

THE OLIVE BRANCH

A Monthly Publication of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church

MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

715 2ND ST. NE

WATERTOWN, SD

June 2025

www.mtolivewatertownsd.org

VOLUME 46 NUMBER 6



"Lean Away!"



Jesus answered "I am the way and the truth, and the life. no one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6

Ben Patterson, in his book "Waiting," writes: In 1988, three friends and I climbed mount Lyell, the highest peak in Yosemite National Park. Our base camp was less than 2000 feet from the peak, but the climb to the top and back was to take the better part of a day, due in large part to the difficulty of the glacier we had to cross to get to the top. The morning of the climb we started out chattering and cracking jokes.

As the hours passed, the two more experienced mountaineers opened up a wide gap between me and my less experienced companion. Being competitive by nature, I began to look for shortcuts to beat them to the top. I thought I saw one to the right of an outcropping of rock so I went, deaf to the protest of my companion.

Perhaps it was the effect of the high altitude, but the significance of the two experienced climbers not choosing this path did not register in my consciousness. It should have, for thirty minutes later I was trapped in a cul-de-sac of rock atop the Lyell glacier, looking down several hundred feet of a sheer slope of ice, pitched at about a forty-five-degree angle I was only about ten feet from the safety of a rock, but one little slip and I wouldn't stop sliding until I landed in the valley floor some fifty miles away! It was nearly noon, and the warm sun had

the glacier glistening with slippery ice. I was stuck and I was scared.

It took an hour for my experienced climbing friends to find me. Standing on the rock I wanted to reach, one of them leaned out and used an ice ax to chip two little footsteps in the glacier. Then he gave me the following instructions: "Ben, you must step out from where you are and put your foot where the first foothold is. When your foot touches it, without a moment's hesitation swing your other foot across and land it on the next step. When you do that, reach out and I will take your hand and pull you to safety."



That sounded good to me. It was the next thing he said that made more frightened than ever. "But listen carefully: as you step across, do not lean into the mountain! If anything, lean out a bit. Otherwise, your fee may fly out from under you, and you will start sliding down."

When I am on the edge of a cliff my instincts are to lie down and hug the mountain, to become one with it, not lean away from it! But that is what my good friend was telling me to do. For a moment based solely on what I believe to be the good will and good

sense of my friend, I decided to say no to what I felt, to stifle my impulse, to cling to the security of the mount, to lean out, to step out and traverse the ice to safety. It took less than two seconds to find out if my faith was well founded.

My friends, God often calls us to do things that are outside our comfort zone, to step away from the mountain and to trust that our lives are in His hands. Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Elijah, David, and Daniel, Peter and Paul and so many others "Leand away" in faith. They trusted that God had a plan to bring them safely home. By grace through faith so can we. We can trust that Jesus our savior is the only way down the mountain, He is the only way home.

Pastor Bertell

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship
9:00 AM

Fellowship
10:00 AM

OR ONLINE

Mt. Olive Lutheran
Facebook Page

Or
Mt. Olive Website
mtolivewatertownsd.org





OFFICIAL ACTS

BAPTISM

MAY 11, 2025

EVELYN CAROL COLLINS

CONFIRMATION

MAY 4, 2025

ALAYNA ANN ARTHUR
LEVI ANDREW JONDAHL
MACKENZIE LYDIA KONRAD
LYDIA JEAN STEMWEDEL



Mercy Meals

Members of Mt. Olive will travel to Milbank to pack Mercy Meals on Wednesday, June 4. A car pool will leave from the church at 9:00. Men, women and teens are all welcome to help. The group may stop at The Watering Can in Revillo for lunch. Be watching for a sign-up sheet.



June LWML Information

The June meeting of Mt. Olive LWML will be held on Thursday, June 12, at 1:30 at the church. The topic will be taken from the spring *Quarterly* and will be given by Pastor Birtell. For roll call members are asked to bring items for Caring Club House. Especially needed at this time are food storage bags (pt, qt, gal), Saran Wrap, window cleaner, 409 or Mr. Clean and dishwasher pods. The hostess is Charlene Young-Cunningham. All ladies are welcome and invited to at-



MT. OLIVE BIRTHDAY PARTY



NEIGHBORHOOD LENDING LIBRARY

The Evangelism Committee is excited to introduce our new neighborhood lending library! This outreach project will feature a small outdoor structure filled with Christian books, especially for young families to take, read, and share. Jim Bassingthwaite is finished building the library, and it's up and ready to be used. To help stock it, we're asking for your support in collecting quality Christian books. A donation box will be available at the church for both books and monetary contributions. Thank you for being a continued blessing to our ministry and community!



Scan QR code
church website.



Station	City	Freq	Day
KMSD	Milbank	1510 AM	Sunday 7:00 AM

June 1 "God's Gumbo"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

The Church is like a pot of Louisiana gumbo, a diverse stew bound together by the power of Jesus' love. (John 17:20-21)

June 8 "Ticket Stubs Turned to Joy"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

The Holy Spirit calls us to turn from the darkness of a self-centered life and come into the light of Jesus' self-giving love. (John 16:20)

June 15 "Nothing He'd Rather Be Doing"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Jesus is a tireless Searcher with an affinity for finding lost people. (Psalm 8:4)

June 22 "Should I Be Worried About the Devil?"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Germán Novelli Oliveros

The devil is real, but rather than fretting about the evil he can do, we rejoice in all that Christ has done to defeat him. (Luke 8:26-39)

June 29 "Honest to God"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

The Book of Job can teach us something about prayer and about how we can talk honestly to God, covered by Jesus. (Job 1:21)



