



# MOUNT OLIVET LUTHERAN CHURCH

August 27, 2025

Dear Mount Olivet Members and Friends,

As you have likely heard, this morning Annunciation School and Church, our neighbors in Southwest Minneapolis, was the site of a horrific shooting. We are heartbroken for those whose lives have been shattered by this act of evil, and we are confused at how something like this could happen in our community. Schools and places of worship are supposed to be places of safety, acceptance, learning, and joy, which makes this act all the more incomprehensible and painful.

If you are feeling overwhelmed or grief-stricken or angry, I understand. I have felt that way, too on countless occasions today. In times like this I find comfort in the words of the Psalmist, not because it offers an answer, but because it reminds me that others have felt as we now do:

*Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?  
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.*

"You are there." In times of trauma, horror and tragedy, we hold fast to the promise that God is there with us amid the pain and confusion. We have confidence that this is true because, in and through Jesus' life and death, God experienced the same suffering and heartache that we do. And we have confidence that, because of the resurrection, evil and suffering will not have the last word.

One of the prayers I regularly use at memorial services starts with this: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all mercy and the God of all consolation. He comforts us in all our sorrows so that we can comfort others in their sorrows with the consolation that we have received from God.*

That is our calling in this moment: to offer consolation, comfort, and care to those around us. To those in the Annunciation community who are grief-stricken, to those in South Minneapolis who are afraid, to those first responders who deal with tragedy all too often, to those who wonder where to turn with their grief. God comforts us so that we can comfort others. And so we will stand together, hold onto each other, share with each other our hope and prayers for peace, and commit to one another to build together a safer and more trustworthy world.

I will close with the words of the Apostle Paul, words to which I hold fast with equal measure of faith and trembling: "I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Amen.

Senior Pastor Lose

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