

Volume LIV  
Number 8

August 2016



**Messenger**

**MOUNT OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

7301 North 28 Avenue Omaha, Nebraska, 68112 402-455-8700 [www.mountoliveomaha.com](http://www.mountoliveomaha.com)

**Mount Olive  
Lutheran Church**  
invites the neighborhood for

**National Night Out**  
**Tuesday, August 2 - 6:00 P.M.**  
*in the church parking lot*



**POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

We will host a cook-out for the neighborhood from 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
Meet your neighbors, local police, and firemen. Hot dogs, chips,  
drinks, and even shade, will be provided. There will be a bouncy  
house for the kids to enjoy. Neighbors are encouraged to bring a side  
dish or dessert.

**All Mount Olivers are invited to attend.**  
**Laura Hogan, Evangelism Outreach (402-453-9189).**

**Bring a canned good to donate to the Omaha Fire Department.**  
Come and meet the neighbors!

**Please join us!**

One of the highlights of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod convention in Milwaukee last month was hearing Ryan T. Anderson address the delegates. He is a respected and sought-after speaker regarding marriage, public policy and religious freedom in the U.S.

By a one-vote majority, the Supreme Court ruled last year that marriage is fundamentally defined by emotional love and not by male-female sexual complementarity, with the prospect of producing children. Our nation has now legally “unhitched” “sexual identity” and marriage from biology. This is contrary to God’s Word.

Jesus taught: “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate’” (Matt. 19:4-6). The Bible universally rejects any sexual activity outside the marriage of man and woman. The New Testament Greek word for such sex is *porneia* (e.g. Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 6:13,18; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; 1 Thess. 4:3). Homosexuality is likewise condemned (1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10 and Rom. 1:26ff.).

If the polls are right, there has also been an astonishingly swift change in public opinion. Most Americans now think that justice, equality, or at least good manners requires redesigning marriage to fit couples of the same sex. Or at least they’ve been intimidated into saying so. Somehow a truth acknowledged for millennia has been overruled by

five unelected judges. There are consequences that will extend far beyond those couples newly able to obtain marriage license.

There is no reason now that mere consenting adult love has to be permanent or limited to two persons, much less sexually exclusive. Further, if fewer people live out the norms of marriage, fewer people will reap the benefits of the institution of marriage—not only spouses, but also children. How can the law teach that fathers are essential, as an example, when it has officially made them optional?

As Anderson said, “The essence of marriage as a male-female union has become an unwelcome truth. Indeed, a serious attempt is well under way to define opposition to same-sex marriage as nothing more than irrational bigotry. If that attempt succeeds, it will pose the most serious threat to the rights of conscience and religious freedom in American history.”

Anderson went on to say that “Our best defense of marriage, and our best defense of religious liberty is living out the truth in our own lives.” The reason, he added “why we lost this marriage debate in the United States was because we failed to live out holy and beautiful marriages ourselves. And we have no one to blame for that but ourselves.”

We are called as God’s people to live out our callings according to God’s plan and will. We are increasingly out of step with our surrounding culture. Yet we need to remember--Christ is Lord of this world and one day that will be obvious to all.

—Rev. Roland A. Jank, Jr

On Sunday, July 3, we welcomed three new members to Mount Olive. First, we received by Holy Baptism **Romualdas Motiejaitis (Rome)**. His family is Lithuanian and comes from eastern Europe and internment in a concentration camp. They immigrated to Omaha. **Rome** is the sixth of eight children and grew up attending Omaha South High School. He spent four years in the Navy, came back to Omaha, and worked as a lithographer until 2000. Today he works construction and enjoys the feeling of accomplishment at the end of the day. **Rome** began attending worship on Easter Day of 2015 and has not looked back. He says that ever since things have been falling into place. The Spring Adult Information Class enabled him to learn more and more about Christ and His church and now he hopes to use his gift of hospitality as a Mount Olive usher.

