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Messenger

MOUNT OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH
7301 N 28 Ave Omaha, NE 68112 402.455.8700 MountOliveOmaha.com

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

From Pastor Meyer's Desk: January, 2020

Now greet the swiftly changing year With joy and penitence sincere. Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.

***With Him as Lord to lead our way In want and in prosperity, What need we fear in earth or space In this new year of grace!*-LSB #896 st.1, 5**

Anno Domini, the year of our Lord, 2020 AD. It's hard to believe that 2020 is just around the corner. I remember when 1981 (the year I graduated from the seminary and received my first pastoral call) seemed to be so very far in the future. Now, 1981 is so very distant in the past! How the years have flown by!

A lot has happened over the intervening years, in my life and in the life of Mount Olive Lutheran Church. A lot has happened in the past year, and now we look at the beginning of 2020.

In every good development and blessing, to God be the glory! Amid every trial, trouble and challenge, God has been and will continue to be with us to sustain us in His power and grace! What a joy to see and know that God continues to do great things among, within, and through His people of faith who gather around and share His Word & Sacraments.

I have enjoyed the worship services, confirmation classes, Bible Classes and fellowship events that I have had the privilege of sharing and participating in with many of you. I've enjoyed the many visits and conversations. I have heard some amazing stories of God at work in and among His people of faith. At the same time I have heard some of your hurts, burdens, sorrows and fears. Though I am very aware of the fact that I'm the 'new' guy, and only here on a temporary basis, at that…., please know that my hope is that I will not only be with you through the work of the Interim Task Force AND the beginning of the Call Process, but that I hope to also be with you when you hear the news that a pastor has accepted your call to be your next Resident Pastor. However, I don't get to control all the details of my calendar and as we all were reminded the last Sunday of December, from Psalm 31:14-15, **"I trust in You, O Lord; I say, "You are my God." My times are in Your hands…."**

As I write this, the Interim Task Force is not yet totally in place but will start meeting together and working within the first two weeks of January. They have a very important though difficult task, some might even say an impossible task, but we know that with God all things are possible – please keep all of them, along with me, in your prayers as we begin our work together as a Task Force. Pray for this team as they go through the material gathered from the "Gathered 'Round His Feet" Meetings, address various items, and as they work to prepare a presentation for

the congregation regarding our strengths, challenges, ministry opportunities, and our key ministry focuses going forward. This is the information that will help us and our District President as we later this 'new' year officially see our call committee start the calling process for our next resident pastor at Mount Olive . And again, start praying for your next resident pastor and his family, NOW!!!

In this new year, I want to encourage you to either continue or start a habit of being active in worship, Bible Study, and the fellowship and ministry of Mount Olive. A lot of work is put into preparing for our services by Rachel our organist/choir director and worship planner, our choir, cantors, readers, Lay Ministers, Altar Guild, and all the many others who help make a worship service happen. Services that are a blessing to many cannot bless you if you keep yourself away. Please come and be touched by your Lord as He visits us through His Word, Sacraments and the fellowship of His people. If there are concerns or opportunities that we should give attention to, please talk to one of our Lay Ministers or one of our church officers. You can also contact me and please know that I will welcome the visit and will listen. Call the church office or call my cellphone: 402-580-2929 and when I am free to talk, we will talk!

What a privilege and honor it is to be your pastor during this time of transition. By God's grace a lot of good things are happening, to God be the glory! But as we see the hurts and fears of many around us and in our neighborhoods and cities, we know there is much more to still do. There are literally so many ministry opportunities being laid at our doorstep, opportunities that Mount Olive is in the PERFECT location to address. So, we strive to move forward, building upon the blessings of the past and thankful for the privilege of continued and growing service to the glory of God and for the good of our neighbors. Many good ideas are being shared, considered and may yet be acted upon. May we, in all things, continue to ask, "Lord, what would YOU have us do?" And trusting the Lord and His Word, let us continue to move forward in caring ministry and follow where He leads us.

Yes, how quickly the years go by. How quickly things change. How different things look, ….yet, at the same time, how remarkably, things stay the same. Though our world is changing rapidly, God's love and grace is still constant and dependable for us with all His people of faith. And His love, forgiveness and eternal promises, centered in Jesus, continue to offer and supply what is the most urgent need of all humankind.

Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace another year of grace…… IN JESUS!

Rejoicing with you in Christ,
Pastor Meyer

Thank You!

A belated thank you to everyone who sent sympathy cards when my father died. Special thanks to those who drove up to Mapleton to be present for the visitation or Dad's funeral. Your loving outreach was a comforting witness to our family.

Sincerely,
Gloria**, **Steve** and **Mark Sorensen

We appreciate all who have reached out to us following the death of my younger brother, **Jim**. It is a comfort to know that he is no longer suffering and that we have such a wonderful family of Christ here at Mount Olive.
Love,
The **Jerry Zulfer Family**

Danke!

I would like to share my sincere appreciation to everyone for your kindness to me since my fall. The cards, calls, visits and prayers have meant so much to me.
Your sister in Christ,
Marge Eastman

Thanks to the following instrumental music students for sharing their talents with us-**McKoy Kosch**-French Horn, **Nelson Kosch**-Saxophone, **Noah Lorang**-Cello, **Kamree Townsend**-Violin, **Alea Wegner**-Piano, **Alex Wegner**-Guitar and **Aurora Wismont**-Violin.

Special thanks to the **Hogue**, **Kosch**, and **Wegner** families, who do so much to help us celebrate our Savior's birth. They organize and participate in the annual cookie exchange, and store, prepare and set up our outdoor manger scene. Lastly, they do everything involving the Children's Christmas Service. They write the scripts, build the props, pick the music, organize costumes, set up the reception following the service and wrap all the gifts for the children. We are blessed to have their family as part of our church family.

Gracias!

Thank you to all who donated poinsettias.

Galen and **Marsha Behr**, **Marilyn Beig**, **Ruth Benish**, **Josh** and **Sarah Callahan**, **Paul** and **Jill Clausen**, **Chuck** and **Dixie Gerhart**, **Dustin** and **Mary Hogue family**, **Becky Hurt**, **Ron** and **Annette Hurt**, **Paul** and **Betsy Kosch family**, **Tim** and **Melissa Lorang family**, **Liz Matson**, **Rev. Glenn** and **Sue Meyer**, **Victor** and **Jody Padron**, **Doug Pollock**, **Brian** and **Amie Rikke**, **Gloria Sorensen**, **Barb Stacy**, **Yo Tierney**, **Isabella** and **Grant Wegner, Bonnie White** and **Max** and **Linda Williams.**

Thank you to Mount Olive members for your generous contributions for hams for the Christmas meal bags distributed through the Food Pantry at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Commons downtown. Your willingness to reach out to provide food for hungry families was heartwarming and appreciated.
—Gloria Sorensen

Funeral Luncheons 2019

Our generous volunteers did five luncheons in 2019. You all are a vital part of Mount Olive's mission to serve. You are much appreciated by the families served at such a sad time. Thank You! Thank You!
God loves you and so do I for your willing help:
Judy Rath, **Barb Stacy**, **Linda Williams**, **Bonnie White**, **Tom Trusty**, **Rich** and **Debbie Wismont**, **Kathy Rawson**, **Jill Clausen**, **Gloria Sorensen**, **Rosemary Block**, **Anne Wegner**, **Jody Wells-Padron**, **Connie Townsend**, **Becky Hurt**, **Judith Weidner**, **Paul Whitmore**, **Annette Hurt**, **Mary Hogue** and **Ray Hogan**.
Thank you to all who pitch in to help Forgive me if I didn't get your names.

In Christ,
Marilyn Beig

Grazie !

Thank you to those who took time on a busy December afternoon to sing Christmas songs for the residents of the Florence Home. **Galen Behr**, **Melissa Lorang**, **Peggy Posey**, **Judy Rath**, **Gloria Sorensen**, **Mark Sorensen**, and **Kailyn Townsend**, your willingness to help meant a lot to me and I am sure even more to the residents of the home.
Thanks,
Jill Clausen

Thank you for all the cards, visits and goodies that you have provided to me throughout the month of December. I appreciate your thoughtfulness.
Rev. Roland A. Jank Sr.

Thanks!

