



Olive Leaves



February 2020

From Pastor Walt Page 1	Table of Contents		
Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards Page 2	Board of Trustees Page 4	Mt Olive Lutheran Preschool Page 6	Sunday School Classes for All Page 9
From our President Page 3	Board of Public Relations Page 5	Stephen Ministry Page 7	Announcements Page 9
Children's Sunday School Page 3	Board of Evangelism Page 5	February Anniversaries and Birthdays Page 7	Kids Korner Page 10
Board of Fellowship Page 3	Pastoral Acts Page 5	Board of Social Ministry Page 8	Calendar
Board of Christian Education Page 4	Board of Stewardship Page 6	Read the Bible in 3 Years: February Verses - Page 8	Worship Schedule



From Pastor Walt

Pastor Walter Harper
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By now you've noticed that I strongly encourage every believer to be in the Word. That is, daily Bible reading is for every Christian, and not just for professional church workers. Martin Luther translated the Bible into German to make exactly that point: this text is not meant only for the priests, but also for the people.

To that end there's a plan for Daily Bible Reading listed in the bulletin every week here at Mt. Olive. Anyone following that plan will read the Bible through in three years. I designed the system myself on the view that one-year plans usually require a lot of reading, so that people quit doing them. Also, the Liturgical Calendar is already broken into a three-year scheme, which is then reflected in this plan.

But here's a related question: What translation do you read? Here's a question related to that related question: "Pastor, what is the best translation of the Bible?" Of course every pastor is thinking, "the one that you'll read." Apart from that little rejoinder, here are some more thoughts:

- 1) Try out several translations, and see which one you like the best.
- 2) There's no such thing as "best"; there are many fine translations available to the modern believer.
- 3) It's often good to read three translations regularly, and make some observations about the differences.

Every translation is doing a balancing act between accuracy and readability. Many people ask about "literalness." Of course anyone who has taken a foreign language knows that literalness is not always easy. Very often you have to use more than one word in English to translate a single Hebrew or Greek word. As one of my Seminary professors used to say, "You can translate anything from one language to another, but you might not be able to use the same number of words."

Most often I like to read from the NIV, the NKJV, and the ESV. The ESV is used here at Mt. Olive. It's an accurate translation, aiming to keep the English as "close to the original as it can."

The NKJV also aims at literalness. But it adds an extra feature: it tries to remind you of the old KJV. For some this makes the translation "familiar." For others, it makes it seem "dated."

The NIV tries to walk a line of accuracy and readability that makes it for many people quite accessible. For some others it's too simple, and a little too willing to stray away from "word-for-word."

Now and again I read from The Living Bible, of 1971. This Bible was rendered by Kenneth Taylor, a gifted theologian and translator. With this caveat: he aimed for a lower reading level, so many find it to be "too free" in its translation method.

- I wouldn't use the LB to conduct Greek and Hebrew word studies.
- I wouldn't use it to encounter "heavy theological jargon."
- I wouldn't use it to settle hair-splitting theological arguments.

But here's a fun little passage in the Living Bible: First Kings 4:1-6. This passage is about the setting up of the reign of King Solomon. These particular verses list the top officers of this administration; what we would call the Cabinet. So here it goes: "*Azariah was the High Priest; Elihoreph and Abijah were secretaries; Jehoshaphat was the official historian and in charge of the archives; Benaiah was commander-in-chief of the army; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; Azariah (son of Nathan) was secretary of state; Zabud was the king's personal priest and special friend; Ahishar was manager of palace affairs; Adoniram was superintendent of public works.*"

I love that translation of this text because of the clarity of it. Other Bible translations are a little more formal in their language; which is technically "more accurate," but might leave us wondering what some of these men did for a living.

Of course no passage of the Old Testament ever describes a man as being the "secretary of state" or the "superintendent of public works." At the same time, you can read the Living Bible in this passage and actually know what roles these servants had.

I only point this out because many people sneer at the Living Bible. As I've said, it's not a place for researching carefully argued theological matters. But even the "lowly" Living Bible often commends itself to the believer. It's approachable, clear, and faithfully rendered by a Christian Bible translator. From time to time add it to your list of translations to consult.