Second, **Ashley Batten** joined the Lutheran Church after growing up a Presbyterian. She graduated from Omaha Marian High School and the University of North Carolina. After graduation she headed overseas to work in Prague, Slovakia in business. In 2013-2015 **Ashley** worked in construction market research in the country of Dubai. Last November she moved back to Omaha and became the general manager of the family business, Battan Trailer Leasing. **Ashley** enjoys gardening, cooking, traveling, and her dog "Chewy." She says that she feels she really belongs at Mount Olive and has learned the biblical basis for what

we do as Lutheran Christians. The Spring Adult Information Class allowed her to get back to the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

Welcome  
to Our Church

Third, **Andrew Larson** joined Mount Olive by reaffirmation of faith. He grew up in Omaha with his fraternal twin brother, Jordan. His family moved to Osage Beach, Missouri, where he was confirmed and graduated high school. He and his family, then returned to Omaha and recently he married **Kaylea Townsend** here at Mount Olive on June 11. They live in southwest Omaha and **Andrew** works on the custodial staff at Omaha Westside High School. His hobbies include working out, spending time with family and being outdoors.



**Ashley Batten, Rome Motiejaitis, Andrew Larson**

# Adult Information Class

Join our semi-annual membership class beginning September 11, 2016, from 3:30 - 5:30 P.M. for fifteen weeks.

This class is not only for those who are new to Mount Olive but also for those members who are looking for a refresher course. Perhaps you stopped worshipping for a while and are looking to get back on track. This class is for you. We also welcome those who are inquiring about the Christian faith for the first time. Come and invite a friend to join you.



- **Adam Behr** — Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, NE
- **Nicholas Fly** — Wayne State College, Wayne, NE
- **Aaron Ridner** — Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE
- **Kelsea Townsend** — Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, NE



- **Krista Townsend** — Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, NE
- **Dalton Willmore** — University of Nebraska Omaha, Omaha, NE

## OUR MISSIONARIES ABROAD

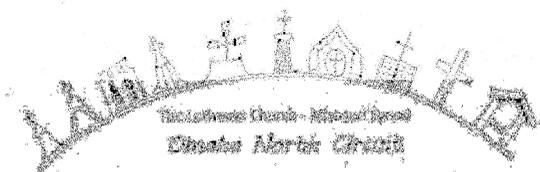
Mt. Olive is helping to support two missionaries and their families who live abroad. We remember them periodically in our public prayer. We ask that you continue to support them financially with your regular gifts. Information about their work is shared on the north hall bulletin board and in our Sunday worship. May it serve as an encouragement for your continued interest and support. For the year 2016 our missionaries abroad are:

---

**Julie Lutz**  
 Box 803  
 Mt. Hagen,  
 Western Highlands  
 Province  
 Papua New Guinea  
[lutz.travel@gmail.com](mailto:lutz.travel@gmail.com)

---

**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)



**Summit 2 - Save the Date**  
**Saturday, September 24, 2016**  
**9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**  
**at St. Paul Lutheran Church**  
**5020 Grand Avenue**

*1 Corinthians 12:12 "Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ."*

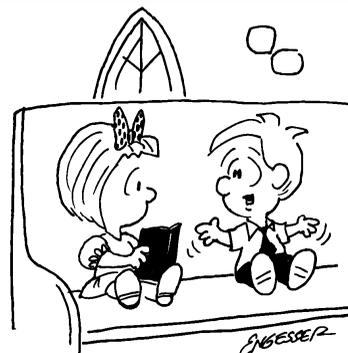
On Saturday, April 16, representatives from each of the 10 congregations of the Omaha North Circuit gathered at Bethany Lutheran Church to help establish relationships between the churches, to identify challenges to growth and outreach facing many churches, to learn about what each other were doing to address these challenges, to discuss how we can collaborate our efforts, and to organize a plan to make future steps.

On Saturday, September 24, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church, at 5020 Grand Avenue, this group is meeting again to further the discussions they started

back in the spring. Based on the information that was collected from the participants at the last summit, this time there will be breakout sessions to target specific topics such as: Elders, Education, Outreach/Evangelism, Sunday School/VBS, Youth, Communication, Fellowship, Resources/Finances, Trustees/Facility, Christian Day School and Witness/Mercy/Life Together. There will also be more time to discuss and solve Omaha North Circuit issues.

