

JANUARY 2022

BELIEVING, BELONGING, BECOMING

MOUNT OLIVET
MESSENGER



mtolivet.org

JOIN US

M MPLS CAMPUS

5025 Knox Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55419
612.926.7651

W WEST CAMPUS

7150 Rolling Acres Rd
Victoria, MN 55386
952.767.1500

If you would like to receive a large print copy of the *Messenger*, please contact Julie Goodman at julieg@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2208.

SUNDAYS

DIAL-IN VIA PHONE
833.775.1238

11am

WATCH THE MPLS
WORSHIP SERVICE AT
MTOLIVET.ORG

11am

HOLY COMMUNION

8:30 & 11:45am

NURSERY

9, 10, & 11am

JANUARY 2

THE BOY JESUS IN THE
TEMPLE

Luke 2:41-52

M 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Dixon

W 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Hammersten

JANUARY 9

THE VISIT OF THE MAGI

Matthew 2:1-23

M 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Lose

W 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Freeman

JANUARY 16

JOHN AND THE
BAPTISM OF JESUS

Mark 1:1-13

M 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Ruud

W 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Lose

JANUARY 23

CALLING OF THE
DISCIPLES AND JESUS'
FIRST MIRACLE

Mark 1:14-28

M 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Hammersten

W 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor MacLean

JANUARY 30

JESUS HEALS THE SICK
& EATS WITH SINNERS

Mark 2: 1-17

M 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Kalland

W 9, 10, 11am
SERMON Pastor Dixon

HOLY COMMUNION

First Wednesday of the month

M 12noon

GOING GOD'S WAY VIDEOS WILL CONTINUE TO BE
AVAILABLE AT MTOLIVET.ORG!

SUNDAY SCHOOL WILL RESUME WEEKLY CLASSES ON
1/9 AT BOTH CAMPUSES.

What We All Need

I came across the following inscription recently and it immediately rang true:

We all need...
 Something to do,
 Someone to love,
 Something to give, and
 Something to look forward to.

To boil it down a little more, we all need purpose – something to do and something to give; community – someone to love; and hope – something to look forward to. As we head into a new year, this seems like good advice. But saying we need these things is different, of course, than finding them and, when we are struggling, they can seem well beyond our reach. This month we turn to exploring the Gospel of Mark, and it occurred to me that the very first chapters of Mark's story about Jesus have some important things to say about all this.

One of the most striking things about Mark's Gospel is that it actually begins with Jesus' baptism (a story we'll hear on Jan. 16). No beautiful stories of his birth. No perilous flight to Egypt. No shepherds and angels or magi. Instead, just a gnarled and wild-eyed preacher by the name of John, submerging Jesus in the waters of the Jordan River and, as he comes up, a voice from heaven that rings out: "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased!" And with that affirmation – and I would argue only with that affirmation – can Jesus go on to accomplish all that he does.

Why is the promise of God's love so important? Simply because it's really hard to love others if you don't feel loved yourself; it's difficult to give yourself away or accomplish anything important if you don't believe you have anything of worth, and it's nearly impossible to remain hopeful if you don't feel valued. Love, worth, value – all these things are what Jesus receives in his baptism: "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased!"

And this promise isn't just for Jesus. In fact, we confess that we receive the same promise at our Baptism: that God loves us, calls us worthy, and believes we have value. And this promise frees us to throw ourselves into what we do, love those around us, give ourselves to others, and look forward in hope. That's one reason regular attendance at worship is so important – these promises can

be hard to believe. Any given week we may hear numerous voices telling us that we're not worthy of love, don't have anything of value to contribute, and have nothing to look forward to. And so we come to church eager to hear again God's promise that we, too, are God's children, beloved in God's eyes.

In addition to attending worship, we can also remember our baptism at others times. Martin Luther frequently stressed that every time we wash with water – whether in our morning shower or just washing our hands for supper – there is an opportunity to remember that in the waters of Baptism God washed us clean, showered us with love, and committed to always being on our side. The more frequently we remember that we are loved, the more likely we are to be able to find the purpose, community, and hope that everyone needs.

Lately, it's occurred to me that all this is true not only of individuals, but also of our congregation. That is, Mount Olivet as a church needs to do something, love someone, give something, and look forward to things. In the pages of this month's *Messenger*, you'll find a number of stories of how we as Mount Olivet Church are a congregation of purpose, community, and hope. From the Community Meals that make such a difference in the lives of our neighbors to the previews of how we help families raise their children through our Cathedral of the Pines Camp and new Summer Day Camps, you will see all kinds of ways we are living into, and sharing, the promise of God's love. And you'll discover more opportunities to grow in your own faith and hear God's promise of love as well. From retreats to adult education and service opportunities, there are so many ways to receive and share those things that everyone needs.