June Birthdays			
6/1	Johnathan Lau	6/21	Corey Stemwedel
6/2	Dorothy Bassingthwaite	6/22	Oakleigh Ochsendorf
	Neil Schamber	6/23	Donald Anderson
6/4	Joshua Fox		Jean Passow
	Linda Webb	6/24	Brittany Luoma
6/6	Katelyn O'Bryan		Mary Feller
	Charles Whiting		Christopher Helle
	Jacklynn Whiting	6/28	Sarah Lunzman
6/7	Mackenzie Konrad		Elijah Wold
	Marjorie Tesch	6/29	Lauren Meikle
6/8	Chris Pownell		Lindsey Meikle
6/10	Florence Johnson		McKenna Kreutner
	Kylee Sikkink		
6/11	Evelyn Harper		
6/12	Gail Wegner		
	Karen Hasek		
6/14	Kent Killion		
6/15	Delaney Schoenefeld		
6/17	Carol Collins		
6/18	Jason Bassingthwaite		
	Craig Brown		
6/19	Bobbi Drevecky		
	Meghan Rose		



June Anniversaries	
6/3/95	David & Paula Hulscher
6/5/99	Myra & Tyler Waxdahl
6/6/87	Todd & Denise Spies
6/17/78	Ed & Vicky Lauseng
6/6/20	Chris & Brooke Helle
6/11/83	Dean & Dorette Clark
6/19/76	Kathy & Karl Killion
6/20/70	Ken & Jean Passow
6/23/54	Alex & Arlene Jordon
6/28/86	Brad & Christie Birtell
6/29/85	Jeff & Carol Collins

HELP US GROW TOGETHER IN FAITH:



Mt. Olive offers a variety of opportunities for spiritual growth, but we understand that not every option fits everyone's schedule or interests. To better serve the needs of our faith community, we invite you to share your thoughts through a brief survey. **This survey allows you to indicate what days and times work best for you, whether you prefer in-person or online gatherings, how often you'd like to participate, and what types of activities interest you—such as Bible studies, book groups, prayer groups, or movie discussions.** You can complete the survey online using the link or **QR code** provided, or pick up a paper copy from the back table. So far, only three people have responded, and we're hoping to hear from many more of you! Your input will help us shape more meaningful and accessible opportunities for faith learning at Mt. Olive. **Survey Link:** <http://bit.ly/4IKcBp2>



Faith Community —Power Hour

Mt. Olive Evangelism members would like to invite all members to Saturday Coffee and Talk at Gather Coffee House on June 21, at 9:00 AM. This is an opportunity to come and go and visit with other members of Mt. Olive and bring friends in a cozy, comfortable atmosphere. This will be a time to socialize, but also a time to share wishes and dreams for our church. Come relax with us for an hour or two or more.



Thrivent Choice Dollars

A meeting was held on April 27, 2025 with 9 people present to allocate funds from the Thrivent Choice dollars. The projects selected were:

- *Orphan Grain Train \$250. This will help with the cost of shipping Mercy Meals we pack on June 4th.
- *The Mt. Olive VBS to help with the cost of T-shirts.
- *The Mt. Olive Quilters \$300 for expenses.
- *The Sound System \$1,250.
- *The Sanctuary lighting fund \$250 and if it is not all used the balance is directed to go to the Sound System.

You do not need to be a Thrivent member to suggest a need or vote on the suggestions. We still have funds available so if you hear of a need we can meet again. The Choice Dollars are directed to Mt. Olive by members who have Thrivent products. Thank you! Dorothy Bassingthwaite



ELDERS Contact Information

Pastor Brad Birtell - 402-276-1188
Dennis Anderson - 886-3178
Doug Jerke - 880-7007
Brent O'Bryan - (712) 261-0316
Chris Pownell - 354-0489
Stephen Heidenreich—
(970) 333-8155
Craig Brown (605) 880-1793



ELDERS OF THE MONTH JUNE

Stephen Heidenreich
&
Chris Pownell



Acolyte Calendar

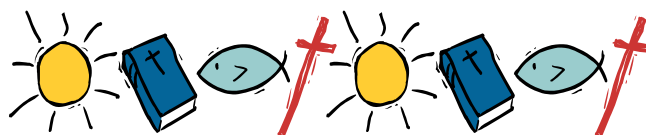


June

6/1 Trevan Schoenefeld
6/8 Ella Harding
6/15 Maddox Warne
6/22 Lydia Stemwedel
6/29 Levi Jondahl

July

7/6 Mackenzie Konrad
7/13 Leland Harding IV
7/20 Lydia Stemwedel
7/27 Nora Pownell



Congratulations Mt. Olive Graduates




Continued prayers for success to all of our graduates.






Camron Eng

**HIGH SCHOOL**
Castlewood High School

**Parents**
John and Tonya
Schmit & Pete Eng

**Interests & Activities**
Football,
track, and
Castlewood community
youth group.

**Future Plans**
Minnesota Air National
Guard





Gabe List

**HIGH SCHOOL**
Watertown High School

**Parents**
Missy Cook & Jay List

**Interests & Activities**
Cross Country, Track and
Field and hanging out with
friends.

**Future Plans**
attend Des Moines Area
Community College for
Communications





Hunter Nord



HIGH SCHOOL

Watertown High School



Parents

Jake and Samantha
Wold

Interests & Activities

Football



Future Plans

attend SDSU in the fall
for business



Ashlynn Patten



HIGH SCHOOL

Watertown High School



Parents

Dana Patten &
Megan Dornan

Interests & Activities

Ballet



Future Plans

Take a year off and work



Masyn Warne



HIGH SCHOOL

Watertown High School



Parents

Kyle & Nicole Warne

Interests & Activities

Football, basketball, golf,
track and field, and softball



Future Plans

attend SDSU for criminal
justice and criminology

