

Volume LVI  
Number 5

May 2018



# Messenger

MOUNT OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

7301 N 28 Ave Omaha, NE 68112 402.455.8700 MountOliveOmaha.com



# Confirmation

Sunday, May 27, 2018, 9:00 am

Kailyn Townsend

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing (*John 15:5, ESV*).

Isabella Wegner

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand (*John 10:27-28, ESV*).

# PRACTICAL ATHEISM

“Hypocrisy in one age,” warned Joseph Addison, “is generally succeeded by atheism in another.” Consider this in light of the fact many observers tell us that America is becoming less Christian. It’s not that Americans are converting to other religions. It’s that more and more people who call themselves Christians don’t display enough evidence to be convicted in a court of law.

Pollsters tell us about 75 percent of Americans still label themselves Christian. What we ought to care about, however, is not what labels people choose, but what they believe and do. In surveys aimed at discerning a Christian worldview (e.g., whether respondents believe that absolute truth exists, that Christ was sinless, that faith in Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross is the only way to be saved, etc.), Barna Research Group finds only ten percent of Americans have these consistent biblical beliefs. Many professing Christians have a disturbing ignorance of Christian beliefs. If you don’t know what we Christians believe, it makes it awfully hard to answer why we believe it. It makes it impossible to pass on the faith to children and grandchildren. It is no surprise then that large numbers of young people stop attending church upon leaving home, if not before.

When Christian churches grew, its leaders stressed biblical study and fervent prayer. Today many churchgoers expect to be entertained and leave “feeling good.” In other

words, Christianity tends to be less and less about God and more and more about ourselves and about how to be happy and respectable.

What I am getting at is that many of us Christians are in danger of “practical atheism.” This is not godlessness. It is instead a slow slide into lives where God is irrelevant. Practical atheism isn’t limited to people who abandon church altogether. It extends to all of us who gradually drift from Christ, even as we faithful attend Sunday services. If we don’t have a healthy, growing relationship with Jesus, our Savior and Lord, our lives will more and more reflect the cultural values of those around us. Remember that most people give little thought to God’s Word and will. They are pursuing worldly agendas and God is an afterthought, if at all. They want an untroubled life, with the freedom to do whatever pleases them.

How different are Jesus’ words: **“If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?”** (Matt. 16:24-26).

Over what do we brood? Do we forget that the things that vex us pass through the hands of a loving God? If we are honest, practical atheism is also our problem. What ought to concern us is not how many wear the Christian label, but how many of us keep the label without fully living the life it requires.

—Rev. Roland A Jank, Jr.

# Mount Olive Blood Drive

Saturday, May 19

The need for blood is constant. Every day, patients in local communities are helped by blood donors who give at blood drives coordinated by generous volunteers like our own **Bonnie White**. Below are just a few examples of patients who were recently helped.

- ◆ A child with sickle cell disease was treated with ten units of type B negative red cells.
- ◆ In just two days, 17 units of platelets, five units of cryoprecipitate, 51 units of red cells and 53 units of

*(Continued on page 10)*



## In Ministry With God's People

We remember in prayer

...**Dixie Gerhart, Mary Hogue, Randy Johnson, Rod & Karen Lorang, Frank Sabatka, Chelsea Standley and Max Williams.**

...our youth catechumens - **Kailyn Townsend** and **Isabella Wegner**, that they would remain faithful to Christ and to His church in the years ahead.

...our missionary work as individual Mount Olive Christians where God has placed us.

...our Vacation Bible School July 16-20.

...**Emily Standley** as she transitions to a work release program in Lincoln, NE.

Walkers and riders needed!!! If you are willing to represent Mount Olive and help advertise our Vacation Bible School at this year's Florence Day's Parade, please talk to **Sarah Jank** about volunteering. The theme is "building a strong community", so it would be wonderful to have lots of representatives. We are partnering again with St. John to build our float. The parade takes place on Saturday, May 12th, and begins at 1:00 p.m. Come out and cheer us on, too!



JOIN THE PARADE!



## OUR MISSIONARIES ABROAD

Mount Olive is helping to support two missionaries and their families who live abroad. We remember them periodically in our public prayer. We ask that you continue to support them financially with your regular gifts. Information about their work is shared on the north hall bulletin board and in our Sunday worship. May it serve as an encouragement for your continued interest and support. For the year 2018 our missionaries abroad are:

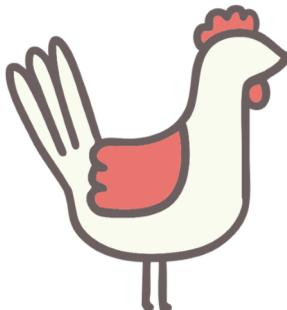
---

**Julie Lutz**  
 12 Wiltshire Rd  
 Kowloon Tong, Kowloon  
 Hong Kong  
[julie.lutz@lcmsintl.org](mailto:julie.lutz@lcmsintl.org)

---

**Rev. David & Mrs. Barbara Bush**  
 1333 S. Kirkwood Rd.  
 Attn: Amy Schaefer  
 St. Louis, MO 63122  
[david.bush@lcmsintl.org](mailto:david.bush@lcmsintl.org)

The monthly *Very Merry Unbirthday* luncheon will be on Wednesday, May 9. We are eating at Jack & Mary's at 655 N. 114 St. It has been offering Omaha's comfort food favorites since 1975. Let's meet in the church parking lot at 11:30 a.m. and carpool. Please RSVP to **Barb Stacy** at 402-453-7049 or **Bonnie White** at 402-676-7334.