But whatever your approach to the translations, remain always and ever "in the Word."



Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

Ephesians 1:3

Please remember our homebound during the season of valentines and love. 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. Don't forget about family members and care givers, too. Contact information is in the church directory.

Phil Carter	Betty Hunter	Anita Meetze	Dorothy Prater
Cleta Dunaway	Bonnie Jones	Gladys Meetze	Mary Schott
Virginia Gable	Mike McGriff	Laura Meetze	Shirlean Sons

From our President

Jim Crosland, Congregational President

Welcoming in a new year can be very exciting and sometimes overwhelming. We have so much going on right now at Mt. Olive and I'm really looking forward to another great year. Pastor Walt and Renee seem to be settling in well and I really love his history lessons with his sense of humor. So nice to have a Pastor that calls Mt. Olive home.

Jason Dennis will be forming the nominating committee soon for vacancies on the boards. Please contact him if you would like to volunteer for a worthy cause in helping Mt. Olive keep moving forward. It really is rewarding.



In the last letter, I mentioned about scams that have been increasing over the holiday period. Well, it also is very prevalent over the tax season. I know everyone, including myself, is getting all their tax documents ready for the enormous refunds that await us. All kidding aside, the IRS will not generally call you requesting information over the phone. Please do not give anyone any personal information. Simply, ask them for their contact information so that you can verify it later. After, immediately notify a family member or call your local law enforcement agency to see if anyone else has been reporting any scams. I am also available and willing to help of course. If it's a scam, they will usually hang up or try to threaten you with incarceration. In my law enforcement experience and from my colleagues, we would never tell anyone over the phone that we are coming to arrest them. Stay informed and report anything suspicious. God Bless

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Children's Sunday School

Jessica Dennis, Sunday School

What a blessing it is to see little ones at the front of service for Children's Sermon! When the Sunday School teachers and I told the children several weeks ago, that Pastor Walt planned to call them up (to prepare them), one child responded, "Wait, do you mean he's going to explain things so we understand it?!" We all had a fun laugh. It truly is a blessing to see the children of Mt. Olive happy to join our newly installed Pastor, by the Pulpit for a children's message, for younger ears. They are so eager to really understand the message. They are currently working to memorize Matthew 19:14, **Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.**

Ms. Karen will be joining the children during Sunday School opening at 9:15 starting again in February to begin learning a new song to sing for the church for Easter. We hope to see all the little ones there!

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Board of Parish Fellowship

Marlene Nes'bit & Kathie Voyles, Co-Chairpersons



Thank you so much to everyone who helped with the Sharing God's Love appreciation luncheon held in January. Plan to attend the New Members' Reception on February 23rd after the 8 AM worship service.

There will be several opportunities for fellowship meals in March with the Wednesday Lenten Lunches and a 5th Sunday potluck on March 29th.

Board of Christian Education

Natalie Crosland, Chairperson

God is always present and at work. Nothing is too hard for you. Jeremiah 32:17

God can solve any problem because He is not bound by human limitations: **He is not limited by time.** God can do in an instant what would normally take years. "He sends His command to the earth; His Word runs swiftly" (Ps 147:15 NIV). How does God deal with Satan's power? By increasing yours! "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Satan took Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple, but he couldn't push Him over the edge—and with God's word he can't push us over the edge either. **He is not limited by anything but doubt.** He made an axe-head float, a donkey talk, and a corpse come back to life after four days, so you don't have a problem He can't solve. So rise up and declare, "Nothing is too hard for You."

Happy New Year Mt. Olive. Beginning in January, Pr. Walt started teaching an adult Bible study on Wednesday afternoons and evenings so that folks can choose which time suits them best. Plus Pr. Walt is teaching new members classes beginning January 12th through February 16th. New Members Sunday will be February 23rd.

It is already VBS planning time! Save the dates! We have scheduled it for Monday-Friday, June 22nd-26th. We are in the beginning phase and have yet to come up with a theme. If you are interested in planning, or have any ideas, please see any of the Board of Christian Education members.

