



# Olive Leaves

December 2018 – January 2019



Prayer Team Page 1	<b>Table of Contents</b>		Birthdays & Anniversaries Page 8
Board of Parish Fellowship Page 2	Board of Christian Education Page 4	High School Youth Page 6	Sunday School Classes for All Page 9
Board of Social Ministry Page 2	Board of Elders Page 5	December Worship Services Page 6	Announcements Page 9-10
From Our President Page 3	Special Dates Page 5	Board of Public Relations Page 7	Kids Korner Pages 10
Thoughts, Prayer, Calls, & Cards Page 3	Board of Stewardship Page 5	Stephen Ministry Page 7	Calendars Page 11
Board of Parrish Fellowship Page 4	Mt. Olive Lutheran Preschool Page 6	Board of Evangelism Page 8	Worship Schedules Insert

## BOARD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS: PRAYER TEAM

*Aresa Boykin, Chairperson*

The call committee was announced at the November Voter’s Assembly. Soon President Denninger will be sending out the list of possible pastors. After research, we have decided on a prayer app called *Echo*. You will be able to have the prayers coming directly to your phone, and you can set up notification times to pray. If you would like to be included in *Echo*, please email Natalie Smith, natalieosbornesmith@gmail.com, so she can add you to our group.

### For the month of December:

**Pray** for Southeastern District President John Denninger as he finalizes his study of our parish profile and pastoral profiles and then selects the candidates for our call list.



**Pray** for our Call Committee: Rich O’Dell, chairperson, Jim Crosland, Johnna Duncan, Katie Greer, Mike Knowles, Karen Meetze, Sandy Osborne, Charlie Sandt, and Peggy Weed. Pray that they will prayerfully discern God’s will as they develop a process for reviewing the candidates.

**Pray** for Pastor David Panning, our Circuit Visitor, as he guides us in the call process.

**Pray** that Pastor Williams and Pastor Voges will continue to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, and minister to our congregation and guests.

**Pray** that Lay Minister Bill Boykin, Elder Chairperson Charlie Sandt, and secretary Mary Keller will be filled with wisdom and discernment from the Holy Spirit as they keep up with the day-to-day challenges during our time of transition.



We challenge each board and group to pray these prayers at your meetings. We challenge every person who receives this newsletter to keep these prayers in a prominent place and pray them daily.



## KEEP SEEKING HIM



**FROM PASTOR WILLIAMS**

*Pastor Gary C. Williams*

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year in Christ our Savior. Pastor Voges and I pray that your family Christmas time is filled with peace and joy knowing that God loves us dearly.

I love the NIV translation of **I John 3:1** **“See what great love the Father has lavished upon us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”** When we consider the magnitude of our sinful nature and God’s amazing love in Christ, the word *lavish* just fits so well. It corresponds to Psalm 103, which reminds us that God crowns, us with love and compassion. We truly are children of the Almighty, Our Creator, Our Redeemer, Our Father, the Triune God who promises to never leave us nor forsake us. He is the one who has ‘crushed’ His own Son that we might be forgiven of all our sins.

When you consider the coming new year, I encourage you to let these truths come to your ears and mind on a daily basis. This love never gets old. It never wears out. This love never tires. It never loses its might and power because it’s foundation is the love of Christ Jesus. God bless you with continued strength and please know that we are here to help you in any way possible. Don’t hesitate to call or text me at (616) 819-9796, anytime day or night.



**BOARD OF SOCIAL MINISTRY**

*Charlene Meetze, Chairperson*

**“The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'” Matthew 25:40**

What a picture of Mt. Olive’s generosity! Over two hundred pairs of socks were provided to Christ Central Ministry – warm feet from our warm hearts. If that’s not enough, together we filled two boxes with items for the USO at our Fellowship Board’s beautiful Veteran’s Day meal. Over 8000 military personnel travel through our Airport per month and our simple items will send a big message of love. So onward we go!