All of this is possible through your generosity and faithfulness. Thank you! And our generosity and faithfulness are made possible, in turn, through God's promise of love and acceptance. For we – individually and as a congregation – are indeed God's beloved children, and with us God is well pleased. Thanks be to God!



Pastor Lose

DAVID J. LOSE, SENIOR PASTOR

JOIN US!

FLYING SOLO LUMINARY WALK

Monday, January 7, 5-8pm, Luce Line State Trail, Plymouth

Join Flying Solo group and Pastor Freeman for a one-mile luminary hike along the Luce Line Trail in Plymouth. Warm up around campfires while enjoying hot cider and other refreshments. No registration required! Hope to see you there!

HEALING THROUGH DIVORCE

Thursdays, January 6 through March 10, 6:30-8pm, via Zoom, \$100.

Mount Olivet Counseling Service

In this support group, cultivate a stronger connection to yourself and others on your journey of healing and recovery from divorce. You will be guided to explore and discover deeper meaning, purpose, and strength buried within your painful experiences, helping you to embrace compassion, hope, and trust in yourself and your life. Sherri Dunham, MA, LPCC joins your healing process to help you embrace self-compassion and thrive in your new landscape. Register by contacting Molly at mpach@mtolivetcounseling.org or 612.927.7335.

YOUNG IN HEART

Wednesday, January 26, 12noon, Minneapolis Campus

Plan to attend the Young in Heart luncheon with a devotion given by Pastor Ruud, and entertainment provided by brother/sister vocal duo, The Brueskes. Cost is \$9, and a donation to Pastor Scott's ministry is welcome. Please register no later than January 21 at mtolivet.org, or by contacting Ann LaBree at 612.767.2288 or annl@mtolivet.org.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION WORKSHOP

January 22, 9:30am-3:30pm, via Zoom, \$150 per couple, plus \$35 scoring fee for the Prepare Inventory

Mount Olivet Counseling Service

This fun and engaging 6-hour workshop, along with the completion of the Prepare Assessment, is designed to enrich your relationship as a married couple; focusing on important topics like positive communication skills, healthy conflict resolution, financial management, and spirituality. Lunch is included via Door Dash. Register at mtolivet.org by January 10.

FACILITIES SUPPORT

Mount Olivet Church is looking for individuals to work on our facilities support team at the Mpls and West Campuses. If you are interested or know someone who would be a good fit, please contact Tricia Acuncion at tacuncion@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2218.

LIFE & GROWTH

NOV 17 - DEC 13

BAPTISMS

Henry Raymond Balogh
son of Sarah and Kenneth
Simon Mark Balogh
son of Sarah and Kenneth
Ava Jean Becker
daughter of Brita and John
Lily Anastasia Burns Cadotte
daughter of Gabrianna and Grecia
Liam James DeHaai
son of Lauren and Alex
Brooks Brian Johnson
son of Courtney and Mitch
Beau William Johnson
son of Katie and Derek
Cyrus Maximilian Knapp
son of Michelle and Preston
Charles James Emerson Lloyd
son of Kerry and Matthew
Milo Morley Henjum
son of Alison and Maggie
Walt Alan Ness
son of Liza and Josh
Alice Ann Ness
daughter of Liza and Josh
Kaden Scott Polsgrove
son of Hannah and Mark
Sloane Willa Schreier
daughter of Megan and Adam
Olivia Evelyn Stadheim
daughter of Emily and Grant
Eloise Patricia Stern
daughter of Chloe and Theodore
Ayla Mae Trettel
daughter of Adrienne and Brian
Nora Ann Ward
daughter of Carrie and David
Nora Jo White
daughter of Molly and Phil

WEDDINGS

Madelyn Gray & Jacob Hjort,
December 11
Stephanie McGinn & Daniel
Wotschke, *December 11*

DEATHS

John A. Colwell
1931 - 2021
Arleen Dahl
1928 - 2021
Sandra A. Hamilton
1934 - 2021
Catherine L. Johnson
1942 - 2021
Earle G. Maynard
1926 - 2021
Charles "Chuck" McCall
1936 - 2021
Mona M. Petersen
1925 - 2021
Ronald W. Pontinen
1931 - 2021
Barbara A. Robach
1941 - 2021