Please join us Tuesday, May 8th, for Mount Olive's Book Club. We will meet one more time before our summer break. Our meeting is at 7:00 p.m. at the home of **Jill Clausen**. **Lois Barr** will provide dessert.

This month we are doing things a little differently. We are using a Mystery Book Bag from the library. Each member will be reading a different mystery written by a different author. Each book is also the first book of a series. We will discuss the various authors and their writing styles as well as consider reading other books by them. It should be a fun evening. To get your book, see **Jill**.

As the Omaha Public Library expands its *Book Club Program* we are able to use more of their books rather than purchase the books ourselves. All Book Club members are asked to review the list of the Book Club bags available from the library (found on the library website) and bring the name of a book you would like us to read. If you have any questions please contact **Jill Clausen** at 402-650-5962.



## Church Properties

You may have noticed the entry area and lobby by the north door have recently been painted. As we work to keep our building welcoming and presentable please keep the following items in mind:

- ✓ Put things back where they belong after using them.
- ✓ If you see something that needs attention, please don't ignore it. Make **Roger Perrigo** or **Jill Clausen** aware of the situation. We would rather be told about something multiple times than not at all.
- ✓ Help by cleaning up after yourself and/or your children. Our cleaners only come twice a week. If you need assistance, let us know.
- ✓ Be judicious when attaching items to the walls (posters, decorations, etc.). If you do tape something up, ensure that all tape and tape residue is removed when the item is taken down.
- ✓ Remember that our building is God's house and should be treated as such.

Thank you so much for what you do for our congregation. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact **Jill Clausen** at 402-650-5962.



Thank You

Thank you to **Kathy Mansfield, Sharon McDonald, Barb Stacy and Bonnie White** for helping with the April Messenger.

Thank you to **Barb Stacy** for taking the finished newsletter to the downtown post office.

A special thank you to **Rich Wismont** who takes care of all of the church's recyclables.

Thank you to **Rosalie Soodsma** for weekly lending a hand in the church office.

- **Teresa Kuti**

Many Thanks!

Many thanks to **Ron Hurt** for laying all of the mulch in the landscaping beds outside the church. It looks great!

Mt. Olive Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, please call **Kristi Townsend** at 402-457-9611 or by email at [townsend.kristi@gmail.com](mailto:townsend.kristi@gmail.com)

Important!

**Emily Standley** has been moved to a work release program in Lincoln, NE. Her new address is; **Emily Standley**, Inmate #99497, Community Corrections Center, P.O. Box 22200, Lincoln, NE, 68542.

Camp Luther

Camp Luther is inviting you and your family to a Camp Luther Weekend on June 2 and 3 for FREE Christ-centered family fun! Enjoy camp activities including archery, canoeing, swimming, and hiking, as well as special activities including bounce houses, a petting zoo, minnow races and giant red wagon rides. Come for the day, or call ahead to stay overnight! Outdoor worship at 10am on Sunday will be followed by a luncheon (free will donation). Register at 402-352-5655 or email [campluther@campluther.org](mailto:campluther@campluther.org)



- ★ **Desirae Greenhagen** from Geneva North High School (July 2017).
- ★ **Alexia Moffett** from Omaha North High School (December 2017).
- ★ **Charly Peterson** from Omaha Central High School (May 2018).

Before Pentecost the disciples found it hard to do easy things; after Pentecost they found it easy to do hard things.

—A.J. Gordon

## Little Free Pantry of Mount Olive

We have an ongoing collection for our “Little Free Pantry.” This small cabinet with non-perishable food items, paper goods, and other items sits outside of Mount Olive. It is accessible 24 hours per day to anyone. The pantry has made a huge impact to the hungry in our neighborhood. It is emptied most days. Please consider putting a couple of extra items in your grocery cart for donation.