**Within the Church:** Sharing God’s Love has asked that we adopt seniors in our community for our Christmas giving tree. As you might imagine, families are chosen for adoption before senior citizens. Based on this information, we have decided to adopt seniors. Take a tag from our giving tree to help those in need.



**Within our community:** Our ongoing help is needed to support the Snack Pack program for students in need in the Lexington-Richland Five School District. Sixty jars of peanut butter were collected so these children would have food during the Thanksgiving Holidays.

**Outreach beyond our community:** Christ Central Ministry needs our help. What can we do? We can serve coffee at a morning coffee cart. Once a month, we could spend a ½ day ladling soup for lunch. We could man a Resource and Solutions Desk. A simple smile and a willing hand could mean the world to a child caught up in helplessness, a mom who has to flee from danger, or a homeless person who is wandering in loneliness. We are a small church, yet we are powerful in our Love for the Lord! Pray about how you can become involved with this mission.

**FROM OUR PRESIDENT**  
*Jim Crosland, Congregational President*



Mt. Olive has been very busy over the last few months, and things are not slowing down!

A big thank you is in order to our church staff and volunteers! These individuals serve on our boards, spend countless hours behind the scenes, and their actions affect the daily operation of our church.

Thank you very much Dana Magic, Jason Dennis, and the Finance Committee for their hard work of preparing the 2019 budget. It was passed at the November Voter's Assembly after a brief discussion of the possible expenses we will incur during the call process.



I have asked Rich O'Dell to stay on as chairperson for the newly created Call Committee. We are awaiting the list of potential pastors from the district so the committee can begin its process of review and selection. The Call Committee will keep the congregation informed of its progress throughout the process.

As the Holiday Season approaches, I would feel terrible if I didn't include a few safety reminders. Here are some suggestions:

- Lock your vehicle doors!
- Do not leave packages, purses, wallets, or electronic devices in plain view even with the doors locked. Put them in the trunk or hide them out of sight.
- Try to park in a lighted area and always watch your surroundings for people that may be following you.
- Be very vigilant around ATM machines.
- Phone scams are at an all-time high right now. If you receive a suspicious phone call, do not give personal information out over the phone. Your banks, the IRS, and phone companies will not call you for this information. Simply, hang up or tell the person you will call them back with the information. And if you do call back, use a phone number that you have for the agency, not one you were given over the phone.



My intentions are not to scare anyone. Please watch out for people that want to do bad things to other people. I truly hope that everyone has a safe and pleasant holiday while approaching the celebration of the birth of our savior. If anyone has any questions or concerns about safety or other topics, please call me at (803) 422-8913.

+ + + + +

**THOUGHTS, PRAYERS, CALLS, & CARDS**

***"May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us."  
Psalm 67:1***



As the holidays begin, continue to remember our homebound. Make a special effort to pray for, send cards, phone, and visit them. Cards are so very meaningful because they can be saved and read over and over. You may include others who are on the weekly prayer page in the bulletin. Contact information is in the church directory.

Cleta Dunaway	Mary Green	Bonnie Jones	Mike McGriff	Gladys Meetze	Al Rush
Virginia Gable	Betty Hunter	Elsie Lorick	Anita Meetze	Grace Miller	Mary Schott



## BOARD OF PARISH FELLOWSHIP

*Kathie Voyles & Marlene Nes'Bit, Co-Chairpersons*

Thank you everyone who helped with the Veterans Day luncheon, including Caitlin Voyles for the "Thank-you Vets" poster, Natalie Crosland for helping with the table decorations, Tracy Gotz for the wonderful cake, Charlene Meetze for USO decorations and contribution coordination, and Richard and Barbara Chesley and Suzie Slaughter for help in the kitchen. We had a wonderful turn out with plenty of delicious foods. It was so meaningful to recognize our veterans and especially fun to see pictures from their military days

### Advent Services

If you are able to provide lunch for one of the noontime mid-week Advent services, please sign up on the poster in the Narthex. The dates are December 5th, 12th, and 19th. The Fellowship Board will help with preparation, serving, and clean up.