THANK YOU

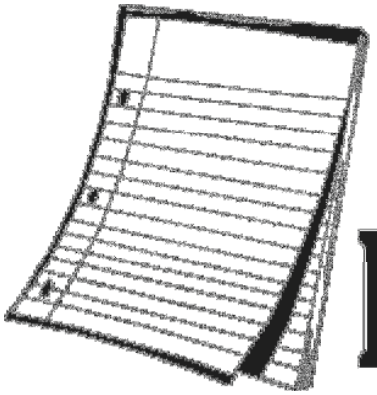
A most sincere thank-you is extended to all who have remembered us with your prayers, cards, gifts, and many other personal kindnesses during the Christmas season and throughout the past almost five months as I have been serving as your Intentional Interim Pastor.

Though my wife Sue is not often able to be with me, she loves the stories and experiences I am able to pass on and share with her. And yes, I share the edible gifts with her, (at least most of them). I am excited about the future that God has in mind for you. I see people, gifts, experiences and people of vision that God is bringing together in some remarkable ways that is truly unique to Mount Olive. I am excited about what God may indeed have in mind for Mount Olive as we move forward together in God's grace, with love and care for one another AND love and compassion for all around us in our communities. I already see much to interest and excite a pastor and his family to come and join you in the work and ministry that God has in mind for you going forward.

May God keep and guide us all in His love and grace as we, together, enter "another year of grace".

Pastor Glenn & Sue Meyer

Merci!



Take Note!

Men's Group-We continue to meet on Wednesdays at 6:00 P.M. Our current study is He Who Dies with the Most Toys, Still Dies. You are welcome to join us every week or as time permits. Contact **Tim Lorang** for more information.

River of Life-The new congregation formed by the merger of Atonement, Bethany and St. Paul Lutheran Churches has taken the name River of Life Lutheran Church. It is being served by Rev. Mark Rosenau and is located at 5151 Northwest Radial Hwy, Omaha, NE 68104 and can be reached at (402) 558-6212.

Confirmation Class-With confirmation classes being moved to Sundays we now have a need to provide a lunch for the 5 students and pastor after the education hour. We are looking for those willing to provide a meal. Please speak to **Kristi Townsend** for details.

Winter Weather-As winter weather is unpredictable, please keep in mind that church operations may be impacted. If conditions are difficult, call the church office before stopping by to make sure the office is open. Likewise, if it seems possible that worship may be cancelled due to weather conditions, check one of the following sources for notification-Mount Olive's Facebook page or Mount Olive Weather Notification Group on Facebook, our website www.mountoliveomaha.com, a special edition of our Mount Olive Weekly email (sent out by Max Williams) or local news stations. If **Pastor Meyer** can make it to church, we will have a service; remember that your safety is more important than your attendance. Please speak to **Mikale Townsend, Jr**. or one of the other lay ministers if you have questions.

Health/Medication Counseling-Contact Parish Nurse, **Amie Rikke** at 402-740-1987; or by e-mail at ajrikke@hotmail.com or **Victor Padron** at 402-707-8311 or 402-453-1045 or by e-mail at mairangi28@gmail.com to schedule a confidential appointment for health and medication counseling. It is available on the third Sunday of each month or by appointment.

Women's Bible Study-Meets the first and third Tuesdays of the month from 6:00-7:30. If you can't make it right at 6 or need to leave before 7:30 it is not a problem. We welcome you for however long you can stay. Our current study is "Really Bad Girls of the Bible". We are having a lot of fun with the stories we have been studying. Some of us have never read the Bible stories about these "Bad Girls". You are not required to read. You may chime in and take part as little or as much as you want. Contact **Dixie Gerhart** for more information.

Monthly Insert-Please take time to read the new monthly insert "Good News for Families".

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 2019 our missionaries abroad are:

Julie Lutz
PO Box 803
Mt. Hagen,
Western Highlands Province
Papua New Guinea
Julie.lutz@lcms.org

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

Lunch Club

The next *Very Merry Unbirthday* luncheon will be Wednesday, January 8. We are eating at Mangia Italiana, 6516 Irvington Rd. Let's meet in the church parking lot at 11:30 a.m. and car pool. Please rsvp to **Barb Stacy** at 402-453-7049 or **Bonnie White** at 402-676-7334.