At the last summit, there were 10 members of Mount Olive who attended and found the session to be informative and helpful. If you would like to attend or would like more information about Summit 2, please contact **Mike Townsend, Jr.** or **Betsy Kosch**.

Parents of youth confirmation students are reminded that a new school year is fast approaching. The Youth Confirmation Class will meet on Wednesday evenings. An orientation meeting is scheduled for students and parents on Wednesday, August 31, at 7:00 P.M. First class session is Wednesday, September 7, at 6:00 P.M.



"If we're all dust, why take a bath before the service?"



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)

Save the Date

Martin Luther Birthday  
Party, Sunday, November  
13, 2016, 2:00 - 7:00 P.M.,  
German American Society,  
3717 S. 120 St. Put this on  
your calendar now.

Thank You

Thank you to **Lorraine Irwin, Sharon McDonald, Barb Stacy, and Bonnie White** for helping with the July Messenger.

POBLO

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

We continue to assemble a few bags of groceries for our POBLO work with families who are in need. Items that can be used are: sugar, salt, tea, rice, flour, cooking oil, dried beans, jam, sugar-free peanut-butter, cookies, juice. Please no canned vegetables or macaroni and cheese. A receptacle for such foodstuffs is in the north hallway.

Thank You

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

Thank you to **Ron Hurt** for painting the railings outside of church. He did a great job!

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

**-Kelly Wegner**  
Director, Board of Church  
Properties

**- Teresa Kuti**

## Annual BBQ

Ponca Hills Volunteer Fire Department at 12919 Ponca Road is having its annual Barbeque Festival on Sunday, August 14th, from noon until 6:00 p.m. This is a family event featuring pit-roasted barbeque beef, sweet corn, kids' games, and fire department water fights.

## Thank You

We would like to thank the board of PFPR and all of our Mount Olive friends and family for supporting and celebrating the Fourth of July at our house. We are so blessed to belong to such a wonderful and supportive congregation.

God Bless America!

Thank you from the  
**Kosch/Wegner Family**

## Bibliophiles Wanted

A bibliophile is a person who has a great love of books. If that describes you, you are not alone! Join the Mount Olive Book Club. We meet the second Tuesday of the month, September through May.

We take turns hosting the meetings and providing a dessert. We generally read books that are easily available, either from the Mount Olive Library or the Omaha Public Library so no purchase is necessary!

Our September meeting will be Tuesday the 13th at 7:00 at the home of **Bonnie White**. We will choose the books for the upcoming months, along with monthly hosts and dessert providers. We would love to have you join us.

For more information, contact **Jill Clausen**.



## In Ministry With God's People

We remember in prayer

...**Carol Childers, Arnie Jacobson, Rod and Karen Lorang, Mike McGrath, Dawn Payne, Don Weihe, Pearl Wiley, and Janet Zulfer.**

...the recruitment of Sunday School teachers for this fall's staff.

...our Mount Olive youth who go to college this fall.

...the seed of God's Word planted in our VBS children, that it would sprout, grow, and bear fruit.

...that God would bring new people into our Mount Olive family that we can help grow into Christ.

# Will He Not Give You All Things?

“**T**hanks be to God for His inexpressible gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15)! This is St. Paul’s exclamation upon hearing the Corinthian church’s response to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his request for support for the Church in Jerusalem. The Christians in Corinth heard and received God’s mercy in Christ, and they responded to St. Paul’s call to support Christians in Jerusalem with a collection. The Corinthians’ joy filled Jerusalem’s need.

This is the reality of stewardship. Because of God’s generosity in the giving of His Son to die on the cross for us, we are to be generous with all that we receive from Him. What do we receive? Everything. All that we are and all that we have is the Lord’s. He is the creator and the giver. We are His creatures and those who receive what He gives.

It sounds easy. And it is. But then again it isn’t. Stewardship is easy because it’s God’s work. Through what God gives, we give to others. Through what God gives, we support the work of the church for the life of the world. He gives; we receive. And like our generous Father in Heaven, we, as His children, use what He gives to us to love and serve others.