DAILY READINGS

FROM PASTOR KALLAND

JANUARY 2022

- 1 John 3:25, All Things in Jesus' Hands
- 2 Galatians 5:17, Conflict With Each Other
- 3 Habakkuk 3:17-18, I Will Rejoice In The Lord
- 4 Proverbs 13:10, Wisdom's Location
- 5 Romans 3:20, We Become Aware
- 6 Hebrews 11:11, By Faith
- 7 2 Thessalonians 3:5, Direct Our Hearts
- 8 1 Peter 3:9, Replay With Blessing
- 9 Romans 12:14, Bless And Do Not Curse
- 10 Acts 22:7, Fell To The Ground
- 11 Ephesians 4:4, One Body One Spirit
- 12 Romans 11:36, Glory Forever
- 13 Romans 12:16, Harmony With One Another
- 14 Matthew 16:26, Exchange For Your Soul
- 15 Proverbs 18:16, A Gift Opens The Way
- 16 Proverbs 18:6, Lips Of Fools
- 17 Luke 12:3, Proclaimed From The Roof
- 18 1 John 4:16, God Is Love
- 19 Proverbs 11:2, Humility And Wisdom
- 20 2 Timothy 3:16-17 Useful For Teaching
- 21 1 Peter 3:3-4 Your Inner Self
- 22 Romans 5:15, Grace Of The One Man
- 23 Proverbs 20:3, Avoid Strife
- 24 Matthew 5:44, Love And Pray For Your Enemies
- 25 Mark 11:24, Therefore I Tell You
- 26 1 Corinthians 3:18, Do Not Deceive Yourself
- 27 John 4:21, Keeps Commands
- 28 1 John 4:9, Live Through Him
- 29 Matthew 6:6, Go To Your Room
- 30 Psalm 103:1, Praise The Lord
- 31 Revelation 1:8, Alpha And Omega

DEVOTION

I should have known better when I peeked through one barely opened eyelid to see the words “National Weather Service Warning”. My husband Tom is a morning person though, so we were out the door before the meaning of the red exclamation point had a chance to sink in.

Halfway around Lake of the Isles, the frigid wind that was gusting over the icy waters hit straight into our eyes and foreheads. It felt like a ‘brain freeze’ when you were a kid and drank an Icee too fast. It actually hurt.

Do you ever feel like that following the warmth of Christmas? The warm glow of the hearth, the twinkle of the lights, the warmth of Christmas gatherings all seem to disappear in the blink of an eye. It feels like *Silent Night* and *O Come All Ye Faithful* have left the building and been replaced by bills and resolutions and a great big let down that rode in on a cold wind from the North.

What do we do when that happens? We turn to each other. To this community of God's people. We come to church! To soak up the Word and the warmth. To serve. To lift up our voices in praise and sing of all the blessings that have been bestowed upon us.

*Great is Thy faithfulness,
O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with Thee.
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not.
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.
Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy Faithfulness, Lord, unto Me.*

Come in from the cold. It's nice and warm in God's house.

— PASTOR HAMMERSTEN



CHRISTMAS AND YEAR END GIFTS

Thank you, thank you for your generous Christmas and end-of-year gifts. Because of the generosity of several Mount Olivet households, we were again able to offer a 1:1 match of all gifts, which meant we that not only ended the year strong, but were able to share that strength with a number of our community partners, contributing to combatting hunger in the Twin Cities and around the world; helping people rebuild after the series of tornadoes, floods, and fires of the past year; aid in resettling Afghan refugees; and so much more. Your gifts make everything we do at Mount Olivet possible. Thank you! Even more, thank God for you!

— PASTOR LOSE

Mount Olivet Careview Gift Shop

Are you looking for a rewarding and fun way to give back to your Mount Olivet community? Eager to support a program whose proceeds directly benefit its residents? We have a spot for you as a volunteer at the Mount Olivet Careview Gift Shop!

Mount Olivet Careview Home, recently voted the #1 Nursing Home in Minnesota by *Newsweek* magazine, is a vibrant and thriving community whose atmosphere is inviting, and friendly staff are eager to greet you. A favorite spot on campus is the Mount Olivet Careview Gift Shop, which has been open for over 30 years and is completely volunteer run. Born in the Mount Olivet Homes Auxiliary (MOHA), it has now evolved to be a service and fundraiser for the greater Mount Olivet membership—men and women ages 16+ are welcome and encouraged to join the team! As volunteer availability and needs have shifted, the Gift Shop is currently open 3 days per week, 10am-1pm. Our goal, as we gain new volunteers, is to be back to offering this vital service to residents, family and staff seven days per week. We need you to help make this happen!



We offer unique seasonal items, gifts, greeting cards at a greatly-reduced rate, candy, snacks and personal care items. More importantly, 100% of the profits go directly back to the Mount Olivet Church affiliates, including Mount Olivet Home/Careview Home, Mount Olivet Rolling Acres, and Mount Olivet Day Services. The shop is loved by all, but mostly by our residents, who look forward to stopping in to shop for gifts, pick out a few treats, and enjoy conversation with the volunteers running the store. The volunteer experience truly is rewarding. “I have a passion for giving back to the residents,” says Lori Anderson, Mount Olivet member and volunteer buyer for the shop. “I definitely get more out of it than what I have to give. I would love to see others join us!”

