



**Mt. Olive**  
**Lutheran Church**  
Rooted in God's Grace

**2024-2025**  
**Faith Exploration Opportunities**

**at**  
**Mount Olive Evangelical**  
**Lutheran Church**

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## **EXPLORE MOUNT OLIVE**

During this session, we will discuss Mount Olive's various ministries and opportunities for spiritual growth. We will share with you our vision for being a discipling congregation. Together we will discuss how our community can best accompany you in your own faith journey, even during the midst of our pastoral interim.

Our next ***"Explore Mount Olive"*** is scheduled for Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, at 11:15 a.m. Following this session, on a Sunday during worship, you will be officially welcomed into our community of faith. Everyone who is interested in learning more about the faith community called Mount Olive should contact the church office or Pr. Steve. Watch for more details in early 2025.

## **GROWTH IN DISCIPLESHIP**

Mount Olive partners with parents to help them share their faith with their children. Mount Olive is committed to offering a variety of events and classes to encourage and empower parents in this holy and marvelous responsibility.

**Baptism:** Baptism is a most wonderful gift from God where God claims us as his own and promises that God will never let us go. Please contact the church office for more information or to schedule a baptism for you or your child. As a gift to families, Mount Olive includes a copy of the Spark Story Bible to the newly baptized. Reading the Bible together is a wonderful way to grow together in faith.

**Cradle Roll:** As a way to help parents share their faith with their children, families with newborns through age three are included in mailings with age-appropriate materials to help nurture faith at home.

**Entrance into Faith Explorers: Sunday School:** As your children grow, Mount Olive supports families by offering our Faith Explorers: Sunday School from September through May. If families choose to participate, Sunday School is offered for 3-year-olds through 5<sup>th</sup> grade as our SS faith exploration guides walk alongside parents in telling the story of God's love and grace. Children entering Sunday School are presented with either a Spark Story Bible or a Spark Book of Psalms as appropriate. In 2024, this faith exploration presentation is celebrated on **Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, at 9:45 a.m.**

**SALSA Bible:** Come and explore the wonders of God's Word as we "SALSA" through the bible! Third-grade families will get an official invitation, but all are welcome to join the SALSA exploration team. This adult and child experience is held in the Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, from 3:15 – 4:15 p.m.** Then, during the Sunday School opening on **October 27<sup>th</sup>, at 9:45 a.m.**, we will SALSA and celebrate with the families as they present their children with their very own grownup Bible.

**Faith Explorers: First Communion:** Children are offered the opportunity to explore the sacrament of Holy Communion during this mini-course. Together with their parents, grandparents, or another significant adult, the students learn why we have communion, and what God does for us through this wonderful gift. This course is pastor-led and culminates in the participants receiving their first communion during Holy Week on Maundy Thursday. Invitations to the class are sent to families with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. If you have an older child who has not participated in this class or a younger child who you feel is ready to receive communion instruction, please contact Pastor Steve or the MTO office regarding your family's participation in the session. This course will be offered on **Saturday, April 12, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.** First communion is on **Maundy Thursday, April 17, 2025.**

**Faith Explorers: 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Mini-retreat:** Students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade will have their own mini-retreat at Mount Olive on Saturday, **January 18, 2025, from 2-5 p.m.** The retreat's main purpose is to help the students understand how important they are in God's family and how they are called at baptism to be a disciple of Christ. The retreat will include a snack, faith exploration and FUN!

**Faith Explorers: Sunday School:** Sunday School is offered for three-year olds through 5<sup>th</sup> grade from 9:45-10:45 a.m. In 2023-24, Sunday School registration is available on **Fall Kick-Off Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup> or on any Sunday.** The first full day of Sunday School will be on **September 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:45 a.m.** as we continue our exploration of God's love for all humanity, as shown through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. from **September 15<sup>th</sup> through May 18, 2025,** with a few noted exceptions, we meet as Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the Sanctuary for our opening where we light the altar candles, sing, pray, celebrate birthdays, and hear a short message from Pastor Steve or Cindy Dobberke about the lesson for the day. Then we head off to learn, share, and grow in faith. Our lesson plan follows the big stories of the Bible, using resources from Spirit and Truth Publishing. All households and guests are invited to participate in the Sunday School Christmas program, held on **Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, during the 10 a.m. worship service.**

**Faith Exploration for adults** is discussed in other parts of this brochure.

**Unless otherwise noted, there will be no Sunday School on the following dates:** Blessing of the Animals worship service, **October 6<sup>th</sup>**; Christmas break, **December 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>**; and Easter Sunday, **April 20, 2025.** Registration forms can be found on line at <http://www.mountolive-elca.net/>.