But stewardship is also difficult. That is because it goes against our natural inclination to think that what I have is mine to do what I

want with. This is our sinful nature. It is our selfishness and our greed. How can we who have been given everything—life, food, clothing, house, home, forgiveness, divine sonship, an eternal inheritance—be so stingy with what we give to the church, the place where we hear about and receive all that God gives us and does for us? We are all guilty of this kind of thinking. And the only godly response is to repent and trust in the Gospel.

For if God has given you His own Son, will He not give you all things? Yes. He will. This is His sure and certain promise. God provides for His people. He provides everything we need for this body and life and for the life that is to come.

The church is a mercy place. It’s a place where God’s mercy in the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, is given and received. For we who believe in Christ, it means forgiveness, life, and salvation in the face of sin, death, and the power of the devil. Here in the church we inhale God’s mercy in Word and Sacrament, and exhale this same mercy in love and service to our neighbor. And that is an enduring, joyful thing to do. Our joy fills our neighbor’s need because His joy filled ours (Hebrew 12:2). Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!

**- Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod**

# Being Prepared

When we think about being prepared for unexpected seasons of struggle, the story of Joseph and the famine in Egypt (Genesis 41) is a meaningful one to remember.

Joseph interprets two dreams for the Pharaoh in Egypt, predicting seven years of feast, followed by seven years of famine. Having been put in charge of the land of Egypt, Joseph stores up grain during the fruitful years, which he saved to use during the lean years.

Scripture says, “And since the famine had spread all over the land, Joseph opened all of the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. Moreover, all the world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine became severe throughout the world.”

A number of spiritual principles are demonstrated in Joseph’s story related to how we use what we have been blessed with:

- **Protect against setbacks.** How would your family be financially prepared if an unexpected “famine” happened in your lives? Whether it’s a sudden job loss, a diagnosis or an accident, your financial situation can quickly become a crisis. Following Joseph’s wise example of preparation can make financial decisions easier when unplanned expenses do arise.

• **Spend less than you make.** We’d always like to have and do more, but when in your life might you be most likely to overspend? How can you follow Joseph’s model to spend only on what you need?

- **Have a short- and long-term strategy.** It may have been tempting in the fruitful years for the people of Egypt to eat more than they needed; but Joseph helped by planning for the future. What wise choices can we make to bridge the gap between seasons of feast and famine?

The good news is that when something unanticipated happens, you can be prepared! You can develop an approach to spending—rooted in your Christian principles—that makes the most of where you are now.

This article provided compliments of Thrivent Financial and **Sarah Jank**, Financial Associate, 402.905.4229, [sarah.jank@thrivent.com](mailto:sarah.jank@thrivent.com).



Neither heat nor humidity would keep the intrepid farmers of this year's VBS from guiding their farm hands. "BARNYARD ROUNDUP: Jesus Gathers us Together" was our theme helping us spread the love of GOD. This year's VBS hosted a total of 41 children with an average of 39 students nightly.

The VBS mission project this year was "Tin Roofs for Africa." Monetary gifts were gathered to purchase needed items for roofing a church.

Many thanks to everyone who helped make this year's VBS a success. There were no small or unimportant jobs. It was a team effort. Thank you to **Ruth Benish, Lana Brennan, Taylor Curry, Becky Day, Dixie Gerhart, Laura Hogan, Aryanna Hogue,**

**Mary Hogue, Arnie Jacobson, Pastor Jank, Suzan Jank, Betsy Kosch, Paul Kosch, Teresa Kuti, Melissa Lorang, Kathy Mansfield, Rachel Misiolek, Robbie Moffett, Sr., Dana Nitz, Victor Padron, Griffin Peterson, Peggy Posey, Barb Stacy, Jessica Stacy, Amanda Steckelberg, Connie Townsend, Kailyn Townsend, Kelsea Townsend, Krista Townsend, Kristi Townsend, Mike Townsend, Sr., Tyler Weeks, Anne Wegner, Austin Wegner, Bella Wegner, Bonnie White, Debbie Wismont, and Jeri Ziegler.**

If I have forgotten anyone, my apologies. Thanks to all of you, especially the bakers who made Friday night's meet-and-greet such a success.

**-Jody Wells-Padron**