Please contact Laurie Hancer, lhancer@mtolivethomes.org or 612.821.3232, for more information and to reserve your spot on our volunteer team!

Mount Olivet Rolling Acres Staffing Needs

We’ve been so very blessed by the wonderful staff at Mount Olivet Rolling Acres. Like most organizations, we are critically low on staff. If you know anyone looking to pick up some extra hours, even if it’s just one day/week, please consider sharing this information with them. We even have overnight shifts where you get paid to sleep! Can’t beat that!

Are you a natural born caregiver? Age 16+? Are you looking for work that’s meaningful and rewarding? Mount Olivet Rolling Acres is looking for Direct Support Professionals. Full time, part time, even when you’re home on breaks from school! We have 30 homes, 4 residents in each, all have three shifts/day so you can work anytime that fits your work/school/family schedule. We offer the best pay in the industry, great benefits, great people and a respected company to work for. You’ll make a difference every single day in the lives of these great people we serve. We have homes all over the metro area from Edina to Chaska to Richfield to Waconia! If you’d like more information, please check us out at mtolivetrollingacres.org/careers, on Indeed, or by contacting Brian Jorgenson directly at 952.474.5974.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Mount Olivet Home/Careview Home would love to have you on our volunteer team! Volunteers are needed to help with programming like Bingo, Chapel escorts, program assistants, Gift Shop, and more!

Contact Laurie at lhancer@mtolivethomes.org or 612.821.3232 if you are interested.



THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Join your pastors for a deeper look at the Gospel of Mark. While the shortest of the four Gospels in Scripture, Mark packs much in content and proclamation of who Jesus is and what God's work in Christ means for all those who follow. The earliest of the Gospels written, it boldly proclaims, "Truly this man was God's son."

Mark: The Gospel as the Evening News with Pastor Ruud (Jan 26/27)

Bookends of Revelation & Fulfillment in Mark with Pastor Kalland (Feb 2/3)

Healings in Mark: "Your Faith Has Set You Free" with Pastors Freeman and Hammersten (Feb 9/10)

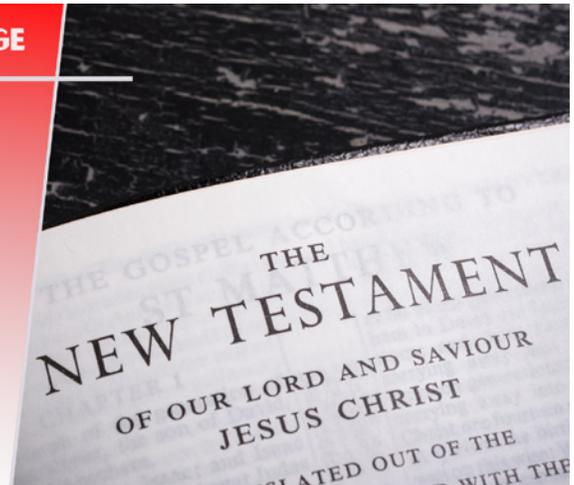
The Hidden Kingdom: The Parables of Jesus in Mark with Pastor Dixon (Feb 16/17)

This four-week series begins January 26/27. You can participate by attending in-person presentations (10:30-11:30am Wednesdays at Mpls and Thursdays at West), receiving recorded videos via email, or both! (The recorded video and the in-person presentations will be the same, however, in-person will have some discussion time and no doubt some impromptu extras!)

Register at mtolivet.org/education or by contacting Katie Stevenson at katies@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2232.

LIVING THE MESSAGE

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NEW TESTAMENT



Why Is Paul Such a Big Deal?

Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon

Paul is sometimes called the "second founder of Christianity," as through his missionary travels, preaching, and writing, he takes what was previously a relatively small Jerusalem-based faith community and turns it into a global movement. Little wonder that his writings make up a third of the New Testament, and that his theology of grace inspired the greatest theologians of history, including St. Augustine, Martin Luther, and John Wesley, just to name a few.

All of this is kind of incredible when you consider that Paul started his career by persecuting the church! But after being confronted by a vision of the Risen Christ and overwhelmed by God's grace, Paul becomes the chief evangelist of this fledging movement and has a particular passion for sharing the Gospel beyond the Jewish community. In our February *Living the Message* class, we'll trace Paul's journey from persecutor to apostle and identify what he discovered in Jesus that changed his life, changed the world, and still has the capacity to change our lives today!

PASTOR LOSE

JANUARY 4: Jesus Is Risen! Now What? *Acts of the Apostles* with Pastor Ruud

FEBRUARY 1: Why Is Paul Such a Big Deal? *Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon* with Pastor Lose

Participate via in-person presentations and/or emailed videos. Join for the second half of the year! Previous videos available. Register at mtolivet.org/education or by contacting Katie Stevenson at katies@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2232.