*You can place your items inside the marked cabinet that is in the old nursery room right behind the doorway.*

- applesauce
- baby food
- baked beans
- bean soup
- beef stew
- bran cereals
- bread
- bread and muffin mixes
- canned and dried beans
- canned chili
- canned chicken
- canned tomato products
- canned tuna or salmon
- canned fruit/vegetables
- cold & hot cereal/oatmeal
- dried fruit
- dry noodles and pasta
- evaporated milk
- flour
- fruit juice
- graham crackers
- granola bars
- honey
- infant cereal and formula
- instant breakfast drinks
- jelly and jam
- macaroni and cheese
- mayonnaise
- noodle mixes
- pancake mix
- peanut butter
- popcorn
- powdered milk
- rice and rice mixes
- salad dressings
- shelf-stable milk
- sugar
- syrup
- whole grain crackers
- vegetable oil
- vegetable soup
- vegetable juice

# Beware of Phone Scams

---

Do you ever get a phone call from the IRS demanding money or from the police department saying there is a warrant out for your arrest? If you answered yes, you wouldn't be alone. The IRS estimates that more than \$65 million has been lost to phone tax scammers in the last five years. These calls are most common during the high tax season in March and April. The callers use scare tactics, talk fast and loud, and can sound very believable. The voice might tell you that they are the IRS and if you don't call them back there will be a warrant out for your arrest. The caller might identify himself as the police or sheriff's department calling with a warrant for your arrest unless you give them money. Calls can even come from young voices sounding like a grandchild saying they are in Mexico or somewhere else out of the country and they need you to send money or they will go to jail.

If you receive a call like this, don't panic. Remember, the IRS would never call you and demand money like this. If you owe them money, you will receive a letter in the mail first. The police department does not handle warrants like this either. They would not ask for money over the phone from you. If you get a call from a young voice that is demanding money who sounds like a grandchild, attempt to get a parent on the phone. At the very least, try to verify they are who they say they are. Ask them a question that only your grandchild might know like what color is their car or what is the color of the house they grew up in or ask them to tell you what their parents' names are.

Remember, you should never give your bank account number or credit card number over the phone. The IRS already knows your social security number so, if someone asks you this, hang up the phone. Most importantly, try and stay calm. The tactic is to get you confused and upset. Don't fall for it!

# Many Thanks

Thank you to the following people who helped with our Spring Work Day: **Dixie Gerhart, Ron Hurt, Yo Tierney, Linda Williams, Rich Wismont, Jerry Zulfer** and **Jim Zulfer**. The bad weather prevented outdoor work, but we were able to get many things done inside. Thank you also to **Betsy Kosch** and **Anne Wegner** who organized the Sunday School storage area and sorted through many, many costumes stuffed in cupboards all over the building to organize and consolidate them. There are still many jobs that need to be done, so if you are a person that likes to work alone or at your convenience, please contact **Jill Clausen** for a list of jobs that need attention.

## LHM Sunday

Sunday, May 6, is Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) Sunday at Mount Olive. We will collect a door offering to support the work God is doing through LHM. Most of you who know LHM will know it through its regular 6:30 a.m. Sunday morning radio broadcasts of *The Lutheran Hour* on KFAB (1110 AM).

However, LHM is much more than that. LHM broadcasts the Gospel in over 30 countries on five continents. It also reaches out personally through Bible studies and outreach activities in most of those countries.

Mount Olive has directly benefited from LHM's work in the USA. It:

- has provided an estimated \$2,400 in subsidies for the four Saturday evangelism workshops we have held over the past several years;

- publishes the resource booklets in the north entryway of our church for use by our members and visitors (including the voters who pass through our doors);
- allows Mount Olive to make LHM apps available on our website at <http://www.mountoliveomaha.com/resources-apps>; (Yes, you can listen to *The Lutheran Hour* on your smart phone, if you don't want to get up at 6:30 on Sunday morning.)
- allows Mount Olive to provide all of LHM's resource booklets on our website at <http://www.mountoliveomaha.com/resources-lhm-booklets>. (Use them for yourself or to give to others in need.)

You may donate by making out a check to Mount Olive and sealing it in the offering envelope in the Sunday, May 6th bulletin or by donating at the door when you leave worship.

*Shipwrecked* is the theme of this summer's Vacation Bible School. Remember Gilligan's Island? Me, the Skipper, Gilligan and 30 of my best friends will be shipwrecked the week of July 16 along with the VBS students. Look forward to Tropical Treats, Cast-away Music and Bible stories that tell how Jesus rescues us. Several positions will need to be filled, so please prayerfully consider when asked to help.

To register your children, grandchildren, friends, neighbors, classmates, etc., please

call the church office at 402-455-8700. You will also find VBS registrations forms as a bulletin insert beginning July 1.



There is no cost to participate. Children ages 4 years to 6th grade are welcome.

- **Jody Wells-Padron**  
Vacation Bible School, Director

*(Continued from page 3)*

plasma were needed to treat a child heart transplant patient.

- ◆ Eight units of red blood cells helped stabilize a 30-year-old female trauma patient.
- ◆ A new mother received two units of red cells after delivering her baby.
- ◆ Two organ transplant patients needed a combined total of 30 units of type B positive blood cells.
- ◆ A pregnant mother undergoing an intra-uterine transfusion for her baby needed a special antigen screened type O negative unit of red cells.

Because of coordinators like **Bonnie**, blood products were available for these patients and many others like them. To schedule an appointment, call **Bonnie** at 402-496-7682 or email [bjhjwhite@cox.net](mailto:bjhjwhite@cox.net).