### Christmas Baskets for Homebound

The board is now collecting items for the Christmas baskets. We need non-perishable, individually wrapped items, some sugar free and some not. Suggested items are: instant oatmeal packets, hot chocolate packets, Little Debbie cakes, peanut butter crackers, fruit cups, mints, and candy (not chocolate). We are still waiting until closer to delivery time before we start collecting the perishable items.



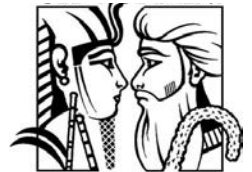
## BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

*Natalie Crosland, Acting Chairperson*

***"God called to him, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.'" Exodus 3:4***

Moses had all the potential in the world at forty, but felt like a lost cause at eighty. Instead of doing God's will God's way, he tried to expedite God's will and delayed it for four decades! The life of Moses proves that no matter how many wrong turns we've taken, it is God's grace that gets us back onto the parade route. Moses thought his past had disqualified him, but God leveraged it to prepare him for his date with destiny. No one knew the protocol of the palace like the Prince of Egypt. And after tending sheep for forty years he knew the ways of the wilderness. Moses got it wrong before he got it right, and you may, too. And here's the good news: God will use your past failures to fertilize your character and equip you with the strength and wisdom needed to do what He put you on this earth do to.

I receive a daily devotional from a friend at work and this one really hit home!! It reminds me that even though I have failed and I have not been the best person, God can and will use me. Please do not let your past hold you back but use it to glorify the Lord and do his will.



The youth are very excited for the 2019 National Youth Gathering!!! Please keep them in your prayers as they prepare for the NYG in Minneapolis!

The Women's Bible Study will continue to meet the third Tuesday of December and January.

If there is a class or a Bible study that you are interested in having, please let me know. The Board of Christian Education is always looking for new ideas.

## BOARD OF ELDERS

*Charlie Sandt, Chairperson*



It is hard to believe that we are near the end of another trip around the sun. So much has happened in the past year and we have so much to look forward to in the New Year. Remember to keep the call committee in your prayers as we move forward eagerly waiting for the next pastor that God is sending our way.

We are in the season for celebrations. There will be Christmas parties, family gatherings and church functions that we all look forward to. We always remember the reason for the season – our Lord and Savior’s birth. Jesus will be in our thoughts as we go about sharing His love with our families and friends. As for the new year, once we get all hyped up for Christmas and expend all of that energy praising our Lord, begin the new year with some new resolutions that help us get closer to Jesus. How about if we start another Bible reading project for 2019?



**Mt. Olive Lutheran: a church that is growing in faith and love by spreading the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

### SPECIAL DATES IN DECEMBER & JANUARY

December 2nd, 9th, & 16th – Sundays of Advent	December 31st – New Year’s Eve
December 13th – Preschool’s Christmas Program	January 1st – New Year’s Day
December 21st – First Day of Winter	January 6th – The Epiphany
December 24th – Christmas Eve	January 13th – The Baptism of Our Lord
December 25th – Christmas Day	January 21st – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



## BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

*John Meyerhoff, Chairperson*

What a wonderful time of year! Christmas and New Year’s are fantastic holidays because they give us the opportunity to get together with family and friends to eat too much, reminisce about the past, exchange gifts, give thanks for all that we have received, and make commitments to be better individuals in the coming year.

The holidays are also a wonderful time to put into practice some of the things we talked about during our recent Stewardship campaign. It is a time to **Serve**. Anything from a simple act like opening a door for someone or wishing a stranger Merry Christmas to more involved activities like working at a soup kitchen or volunteering to cook for a family in need. It is a time to **Give**. Put an extra dollar in the Salvation Army red kettle, buy a gift for a less fortunate child, or instead of buying expensive gifts, agree as a family to make a donation to a local charity. It is a time to **Give Thanks**. To give thanks to our friends and family for all that they have done for us, thank our Pastors and church staff for the great work they do every day to help us and most importantly, to give thanks to our heavenly Father for the gift of His Son and the forgiveness of our sins.