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

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

Thank you also to **Brian Rikke** who collects the recyclable items at church and hauls them away.

Thank you to all who quietly help and serve "behind the scenes". Your contributions are noticed and appreciated.

We remember in Prayer-

...**Neve Anson, Marilyn Beig, Marge Eastman, Rod** & **Karen Lorang, Susan Lozier, Carol McGrath, Emily Standley, the family of Pearl Wiley**.

...all in our community whom we need to reach with Your light in times of darkness.

...all the Christians suffering persecution around the globe.

…our nation, so divided along political lines that we would remember our commonality as Your beloved Children.

...the person that God is preparing to be the next permanent pastor here at Mount Olive.

...our Mount Olive family as we move forward with God's plan for us in this time and place.

neighborhood notes

Looking for a "new you" in 2020?

When it comes to getting fit, there are some fun options and great resources available at the Florence Community Center (2920 Bondesson Street).

First, there are free activities for anyone 55 and up:

-**Walk** in the gym from 8 to noon, Monday-Friday.

-Use the **weight room** from 8 to noon, Monday-Friday, 10 to noon Saturday and 4-7:30 Wednesday night. (There are weight machines and free weights, benches, treadmills, stationary bikes and an elliptical machine.)

-**Play Pickleball**, a net-divided court game that combines features of tennis, ping-pong and badminton. It's available Monday-Friday at various times (call 402-444-5216).

Provider classes include:

-**Tai Chi**, a class that uses movement to improve balance. It takes place in the gym on Mon. & Wed. from 10:30-11:15 a.m. There's a suggested contribution of $.50 per class.

-**Step into Fitness**, a class that includes upper body strengthening, step aerobics and ab toning. It takes place T & Th from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and costs $32/8 week session.

-**Essentrics: Stretch & Tone Class**, a dynamic, full body workout suitable for all fitness levels, that simultaneously combines stretching and strengthening while engaging all 650 mus cles. This class will increase flexibility and mobility for a healthy, toned, and pain-free body. Meets Tuesdays from 9:30am-10:30am. Cost is $10 per class if paid at the time of class or $60 for all eight classes, if paid at the first class.

-**Essentrics: Gentle Stretch Class**, 30-min gentle workout that will help you regain mobility while slowly building strength and reawakening the power of your 650 muscles. It is de signed for people who are experiencing stiffness chronic aches and pains, or are begin ning to exercise after a long sedentary period. Meets Tuesdays from 10:45am-11:15am. $5.00 per class (Senior rate $4.00)

There are other classes available and activities for all age groups. Stop by the Florence Recreation center to find out more. Besides providing the opportunity to become more physically fit, the Florence Community Center gives us a chance to meet and get to know our neighbors.

Gloria Sorensen
Community Outreach Coordinator

In January, Mt Olive's Book Club is reading Christmas Stories: 7 Original Short Stories by Kevin Moore. This is the author's debut collection and celebrates the hope, magic and memories that are central to the true meaning of Christmas. "You'll meet a young boy who reevaluates his perceptions after he's forced to spend Christmas with his stern grandfather, an attorney who seemingly has everything but really has very little; a burned-out homecoming queen who grows weary of her own excuses for failure; and many other memorable characters. As Moore's protagonists face adversity and sadness, they learn important lessons, gain hope, and experience powerful transformations."
-- from Amazon's website

Come join us on January 14th at 7 PM at the home of Amie Rikke, Jenny Williams will provide dessert.

CHILI COOK-OFF

"Lasso" your recipes and start cookin'!

Calling all cooks to participate in an upcoming Chili Cook-Off and Potluck on Sunday, January 19th at 11:30 A.M.
Please register your chili by signing up at the back of the church or by speaking with **Jamie Jank**.

Bring your chili in a crockpot along with a ladle for serving. Please keep additional condiments to a minimum.

Chili not your specialty? Please bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share at the potluck instead.