MOUNT OLIVET DAY CAMPS

REGISTRATION OPENS JANUARY 17!

Spend this summer with your friends at Mount Olivet! Our newly expanded day camp offerings will provide a consistent care option for kids throughout the summer from 7:30am-5pm. Participate in new and exciting programming as well as Mount Olivet classics like Vacation Bible School and God's Kids Sing! Each week will have activities surrounding its theme including crafts, movement games, music, service, learning, and FUN! Join us for one week, or the whole summer!

Each Day Camp is \$225/session and includes snacks, a t-shirt, activities and field trips with transportation when applicable.

If you are unable to join us for a full week of day camp, we will be offering drop-in day options 7/6-7/8, 8/22-8/26, and 8/29-9/1 at a daily rate of \$45. Register at mtolivet.org!

If you have questions, please contact Children's Camp Coordinator, Kristin Olson at kolson@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2246.

GOD'S KIDS SING! JUNE 13 - 17 K-6TH GRADE

This is a full five-day camp that is centered on singing, playing instruments, learning movement to Bible verses, choreography to upbeat songs, and all kinds of art projects. Classes are taught by professional educators and include an engaged group of High School counselors who love our GKS! campers! Come and be a part of the 2022 GKS!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JUNE 20 - 23 PRE K-6TH GRADE

Get ready for S'more Jesus at our VBS Camp Out! We'll have a great, faith filled week! This will be incorporated into the Day Camp week for those campers K-6th grade, and we'll offer a morning session for Pre K-2nd graders. This camp is offered at both campuses. Mpls Campus 6/20-6/23 & West Campus 6/27-6/30.

COOKING WEEK JUNE 27-JULY 1 K-6TH GRADE

Learn some skills in the kitchen while having a blast! During cooking week we will learn to decorate our own aprons and bake bread, go on some fun field trips including a Three Rivers play area and swimming at the Mount Olivet Conference and Retreat Center and break the rule "don't play with your food!"

SUPER SUMMER JULY 11 - 15 K-6TH GRADE

Superheroes are all around us! This week we will go to the Science Museum of Minnesota to check out their Science Superheroes exhibit, make some cool creations at Snapology, swim at MOCRC and show some gratitude to the superheroes in our community.

NATURE CAMP JULY 18 - 22 K-6TH GRADE

Held at the beautiful Mount Olivet Conference and Retreat Center our new nature camp will provide a variety of educational and fun learning experiences related to nature and our environment. We will learn about composting, take some hikes, enjoy the pool, engage in nature play and have a lot of fun. Lunch is provided by the MOCRC culinary team.

SUMMERTIME PLAYERS! JULY 18 - 22 6TH-9TH GRADE

This is a music-based day camp specifically designed for this special age group. Days are action-packed with team games, singing and dancing to pop and musical theatre songs, and afternoon field trips. STP is the perfect place to make new friends, bond with the Youth and Music staff of MO!

IMAGINATION CREATION JULY 25 - 29 K-6TH GRADE

We will foster creativity and spark our imagination this week through theater play, art projects and trips to Crayola Experience and Stages Theater, as well as taking our imagination outdoors at the MOCRC.

BUG WEEK AUGUST 1 - 5 K-6TH GRADE

We'll be busy as a bee during Bug Week learning about pollinators at the MN Landscape Arboretum, enjoying some time outdoors at Oak Hill Park & Splash pad and the MOCRC, and getting up close and personal with a variety of bug friends from Bruce the Bug Guy. *Field trips are subject to change.



CATHEDRAL OF THE PINES

MEMBER REGISTRATION OPENS JANUARY 17!

Cathedral of the Pines, a youth camp located in Lutsen, MN, combines some of the best ingredients for a positive summer experience...laughter, prayer, education, and recreation. The mission of Cathedral of the Pines Camp is to serve children and young people by enhancing their spiritual and emotional development. The summer camping experience in the natural beauty of northern Minnesota helps the campers grow in their relationship with God.

Individuals of all ages gather on the lovely shores of Caribou Lake for Christian experiences in an atmosphere of friendship, fine facilities, and good food. Trained, caring counselors bring the Good News of God and loving volunteers prepare meals. There are health professionals available at all times. A typical camp day includes Bible classes, swimming, paddleboats, nature hikes, sports fundamentals, arts and crafts, large and small group games, and, of course, delicious food! Each day at Cathedral of the Pines begins and ends in the chapel overlooking beautiful Caribou Lake.

Member registration for 2022 camping sessions will begin on Monday, January 17. Members are encouraged to register for youth camping periods as soon as possible, as sessions fill up. Non-member registration will open on Tuesday, February 1. Any non-member registrations received prior to February 1 will be sent back and refunded. All registrations will be online through Campbrain.

