be dropped off at the Welcome Desk.

Questions? Contact: Bernice Tenquist 763.227.1548 OR Erna Sandness 612.910.9568

• THERE WILL BE NO QUILTERS MEETINGS IN DECEMBER. WE WILL RESUME JANUARY 5 •

YOUNG ADULT

Please keep the following young adults in prayer this month and stop to sign a card for each of them on **Sunday, December 6.**

Julia Schultz **Nevaeh Madison** **Rachel Jerzak** **Nyanuer Biel**
Briana Araya **Lily Sackett** **Jack Risse**

Prayer for God's Calling on the lives of our Young Adults

Lord, I lift _____ up to you and ask that you would move in their life. Reveal your calling for their life and give them the courage to obey it. Help them pursue the desires of your heart and your will for their life with fervor and tenacity. Help them to press on with endurance regardless of the obstacles. Help them to pursue a close relationship with you so that they don't wander off your path. Help them to grow and be stretched in new ways so that they are better equipped for the next challenge to come their way. Raise up young people all over the world that are willing to step out in faith and pursue your calling for their life. Help them to become close together as the body of Christ, to support and love each other, and encourage each other through every circumstance. Amen

PRESCHOOL

Our preschool had a wonderful week celebrating the special people in our children's lives! We welcomed grandparents for our annual Grandparents Day, sharing a fun-filled morning of chapel, singing, crafts, and snacks. It was such a joy to see the smiles and special memories being made! During chapel some students received their very first Bible—a special milestone as they continue to grow in their faith. The celebration continued on Sunday as our preschoolers shared their songs with the church congregation during worship. Mrs. Martha also treated the children to a wonderful children's message. We are so thankful for these opportunities to share God's love and let our little lights shine!











CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Wednesday Nights

Dec 2, 9 *6:45-8:00 PM*
Confirmation (Jerusalem) &
Youth Group (Sr. Youth Room)
Dec 16 Youth [6th-12th]
Christmas Party 6:45-8:00 PM
(Sr. Youth Room) Bring a silly white elephant gift!
Dec. 23, 30 NO Confirmation & Youth Group

Sunday Mornings

Dec 6 Breakfast Buddies in Family Center
Dec 13, 20 Sunday School (Family Center)
Youth Bible Study (Sr. Youth Room)
Dec 27 NO Children, Youth & Parent Classes, ONE Worship Service at 9:30 AM
Dec 6, 13, 20 The Big Ten Parenting Study 9:30-10:15 in Jerusalem, it's not too late to join! ALL are welcome to attend- come whenever it works for your schedule!

BREAKING NEWS

JESUS IS BORN!

Join us for our interactive

Children's Christmas Program

where ALL are invited to be involved

Just show up and you'll get a part to help tell the story

Sunday, December 13 during 10:30 AM Worship

BORN! BREAKING NEWS: JESUS IS BORN! BREAKING NEWS: JESUS IS BORN! BREAKING NEWS

YOUTH CHRISTMAS COOKIE BAKING DAY

Saturday, December 19
10 AM - 4 PM
Lunch Provided ~ RSVP to DCE Martha

YOUTH CHRISTMAS COOKIE FUNDRAISER

Purchase Cookie Trays & Treats
on Sunday, December 20

Thrivent Choice Dollars®: Did you know you may be able to help support Mount Olive at no cost to you? Eligible Thrivent members can direct their Choice Dollars to the nonprofit organization of their choice. Simply log in to your Thrivent account, select Thrivent Choice, and designate Mount Olive Lutheran Church as your recipient. Thrivent will then make a donation to Mount Olive based on your designated Choice Dollars. It's an easy way to support our church and its ministries!

Qualified Charitable Distributions

Individuals age 70½ or older may be eligible to make charitable gifts directly from their IRA to Mount Olive. These gifts may offer tax advantages to the donor, including satisfying required minimum distributions, while allowing Mount Olive to receive the full contribution without credit card or processing fees. Consult your financial or tax advisor to determine whether a QCD is appropriate for you.

Legal Church Name: *Mount Olive Evangelical Lutheran Church*
Federal Tax ID (FEIN): *41-0840844*
Mailing Address: *700 Western Street Anoka, MN 55303*

REMINDERS-- Envelopes and Contribution Cards

Envelopes are available to keep your contribution private.