**Faith Explorers: AoB:** Our Affirmation of Baptism is a three-year opportunity for 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, their families, and other interested participants to explore their faith using teaching, discussions, and experiences involving the Bible, Martin Luther's Small Catechism, and faith in daily life. The program typically begins when students are in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We meet on the second Tuesdays of each month from 6:30-8:00 p.m., September through April. Please contact Cindy Dobberke at [cindy.dobberke@mountolive-elca.net](mailto:cindy.dobberke@mountolive-elca.net) for further information.

Our first session is **Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30-8 p.m.** when all families are invited to join us for dinner.

We also offer cross-generational service and fellowship opportunities for all AoB participants. Watch for further info details on the website, weekly emails, bulletins, and in the newsletter.

**Faith Explorers: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade AoB Sessions:** As a continuation of their life-long faith and AoB journey, Mount Olive's students will further explore affirming their baptism during a mini-retreat on **Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, from 2 – 5 p.m.** The youth are invited to affirm their baptisms during the 10 a.m. worship service on Reformation **Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.**

**Faith Explorers: Vacation Bible Camp:** is held for three-year-olds through 5<sup>th</sup> grade during one week in the summer. We typically meet from 9 a.m. to 12 noon for songs, skits, crafts, and games, all while exploring faith and learning about God's amazing love as shown through the life of Jesus. Older youth and adults help make this a great time for sharing our discipleship stories and exploring faith together!

**Special Opportunities:** Special opportunities are offered periodically throughout the year for all generations. Be on the lookout for events which invite all to explore their faith while learning and growing as disciples of Christ.

## BIBLE/ADULT STUDIES

**Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study:** In an informal setting, adults explore various books of the Bible and how they address the religious, moral, ethical, and social issues faced by Lutheran Christians today. Discussion/class topics are publicized in the weekly church bulletins and monthly newsletters. Discussions begin on **Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, at 9 a.m.** in the Library.

For the 2024-2025 education season, the Adult Education group will continue the study of the book of Genesis started last year with its stories of sin and judgement, stories of the promise of salvation, stories of corruption, lust, and murder. We'll also be having a special Advent study and finish the year with a study of women in the Bible. Join us for the education and fellowship. Join us to just listen or to participate in the discussion. Join us for a few sessions or for many sessions. We're looking forward to welcoming you!

Everyone is welcome! No experience is necessary! These studies are conducted throughout the year on Sunday mornings. **Unless otherwise noted, there will be no Sunday Adult Education on the following dates:** Thanksgiving Break, **November 24<sup>th</sup>**; Christmas Break, **December 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>**; Palm Sunday, **April 13<sup>th</sup>**; Easter Sunday, **April 20, 2025**; and Mother's Day, **May 11, 2025**.

For more information, please contact Laura Conry, Dwight Cruikshank, Glenna & Bruce Gunderson, Betty Hinkelman, or Eva Schindhelm.

**Weekly Text Study:** On Wednesday mornings from 9:30-10:30 a.m., you are invited to join Pr. Steve and others share in facilitating, learning and discussing the Bible reading for the upcoming Sunday worship. Contact Pr. Steve for more information.

**Wednesday Night Bible Study:** The Wednesday Night Bible Study are on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., September thru May. They will resume on **September 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall.

This year's study will be led by Richard Grosenick, a gifted Bible study teacher whom some of you will remember from adult Sunday School class several years ago. (Dwight will still be there, but Richard is in charge). This year's study will be the New Testament books of Romans and 1<sup>st</sup> John.

All are welcome. It is not necessary to have any prior experience in Bible study. All that is needed is a desire to know more about the Bible, while having good fellowship and a little bit of fun. If interested, contact Dwight Cruikshank at [dcruikshank44@gmail.com](mailto:dcruikshank44@gmail.com).

**Gather Faith Exploration Group** meets at **9:30 a.m.** on the third Tuesday of each month in the MTO Fellowship Hall. Looking for an opportunity to explore and share your faith with others? Please join us for a low key, no experience needed discussion, once-a-month study and discussion group. The group uses Gather magazine from the Women of the ELCA and their bible study offerings as a resource. For more information, please contact Cindy Dobberke at [cindy.dobberke@mountolive-elca.net](mailto:cindy.dobberke@mountolive-elca.net).

This year's monthly topics are as follows:

**December 17, 2024: Advent devotional: "In God's garden: What fig trees teach us about Advent"**

**Winter/Spring 2025: "Winter/Spring 2025: "Faithfulness in these days" by Denise Rector**

- **January 21, 2025** -- [Ruth and Naomi](#)
- **February 18, 2025** -- [Psalm 22](#)
- **March 18, 2025** -- [Acts 10-11: Peter and Cornelius](#)
- **April 15, 2025** -- [Mark 5:21-43: Jairus and The Woman Who is Bleeding](#)