There is a Cathedral of the Pines Sponsorship Fund for Mount Olivet members who need financial assistance. Please contact Camp Coordinator, Kris Ericksen, for more information at krise@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2207.

2022 YOUTH CAMPING SCHEDULE ELIGIBILITY DETERMINED BY GRADE AS OF SEP 1, 2022

GRADES 3, 4, & 5

Week 1: Saturday, July 23 – Wednesday, July 27

Week 2: Saturday, August 6 – Wednesday, August 10

GRADES 5, 6, & 7

Week 1: Monday, July 18 – Saturday, July 23

GRADES 6, 7, & 8

Week 1: Sunday, June 26 – Friday, July 1

Week 2: Tuesday, July 5 – Sunday, July 10

Week 3: Wednesday, July 27 – Monday, August 1

9TH GRADE CONFIRMATION CAMP (MOUNT OLIVET MEMBERS ONLY)

Week 1: Sunday, July 10 – Friday, July 15

Week 2: Monday, August 1 – Saturday, August 6

GRADES 11, 12, & GRADUATES

Summer Starter: Sunday, June 19 – Thursday, June 23

GRADE 10

10th Grade Starter: Thursday, June 23 – Sunday, June 26

GRADES 10, 11, & 12

Hi-League Retreat: Wednesday, August 10 – Sunday, August 14



The Peace and Calm of God's Creation

Just before the pandemic began, Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center received a \$15,000 grant from the Louisville Institute in order to explore how it could better serve its many guests, including members of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church. As part of the grant, we surveyed participants in ten of our signature programs. We learned a lot, among other things, about the impact of God's creation on guests' spiritual and emotional wellbeing. Specifically, we heard the following:

Guests are nourished spiritually by nature. The top three needs of guests that are met at the Conference & Retreat Center are spiritual renewal, connection to nature/God's creation, and fellowship with others. As one person succinctly said, "[This place] allows me to just be still and quietly take in God's creation."

Guests love the beauty of our land. Of our many outdoor amenities, guests most appreciate the flower beds, the fireplace and patio, hiking trails, and Marsh Walk. We have over 20 natural flower beds featuring over 200 unique flowers. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we will have a new retaining wall and flower bed outside the Wild Geranium meeting room next Spring.

Guests experience peace and calm through nature. Whether hiking the trails, sitting quietly on our benches and swings, or listening to the birds and watching the Monarch butterflies, guests are renewed in this place. They feel peace, inspiration, and joy. One person put it beautifully, "Being immersed in this setting gives me a bigger perspective on life . . . It helps me to listen to and hear God's whisper to my heart and inspires me to gratitude, delight, joy, and being still."

We hope you will join us for one of our upcoming events or treat yourself to the luxury of a private retreat so that you can experience all this and more.

DR. THERESA LATINI, *Executive Director of the Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center*

WOMEN'S WEEKEND

Registration for Women's Weekend is still open! From January 28-30, come share the gifts of friendship, and be inspired to deepen your friendships with God, with one another, and with all God's creatures. Spend time walking in the woods, relaxing in the whirlpool, scheduling a massage, or quietly meditating. Led by Pastor Hammersten, Pastor Freeman, and Conference & Retreat Center Director Rev. Theresa Latini. Register at mtolivet.org by January 21.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

Last winter, as a response to the ever-changing needs during the pandemic, we created the "Living Well, Leading Well" Virtual Workshops. Pastors, theologians, and other leaders offered content and conversation on Zoom for folks to attend from anywhere. Because of its impact and close alignment with our mission, we're bringing these offerings back in spring! This year's theme will explore the promise of Psalm 139 that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." Stay tuned for dates and more information in February's Messenger and on MOCRC's website.

DAY LENTEN JOURNEY

Save the Date for this year's Day Lenten Journey at the Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center on Tuesday, March 8, from 10am-3pm. More details to come in the February Messenger.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church is one of the few churches in America that provides professional, ethical, licensed counseling services to aid church and community members in dealing with the tensions, pressures and stresses of daily life. Our services help people work through their concerns in a supportive setting that is open to those of all faith perspectives and walks of life. Our therapists include Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors, and a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor. We offer therapy for adults, children, adolescents, couples and families. A variety of support and educational groups are offered as well. We offer both in-person and secure telehealth sessions.

To schedule an appointment, register for a group, or gain more information, please contact Molly Pach at mpach@mtolivetcounseling.org, or 612.927.7335, ext. 10.



The Effects of Negative Self-Talk

What is self-talk? It's that little voice inside our head, or that inner dialogue that gives us messages. The little voice is always there giving us messages about ourselves and the world around us. At times this little voice can actually be positive and helpful, but often times it can be negative and harmful. When it is continuously negative, full of judgement and not loving and/or compassionate, it is known as negative self-talk. Some examples of negative self-talk may sound like: "I always make mistakes," "I'm not good at this," "I'm not smart enough."