Remember those who are less fortunate



I wish you all a very blessed and Merry Christmas and healthy and Happy New Year!



**PRESCHOOL NEWS**

*Anna Brent, Preschool Director*

803-781-7180 – [preschool@mtolivesc.org](mailto:preschool@mtolivesc.org)

*Web: [mtolivesc.org/preschool](http://mtolivesc.org/preschool) – [Facebook.com/mountolivepreschool](https://www.facebook.com/mountolivepreschool)*

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the preschool! Our halls are busy with Christmas crafts, learning about the reason for the season, and practicing for our Christmas program. We are having our Christmas Program, **“Who is Coming to Our House?”** at 6:30 pm on Thursday, December 13th, followed by cookies and drinks. You are invited to come see our precious students proclaim the news of Christmas!

THANK YOU! Over \$1,000 was donated in support of the preschool to our **Tree of Thanksgiving**. We are so thankful for your generous hearts and faithful support of the preschool ministry. Because of this, and additional scholarship donations, we were able to fully fund both scholarships for two of our preschool students. We feel privileged to have the opportunity to serve our preschool children and their families and spread the good news of the Gospel.



As always, if you have any questions, please contact me!



**HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL & YOUTH**

*Seth & Johnna Duncan, Leaders*

The youth will continue to meet on Sundays in the Wagner House for Sunday school through the New Year. We have continued to have great attendance, keep it up y'all! We are planning some Christmas youth group fun so keep your eyes open for an email soon!

National Youth Gathering: The Envelope Fundraiser is up in the narthex and is already off to a great start! Thank you so much for supporting the youth who will be making the trip this coming summer to Minneapolis to learn and worship with over 20,000 other LCMS youth! Our students attending are Abby Kibler, Bailey Stuck, Jimmy Crosland and Noah Laney.



2019 LCMS Youth Gathering

<b>UPCOMING WORSHIP CALENDAR</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Service Times</b>
December 2nd, 9th, & 16th	Sundays in Advent	Sat. 5:30 PM Sun. 8 & 10:30 AM
December 5th, 12th, & 19th	Mid-Week Advent Worship	Wed. 12 Noon, followed by lunch
December 5th, 12th, & 19th	Midweek Advent Bible Study	Wed. 6:30 PM, bring sandwich
December 24th	Christmas Eve Service of the Word	Family Service 5:00 PM
December 24th	Christmas Eve Worship	Candlelight Worship 7:00 PM
December 25th	Christmas Day Worship	10:30 AM





**BOARD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS:  
MT. OLIVE'S FAVICON**

*Aresa Boykin, Chairperson*



Have you ever heard the term **favicon**? It is short for “favorite icon”. A favicon looks like an app on your phone or tablet screen, but it is a direct shortcut to a web page. This means that you can directly access a web page without typing its name or doing a Google search!

Up until a few months ago, I did not know that there was such a thing as a favicon, but now our Mt. Olive website has one thanks to our in-house web designer, Meghan Smith. Favicons are free and do not require ongoing updating like an app would.

To get the Mt. Olive favicon on your home screen, first, go to <https://mtolivesc.org> on your device’s browser. Then:

**For Android Devices:**

- Click on the 3 dots at the top right.
- Click “Add to Home screen.”
- Click “Add.”

**For Apple Devices:**

- Click on the share box/arrow at the right of the website name at the top of the screen.
- Click “Add to Home Screen.”
- Click “Add.”

It is that simple! I hope to see the Mt. Olive favicon on the home screen of your device!