Contribution cards are available to help us know who to credit for a contribution. If you give by check, your donor information is typically on your check. If you give cash, please fill out the contribution card so we know who to credit the donation to.
Contributions are most helpful when given to the general fund to cover our day-to-day expenses and ministry.

Avoid designating gifts toward expenses or ministries we do not currently have. Please do not write checks to Mount Olive that are intended for other organizations. Please give directly to those nonprofits.

BLESSED TO BE A *Blessing*

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-8

Our Blessed to Be a Blessing Commitment Sunday was a wonderful day of faith and generosity! We received 78 pledges from about one-third of our giving families, totaling $1.123 million! Thanks to Give to the Max, an additional $4,486 was added. Thank you to everyone who has prayerfully committed to helping Mount Olive continue to be a blessing to our congregation and community. God is good!





Click here to view the Blessed 2 Be newsletter.







CHECK IT OUT!


ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS
Preparing our Heart & Homes for Christmas
ADVENT SERVICES • 6:00 PM
Wednesday, December 2
Wednesday, December 9
Wednesday, December 16
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
3:00 PM • Family & Children
5:00 PM • Lessons & Carols
No services on Christmas Day
One service on 12/27/26 • 9:30 AM
(no Education hour)


JOIN THE NURSERY TEAM
As we continue to welcome more young families (PRAISE GOD!) Martha is looking for people to help in the Nursery on Sundays
Sign up at the Welcome Desk or contact DCE Martha with questions at martha@mtolive-anoka.org


ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE INVITED TO THIS SPECIAL CHRISTMAS EVENT
O Come Let Us
ADORE HIM
Tuesday, December 8, 2026
6:30 PM
SHARE SCRIPTURE • SING CAROLS • PRAISE AND WORSHIP THE NEWBORN KING
At elegant tables the celebration continues:
Mingle • Cheese & Crackers • Handcrafted Christmas Cookies
Share the merry memories, laughter & lore of the season
Email to reserve childcare: martha@mtolive-anoka.org
INGATHERING OF DONATION ITEMS FOR "GRANNY'S CLOSET"





MIDWEEK MEALS

We are still taking DONATIONS of:

elbow macaroni • pasta sauce
cream of mushroom soup
flour • sugar • butter

Thank you for helping support this ministry!

Baptism Quilts

Our baptism quilts are a special way to welcome little ones into God's family. We are looking for someone with a heart for sewing who would be willing to help create these keepsakes for our newest members. If you are interested, please contact Kathy West at KLW2@comcast.net.

BIBLE STUDIES

EXPLORATION & DISCOVERY
Wednesdays in December
3:30 PM • Jerusalem Room

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP
1st and 3rd Fridays
9:30 AM • Bethlehem Room

JOIN US

SNOWBIRDS

If you're a snowbird planning to spend the winter out of state, contact Brenda with your winter mailing address and the dates you'll be away.

brenda@mtolive-anoka.org
952.600.1274

Mount Olive
Lutheran Church & Preschool



December 2026

WORSHIP

Onsite and Online Worship Hours:

Sunday: 8:00 AM (Traditional)
9:15 AM (Education hour) 10:30 AM (Contemporary)

Wednesday Advent: 6:00 PM
December 2, 9, 16

Christmas Eve

3:00 PM - Family & Children
5:00 PM - Lessons & Carols

No service on December 25
ONE service on December 27: 9:30 AM

FOLLOW US!

Website: www.mtolive-anoka.org

Youtube: *(search Mount Olive Lutheran Anoka)*

Facebook: *(search for Mount Olive Anoka)*

QCTV: *(Channel 19).* View previous week's worship
Sundays: 6:30 AM, 12:00 PM
Wednesdays: 8:00 PM

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 08 ..... O Come Let Us Adore Him Christmas Event
Dec 13 ..... Children's Christmas Program
Dec 19 ..... Youth Christmas Cookie Baking Day
Dec 20 ..... Youth Christmas Cookie Fundraiser
Dec 21-Jan 1 ..... Preschool Closed
Dec 24, 25 ..... Church Offices Closed
Dec 31-Jan 1..... Church Offices Closed
Jan 09 ..... Vision Assembly Meeting