What happens when our self-talk continuously becomes negative? It can impact both our mental and physical health. Negative self-talk has been shown to release hormones in the body, such as cortisol, which increases stress levels within the body and brain. It can also decrease our self-esteem, self-worth and overall confidence in the things we do. Negative self-talk can also increase feelings of anxiety and depression.

How can we decrease negative self-talk?

1. We can slow down and pay attention to the inner dialogue and messages we are giving ourselves and discover how much of what we tell ourselves is negative or positive.
2. Take time to challenge those negative messages by asking ourselves if these messages are really true.
3. Replacing the negative messages with positive messages.
4. Have compassion towards ourselves, asking if we would give a loved one the same message that we give ourselves in similar circumstances. We are typically much more harsh with ourselves than we are with a loved one.
5. Keep practicing 1-4. It can take time and a little practice to decrease negative self-talk.

NIKKI KNUDSON-DALAL, MA, LMFT, LADC, *Mount Olivet Counseling Service*

UPCOMING EVENTS YOUTH MINISTRY

To register for these events or learn more about these offerings, please contact Geoff Arenson geoffa@mtolivet.org, 612.767.2212; Anna Herd aherd@mtolivet.org, 612.767.2279; Macey Oliver moliver@mtolivet.org, 612.767.2237; or Julia Jallo jjallo@mtolivet.org, 952.767.1502.



JHA ICE SKATING

1/17 12-2:30pm. Join the Junior High Youth Staff for ice skating at Centennial Lakes! Don't forget to dress warmly!



MO UNITED

MO United is a high school service project that meets every other Tuesday from 6:30-7:30pm at the West Campus. If you are interested please email, jjallo@mtolivet.org.



HI-LEAGUE

1/9: Bingo, pizza, and Oreos
1/16: Vertical Endeavors
1/23: Ice Skating
1/30: Breakfast and Trivia



KUWTYS

Ever wonder what a full month of holiday youth events looks like? Check out our latest *Keeping Up with the Youth Staff* episode on the Youth Instagram page! Follow [@mtolivet_youth](https://www.instagram.com/mtolivet_youth) for more!



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Help serve dinner or deliver groceries to families in south Minneapolis. If you would like to volunteer, contact Sam Sanda at ssanda@mtolivet.org for details.



CONFIRMATION

REMINDER!
No Confirmation on Sunday January 2.



7TH GRADE RETREATS

WEST CAMPUS
Friday, 1/7-Saturday, 1/8 from 4:45pm-10:30am.

MPLS CAMPUS
Friday, 2/4 - Saturday, 2/5 from 4:45pm-10:30am

7th graders are welcome to attend either campus for the retreat!



MO UNITED

MO United (MOU) is a relationship building service project where high schoolers engage in various activities with residents from Mount Olivet Rolling Acres. After a year of isolation, unknown circumstances, and boredom of being cooped up inside, MOU has returned to in-person events! We have loved interacting with the residents from Rolling Acres. From bonfires, to Halloween dance parties, and a variety of arts and crafts, the high school volunteers have begun creating relationships with the adults at Rolling Acres. This service project builds on the importance of interpersonal relationships and engaging with others within our community. There is an importance in forming a bond with individuals outside of our normal bubble, and showing empathy to create an equal sense of worth and belonging. This program has not only shown the impact we can have on the resident's lives, but it has also changed the perspective on our lives as volunteers. MOU meets every other Tuesday from 6:30-7:30pm. This is a growing program, and we are always looking for more volunteers. If you are a high schooler and interested in volunteering, please contact Julia Jallo at jjallo@mtolivet.org.

— JULIA JALLO, Coordinator of Senior High Youth, West Campus

7TH GRADE RETREATS

After the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, January and February have always been harder months for me. It is cold and dark outside, final exams and the end of the semester are on your mind, and spring break and summer seem so far away.

However, the 7th grade retreats have always been one of my favorite parts about this time of year. I love the 7th grade retreats for a few reasons. First, these retreats act as an easy way to make more friends at Mount Olivet. Whether you have many church friends or if you come by yourself, I am confident that you will feel better about your connections at church after the retreat.

Additionally, these retreats allow us to spend time with our pastors. I remember feeling like pastors had to be perfect people when I was growing up. I've realized while they might not be perfect, they almost always have something important to say. Feeling like I could approach pastors with questions was something that I learned from these retreats, even if my question was as simple as asking Pastor Kalland when he first grew a mustache.

Finally, the high school counselors make these retreats an awesome experience. As a 7th grader, I remember my counselors encouraging my friends and I to stay involved with Mount Olivet throughout our high school years. Hearing that encouragement from someone our age made all the difference.