Eleanor Misiolek-Nursery

Ben Lorang, **Sam Lorang**, **Evelyn Misiolek**, **Addison Wheeler** and **Emma Wheeler**-
Kindergarten-2nd Grade

Kamree Townsend-7th-9th Grade

These Sunday School students had perfect attendance in **December**.
Congratulations!!

Directory Changes

Remove:
Pearl Wiley – Death

Please email the church office at **mountolv@msn.com** or call **402-455-8700** with any directory changes.

Pew Cushions

If you can sew a straight line we need your help! Join us Saturday, January 11 at 9:00 A.M at church to make individual pew cushions that will be kept at the church for use by our elderly members. We are in need of a few portable sewing machines as well as fabric scissors and pins. We will also need people to cut and pin the fabric.
If you can help please contact **Janet Flemmer** at 402-658-6486.

Friday Night Flix is Back

Please join your fellow Mount Olive movie buffs on Friday night, January 10 7:00 p.m. (NEW TIME!!) We will be showing the Movie "To Kill a Mockingbird."

"To Kill a Mockingbird" is a 1962 American drama based on Harper Lee's 1960 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of the same name. Set in a small Alabama town in the 1930s, the story focuses on scrupulously honest, highly respected lawyer Atticus Finch, played by Gregory Peck. Finch puts his career on the line when he agrees to represent a black man accused of rape. The trial and the events surrounding it are seen through the eyes of Finch's six-year-old daughter Scout. This film runs 2 hours and 10 minutes.

Popcorn and Movie Candy will be provided. Contact **Dixie Gerhart** with questions.

January Baptisms

Robert Frazer - 1
Hope Lorang - 1
Victor Padron - 1
Ryan Flemmer - 4
Sara Kowalik - 5
Lillia Jank 7
Aaron Ridner - 7
Brittany Willmore - 7
Dalton Willmore - 7
Roger Perrigo - 8
Robbie Moffett, Jr. - 10
Alexia Moffett - 10
Jessica Moffett - 10
Gideon Rager - 10
Becky Day - 11
Mckoy Kosch - 11
Krystal Kinney - 12
Rachel Misiolek - 13
Isabelle Nordaker - 13
Barbara Stacy - 13
Randy Johnson - 15
Beverly Allen - 16
Christopher Jacobson 19
Cayden Corcoran 20
Sandra Kyle - 20
Everett Misiolek 20
Jill Clausen - 21
Lynne Ridner - 21
Amy Zook - 23
Cody Markham - 25
Grace Gozzola - 30
Stephanie Markham 31

January Birthdays

James Sorensen - 2
Frances Carlentine - 3
Sara Kowalik - 5
Gary Peterson - 5
Kelly Stewart - 5
Eli Hagen - 6
Destiny Prine - 8
Lincoln Anderson 12
Carol McGrath - 12
Elaine Witt - 12
Sandra Kyle - 14
Grace Gozzola - 15
Malina Crnkovich - 21
Deb Fly - 22
Chelsea Anderson - 23
Parker Corcoran - 24
Brian Rikke 24
Wesley Padron - 25
Marilyn Beig - 28
Krista Townsend - 28
Paul Whitmore - 31

January Anniversaries

Mike and Marcia Steckelberg 2

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Sunday	Worship	Communion	Adult Bible Class
December 1	101	73	37
December 8	94	65	28
December 15	82	66	27
December 22	111	86	34
December 29	75	58	23
Total	463	348	149
Average	93	70	25
Private Communion		5	

SERVING SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

Greeters	
5	Robbie and Tamra Moffett, Sr., Mary Hogue, Becky Hurt
12	Sharon McDonald
19	Dawn Payne, Judy Rath
26	Connie Townsend, Kristi Townsend
	Would you like to see your name here? Speak to **Mikale Townsend, Sr.**

Acolyte	-	Grant Wegner
Lector	-	Max Williams
Lay Minister	-	Galen Behr
Altar Guild	-	Barb Stacy
Cantor	-	Mark Flemmer

Ushers

January 5
Josh Callahan Dustin Hogue
Rome Motiejaitis

January 12
Paul Whitmore - C Doug Worrall

January 19
Ray Hogan - C Victor Padron
Douglas Pollock Rich Wismont

January 26
Mike Townsend, Sr. - C Alex Johnson
Jim Zulfer