The Board of Education is very excited for 2020. The children's classrooms have been freshened and are so much more fun for the kids as well as adults. Karen is working with our children to teach them new songs and we look forward to hearing their voices lifted in praise. We have begun to have a children's devotional during church services and invite all children to participate.

It is time – VBS!!!! Our theme this year is *Concrete and Cranes – Building on the Love of Jesus*. VBS will begin on Monday June 22 and end on Friday June 26, 2020. If you are interested in helping, please see any of the BOE members. Please stay tuned for a VBS planning date and remember there is no problem God can't solve.

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Board of Trustees:

Charlie Stuck, Chairperson

We hope you have noticed the improved lighting in the Narthex. A big thank you to Chris Slaughter and Charlie Stuck for donating the light fixtures and light bulbs. We now have LED lighting in the Narthex which will save us money in the long run. Thank you to Mike Prater for installing the fixtures.

We also have new lighting installed in the stained glass rose up in the choir loft. The LED backlight (36"X36") was donated by Todd and Shari Selke in memory of Neil. Todd also helped the trustee team install the backlight. Thank you to Todd and Shari for your thoughtful gift. We will have a forever memory of Neil in our church.

Board of Public Relations:

Aresa Boykin, Chairperson



Beware of Scams & ID Theft!

It seems like every day we hear of a new scam or data breach that can impact the lives of many people. During the past year, there have been at least four instances where members of Mt. Olive have been affected by these dishonest scammers who are trying to make a living off of honest, hard working folks.

After a discussion at Church Council, The Board of Public Relations began looking into ways to better educate our members in hopes that no one else would be hurt. The first step was to place a document in the Christmas homebound baskets entitled, *Common Scams that Target the Elderly*. In addition, free materials on identity theft were also ordered.

In February, there will be a display in the narthex or outside the office where anyone can pick up copies of these useful documents. Please get some items for yourselves and for your extended family members and neighbors.

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Board of Evangelism: Sharing with Everyone

Richard Shealy, Chairperson

Sharing Jesus

1 Peter 3:15ESV *...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect...*

Recently I found an article titled "Simply Sharing Jesus" in my e-mail. It is a ten-page pamphlet from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. As you might guess, it contains a plan for sharing one's faith. Most of the material is what we have covered in our Sunday School Classes and other study groups. But there is a section that needs to be repeated so that we don't lose focus on our mission. That section is entitled "**Laying the groundwork**" and includes three points on how to stay focused. **First:** "Know your role." Our job isn't to save everyone. We can only point them to the Truth and let God handle the rest. **Second:** "Know your opportunity." Make the most of your circumstances and reflect His love to those around you; some people call it "Bloom where you are planted." **Third:** "Know your audience." Remember who you are talking to. Use language they understand. Avoid clichés and keep it simple. **Final note:** Be patient and look for clues that they understand. Feel free to ask if they understand what you are saying and if they would like to be prayed for at that time.

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Pastoral Acts

	<p>Funeral Service Lois Lucille Meyer June 16, 1925 – December 5, 2019 Service – December 9, 2019</p>	
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	<p>Holy Baptism Bruce Sullivan Greer December 15, 2019</p>	
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Board of Stewardship:

John Meyerhoff, Chairperson



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I hope you are all doing well and are enjoying the mild winter we are experiencing so far.

During the holidays, a church member told me he/she wished the Stewardship messages would be more Gospel based. The communication should be more about forgiveness and less about doing. I have thought a lot about this comment. It is most definitely true that we are saved by Grace alone and nothing we do ourselves can lead to redemption. However, it is also true that as Christians, God expects us to always strive to be the best we can be.

Both in the Old and New Testaments, the Bible tells us we are sanctified through the death of Jesus Christ and the continual work of the Holy Spirit. (**Sanctification means** "to be set apart." ... But, while **justification** is God's act of forgiving your sins and counting you righteous through faith in Jesus Christ, **sanctification** is the continual work of the Holy Spirit in the believer in order for you to conform to the image of Christ, who is God's Son.) In Leviticus 20:7 we are told "Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy; for I am the Lord your God. Keep my statutes, and do them; I am the Lord who sanctifies you." In Romans 6:1-2 we read "What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"

Can good works save us? Absolutely not! But as sanctified Christians, we should strive daily to be more Christ-like. This includes being good stewards by giving our first fruits back to God and tithing; by loving our neighbors and sharing the Word with non-believers; by sharing our possessions with the less fortunate; and by working to fully utilize all of the gifts and talents God has bestowed on us. May we, as loving Christians, be faithful stewards and do good works not because we believe it will help us to achieve salvation, but because we are sanctified believers who strive to be more like our Savior Jesus Christ.