I cannot wait for the 7th grade retreats. See you there!

— SAM SANDA, Youth Staff

Join us at a 7th grade retreat on Friday, 1/7 - Saturday, 1/8 from 4:45pm-10:30am at the West Campus, or Friday, 2/4 - Saturday, 2/5 from 4:45pm-10:30am at the Minneapolis Campus. 7th graders are welcome to attend either campus for the retreat!

“For I was hungry and you gave me food...” Matthew 25

In the spring of 2019, Mount Olivet’s Community Meals began out of desire to answer the call in Matthew 25 to feed the hungry. These meals began as sit-down dinners, filling the Minneapolis Fellowship Hall with not only good food, but good community—growing to over 100 people fed per week.

When the pandemic hit in March 2020, Sally McNamee and the kitchen team pivoted to a drive-through, which now averages 1,050 meals picked up per week. People are given a choice of dinner entrees (favorites include lasagna, mac n’ cheese, and meatloaf), and bag lunches are also offered. Mount Olivet has served 112,000 meals since April 2019, with the need continuing to be strong, especially during the pandemic.

As Pastoral Adviser to Community Concern, Pastor MacLean helped spearhead these meals, and at the drive-throughs he takes orders and delivers meals to the people in their cars. He has been reminded time and time again that so many are going through hard times, and that need cannot be recognized by looks or by what kind of car someone is driving. Meals are always provided: no questions asked. Pastor MacLean will never forget one interaction with a well-dressed woman who came through the line in an up-to-date minivan with her four kids. She burst into tears and told him, “You have no idea what a blessing this has been for me and my family. My husband and I both lost our jobs at the same time, and we’re just getting by.”

What compels Pastor MacLean to keep doing these Community Meals? He said, “I can serve people, just as we are called to do in Matthew 25. Feeds my soul, and, most importantly, the people are front and center -- not only looking for food, but for someone to talk to, for community. Serving them is what it is all about.”

Sally McNamee, Director of Culinary Services, has been integral in Community Meals since the beginning. Sally often serves the people who walk-up to the drive-through. She shared some of the circumstances people dealing with food insecurities have: some have to select meals based on if they have a stove; some are picking up meals for the entire week, while others only take what they can eat that day as they have no refrigerator. There are people who bring meals to homebound elderly people and must choose food that is easy to eat due to dental issues. And still others have no car, or no money for car repairs, thus the need to walk-up.

One woman picks up 50 meals to bring to tent cities in the Twin Cities. She herself lost her job in 2020. She thought she was doing everything “right,” but then she found herself living in her car, hitting obstacle upon obstacle as she tried to get work and housing again. Mount Olivet’s Community Meals helped her when things were bleak, and she wants to repay. People helping people—as we are all called to do.

What compels Sally McNamee to keep doing these Community Meals? She said, “When the meals had to move to drive-throughs when the pandemic hit, I was so grateful to have something to do to help. Something that made a difference. As I have gotten to know the drive-through patrons, I am reminded week after week that they are children of God and the need just doesn’t end.”

These Community Meals are supported by the generosity of Mount Olivet members. Thank you!

KATIE STEVENSON, *Director of Stewardship & Coordinator of Adult Education*





THANK YOU MOUNT OLIVET!

We begin this New Year with a word of thanks, intense gratitude, and joy about the generosity of our Mount Olivet members! We finished 2021 surrounded by examples of how Mount Olivet continues to be a servant congregation willing to answer the call to “love thy neighbor” (Matthew 22).

Our annual Christmas for All service project brought in hundreds of donations of new items that were used to stock our own Christmas Store at the West Campus. The amount of gifts and cheer willing to be shared with others made Christmas for All one of the most gratifying projects of the year! On Sunday December 5, we transformed the West Fellowship Hall with tables and tables of wonderful gifts for people of all ages. Mount Olivet was able to provide an exceptional shopping experience for Love INC clients, provide countless gifts for the Southside Family Nurturing Center Christmas Store, and give gift cards to support those at Redeemer Lutheran Church.

The MOCW Coat and Mitten Drive throughout December brought in wonderful new cold weather gear that is so essential to those experiencing homelessness this winter.

And thank you to everyone who attended our new holiday events last month on Sunday, December 5, at the Mpls Campus. We hosted a community sing-a-long of Handel’s *Messiah* with performances by our Mount Olivet soloists and musicians. Following the sing-a-long, we had a community tree lighting of our 30 foot evergreen on 50th and James. There was cocoa, cookies and popcorn while children and families visited Santa and his reindeer for photos and fun!





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SUMMER CAMPS

MOUNT OLIVET DAY CAMPS AND CATHEDRAL OF THE PINES CAMP!

**REGISTRATION OPENS
MONDAY, JANUARY 17**