+ + + + +



**STEPHEN MINISTRY:  
THE MINISTRY OF COMFORT**

*Bill Boykin, Stephen Leader*



As Christmas and New Year’s approach, many people are hurting due to the loss of a loved one, a medical diagnosis, divorce, job loss, of some other significant life challenge. These experiences can make an ordinarily joyous season difficult, lonely, and perhaps even painful. When you know someone is struggling during the holidays, here are some ways you can make a difference:

- **Offer to help in specific ways.** Try to anticipate needs and ways you can help. For example, you might ask, “Can I help you prepare Thanksgiving dinner?” or “Can I help put out the Christmas lights?” Remember, however, to follow the person’s lead and not just impose your help.
- **Help people pace themselves.** The holidays are busy, and those who are hurting may need help or permission to slow down or do less than they ordinarily would. Let people know it’s okay to conserve energy and pick which activities and traditions to take part in.
- **Ask people how they’re really doing.** During the busyness of the holidays, it can be easy to just interact with people on a surface level. Finding a good time to ask hurting people how they’re *really* doing—and then listening—is a powerful way to care.
- **Validate feelings.** When people do open up and share, listen and then show that you believe them and accept their feelings. Letting people know it’s okay to feel whatever they’re feeling can provide a lot of comfort.

By relating in these ways, you can help hurting people find comfort and hope in a difficult time.

(From Stephen Ministries Care Mail, Rev. Justin Schlueter)

**“STEPHEN MINISTRY IS CHRIST CARING FOR PEOPLE THROUGH PEOPLE.”**

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM: PRIESTLY SERVANTS**

*Richard Shealy, Chairperson*



**“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1Peter 4:10**

At our most recent Men’s Prayer Breakfast, we studied various passages in 1 Peter regarding our lives as part of the Royal Priesthood. The study reminded us that we are people chosen to be the stones used to build the church of God with Christ as the corner stone. Other readings in 1 Peter tell us that as we are the stones in God’s building, we are representatives of God’s presence in this world. As we enter into the holiday season and the beginning of a new year, let’s consider how others perceive our words and actions. Are we truly representative of God’s grace to all? We tend to be generous as various charities ask for help this time of year, but what about the rest of the year? Please consider an organization that could utilize your time as well as your financial help all year along.



**DECEMBER 2018 – JANUARY 2019 ANNIVERSARIES**

12/2 Charlie & Jamie Stuck	12/29 Richard & Barbara Chesley
12/4 Tim & Shanna Stuck	12/31 Johnny & Joe Ann Barrett
12/13 Eddie & Polly Roland	12/31 Orra & Tracy Gotz
12/17 Don & Gloria Meetze	1/14 James & Carolyn Kibler
12/19 Kevin & Mandy Kibler	1/17 Scott & Wendy Barrett
12/22 Natalie & Eric Smith	1/20 Eddie & Dana Magic
12/23 Matthew & Page Fletcher	1/23 Mike & Linda McGriff
12/28 Lu & Pat Donlon	1/24 Al & Myrna Rush
12/28 Harold & Sara Jones	

**DECEMBER 2018 – JANUARY 2019 BIRTHDAYS**

12/1 Connor Weed	12/22 Austin Perkins	1/12 Justin Pham
12/4 Greg Ervin	12/23 Keith Flenner	1/14 Hal Hoffman
12/5 Ron LaGrange	12/23 Charles Fletcher	1/16 Joshua Boatwright
12/7 Eva Folks	12/23 John Meyerhoff	1/16 Laura Shealy
12/7 David Gotz	12/23 Shari Selke	1/17 Stephanie Lewis
12/8 Jenn Weed	12/24 Rebecca Shirah	1/18 Johnna Duncan
12/10 Laura Laprise	12/26 Natalie Osborne Smith	1/19 Mitch Greer
12/11 Wanda Witt	12/28 David Fletcher	1/19 Shirley Vogel
12/12 Janet Jabs	12/30 Don Angen	1/21 Kim Perkins
12/12 Christopher Meetze	12/30 Sherry Ervin	1/21 August Medlin
12/12 Claudia Schneider	1/3 Page Fletcher	1/24 Elsie Lorick
12/15 Blake Cook	1/7 Mary Lou Tedder	1/25 Andrew Rosinski
12/15 Lu Donlon	1/8 Kerri Kogelmann	1/25 Richard Shealy
12/16 Liezl Baden	1/9 Shanna Stuck	1/26 Kim BouFawaz
12/16 Johnny O’Dell	1/9 Peggy Weed	1/26 Emma Dennis
12/18 Todd Barrett	1/10 Dianne BouFawaz	1/29 Krista Knowles
12/19 Alex Knowles	1/10 Mary Lawhorne	1/30 Tristan Selke
12/21 Eric Hennington	1/10 Christian Pham	1/31 Cindy Soto
12/22 James Kibler	1/11 Brecken Meyerhoff	