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Preschool News

Anna Brent, Preschool Director

803-781-7180 – preschool@mtolivesc.org

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



The 28 students and their families who are being served this school year in the preschool are flourishing! Our amazing staff creates a warm and loving environment in which they provide high quality learning experiences. The students learn about God's love for them and His desire for them to be their best while they learn about and explore His world.

Do you know any families with young children who would benefit from our school? Encourage them to call, email, check out the website or Facebook page, or come visit! **Registration for congregation members and current students begins on February 1st** and for new students and families on February 15th. Registration materials are available on the bulletin board near the Fellowship Hall, on our website, and downstairs on the table near the preschool entrance.

Stephen Ministry

Bill Boykin, Stephen Leader



The joy of Valentine's Day can turn into a time of painful loneliness and emptiness for those who have suffered a loss or who are going through a difficult time.

In addition to the colder weather and fewer hours of sunlight, many people experience winters in their personal lives. A recent loss through death, divorce, or relocation may leave them feeling lonely. A hospitalization, a cancer diagnosis, or ongoing medical problems may leave one feeling isolated. The loss of a job, the fear of layoffs, or a financial setback can devastate one's self-esteem. Family and personal struggles may leave one with nowhere to turn for support.

If you are going through a difficult time, our Stephen Ministers can bring God's warm love back into your life. They provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care. They will meet with you privately on a weekly basis to listen, to support and encourage you, to pray with and for you, and to walk with you for the duration of your crisis.

Those who have the gift of hospitality, consider signing-up to bring snacks for one of our training meetings. Since sessions are on Mondays, you can drop them off in the kitchen when you come to church. Mark them for "Stephen Ministry." The sign-up sheet is under the Stephen Ministry bulletin board, by the fire extinguisher in the hall, across from the office.

If you or someone you know is hurting, find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders: Bill or Aresa Boykin, Charlie Sandt, or Dianne BouFawaz. Remember that everything you talk about with a Stephen Minister is confidential.

"STEPHEN MINISTRY IS CHRIST CARING FOR PEOPLE THROUGH PEOPLE."

February 2020 Anniversaries

2/7	Philip & Beth Clauss	2/25	Jens & Liz Rosinski
2/10	Todd & Elizabeth Barrett	2/26	Henry & Linda Schmidt
2/14	Dennis & Tina Dixon		

February 2020 Birthdays

2/1	Dot Monts	2/12	Noah Laney	2/19	Carole Mueller
2/2	Chuck Bauer	2/12	Herb Loeb	2/19	Susan Strouse
2/2	C.R. Miller	2/13	Kathie Bost	2/20	Kathy Eargle
2/3	Susie Hoffman	2/14	Trent Boykin	2/21	Chris McKinney
2/7	Sally Kinard	2.14	Paula Helming	2/22	David Buck
2/7	Hunter Kogelmann	2/15	Hannah Hennighan	2/23	Teresa Hoefer
2/8	Beth Lipkin	2/16	Scott Birkelien	2/25	Kelsey Whitaker
2/10	Phil Carter	2/16	James Crosland	2/26	Henry Schmidt
2/11	Jeff Bedenbaugh	2/17	Rachel Lewis	2/26	Dan Stocker
2/11	Seth Duncan	2/18	Natalie Crosland	2/27	Hunter Robinson
2/11	Bailey Stuck	2/19	William Baden	2/27	Suzi Slaughter
2/11	Carly Stuck			2/29	Mike McGriff

Board of Social Ministry

Charlene Meetze, Chairperson

John 15:12: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

A simple command and one that brings peace, comfort and joy: Your Social Board is trying to apply this command to all of the projects we undertake. What a telling experience we witness as we see our Mt. Olive Family following right along with the projects we undertake to meet the needs of others.