## JOIN US FOR A SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS!

December 2018 – January 2019 Sunday School & Bible Classes – 9:15 AM			
Infants – age 2	Nursery	Bailey Dort	Love and care during Sunday school and 10:30 Worship Service.
Circle of Friends	Downstairs Classroom	Faithful Group of Volunteers	Bringing Jesus to Special Needs Children
PK3 – 4th Grade	Upstairs Classrooms	Pat LaGrange, Laura Laprise, & Connie Cook	Growing In Christ Series from CPH
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade & Older and their parents	Wagner House	Bill Boykin	A multi-year study of Martin Luther’s Small Catechism for Confirmation
Middle Schoolers	Wagner House	Rick Baden	A variety of lessons from the Bible
High Schoolers	Wagner House	Seth & Johnna Duncan	“Sticky Faith” – Sticking to your faith & beliefs while living in the world
Adults	Fellowship Hall	Barry Bost	The Weekly Lectionary – See Worship/ Serving Schedule for weekly Scriptures.
Adults	Downstairs Classroom	Sandy Osborne	“Upon this Rock” - Bible study based on the 2018 LCMS Convention
Young Adults	Wagner House	Katie Greer & Meghan Gotz	“The Law & Gospel”
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

### February Newsletter Deadline – Sunday, January 20th

The deadline for submitting articles for the February 2019 issue of the Olive Leaves is **Sunday, January 20th**. Remember that you can email your articles early. Please email your announcements and articles to [aresaboykin@sc.rr.com](mailto:aresaboykin@sc.rr.com).

### Christmas Decorating

Plan to join in the festivities of decorating Mt. Olive on December 2nd. Folks can begin decorating the fellowship hall after Bible class. There will be a light lunch after the 10:30 service followed by decorating in the sanctuary and narthex. We always have a delightful afternoon!



### Advent Bible Study

Bring your own sandwich as we study the incarnation of Jesus on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM during Advent. Natalie Osborne Smith will be leading these sessions on December 5th, 12th, and 19th. Dessert and drinks will be provided.

### Men’s Prayer Breakfast



The next breakfast will be the third Saturday in December, which is the 15th. The January breakfast will be the 19th. Come and bring your sons and neighbors for a hearty breakfast, devotion, and prayer.

### Women’s Bible Study

The ladies of Mt. Olive will continue their monthly Bible study on the third Tuesdays, December 18th and January 15th. Please join us at 6:00 PM as we apply God’s Word to our own lives through *Mirror, Mirror* by Susan Senechal. If you need a book, contact Natalie Crosland.

### Sharing God’s Love Ongoing Donations

SGL tries to provide basic necessities for our neighbors in need. The most urgent need at this time of year is funding for the utilities assistance program. You may send checks or donate on line at <http://sharinggodsllove.net>. The following items are also needed: spaghetti sauce, spaghetti noodles, jelly, and winter clothing for children.

During the busy holiday season, please consider donating to Sharing God’s Love by linking your Kroger Shopping Card at [www.kroger.com/communityrewards](http://www.kroger.com/communityrewards), or by connecting your Amazon account at <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/57-0815818>. These businesses will donate a portion of your purchase dollars. Thank you for helping SGL help our community!