Christmas: The SUV used for the delivery of goods to Sharing God’s Love, with all of the seats folded down, was loaded to the roof for three trips and could barely hold all of the Advent contributions and Christmas Gifts from Mt. Olive! The volunteers who helped unload our contributions kept asking "Where is all this coming from?" It was such a joy to exclaim, "Mt. Olive Lutheran!" They were impressed to say the least.

Our semi-annual **Blood Drive** was at Mt. Olive January 20, 2020 where we collected 23 units of blood. Thank you to those who donated the gift of life!

The church will come together on February 7, 2020 to celebrate the love for our families and friends at the **"Mt. Olive’s Valentine Soiree"**. **(Deadline to register is February 2nd)**. The Fellowship Hall will be adorned, equipped and ready for a fun night. Hopefully not one member will miss this fun evening either by attending or making a contribution. Proceeds of this event will go to our Preschool and will be used to enhance the already blessed Christian education available to our young children. What an awesome ministry we have right here at our church!

The Souper Bowl of Caring collection will be held on Souper Bowl weekend, February 1st-2nd.

UPCOMING! Road Trip? Stay tuned!

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Read the Bible in 3 Years: February 2020

Feb 1	I Samuel 4	Feb 8	I Samuel 11	Feb 15	I Samuel 18	Feb 22	I Samuel 25
Feb 2	I Samuel 5	Feb 9	I Samuel 12	Feb 16	I Samuel 19	Feb 23	I Samuel 26
Feb 3	I Samuel 6	Feb 10	I Samuel 13	Feb 17	I Samuel 20	Feb 24	I Samuel 27
Feb 4	I Samuel 7	Feb 11	I Samuel 14	Feb 18	I Samuel 21	Feb 25	I Samuel 28
Feb 5	I Samuel 8	Feb 12	I Samuel 15	Feb 19	I Samuel 22	Feb 26	I Samuel 29
Feb 6	I Samuel 9	Feb 13	I Samuel 16	Feb 20	I Samuel 23	Feb 27	I Samuel 30
Feb 7	I Samuel 10	Feb 14	I Samuel 17	Feb 21	I Samuel 24	Feb 28	I Samuel 31
						Feb 29	Pick a favorite!

Join us for a Sunday Morning Bible Class!

February 2020 Sunday School & Bible Classes – 9:15 AM			
Infants – age 2	Nursery	Parents may stay with their infants & toddlers in the nursery, as we are in between caregivers. Please listen to the worship service through the speaker.	
Circle of Friends	Downstairs Classroom	Katie Tyczynski & Faithful Group of Volunteers	Bringing Jesus to Special Needs Children
PK3 – 4th Grade	Upstairs Classrooms	Pat LaGrange, Laura Laprise, Kaley Laprise, Jessica Dennis	Epiphany and Jesus’s early years.
5 th Grade & Older and their parents	Wagner House	Lay Minister Bill Boykin	A multi-year study of The Bible & Martin Luther’s Small Catechism for Confirmation
Middle School	Wagner House	Rick Baden	A variety of lessons from the Bible
High School	Wagner House	Will & Katrina Folks	A variety of lessons from the Bible
Adults	Downstairs Classroom	Sandy Osborne	The Book of Jude
Adults	Choir Room	Eddie Magic	<i>Lutheranism 101</i> – The basic tenets of being Lutheran; will resume February 23
New Member Classes – 6 Weeks	Fellowship Hall	Pr. Walt Harper Through February 16th	A study of the basics of Christianity & Lutheran tenets. New members will be welcomed into the church on February 23rd.
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

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Announcements & Opportunities

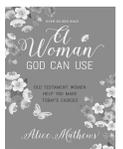
March Newsletter Deadline – Thursday, February 20th



Your next deadline for submitting articles for the March 2020 issue of the Olive Leaves is **Thursday, February 20th**. And make a special note: Sue Strouse will be taking over the newsletter in 2020, so email your information to slstrouse@gmail.com.

Ladies’ Bible Study

The ladies’ monthly Bible Study will be on **Tuesday, February 18th at 6:30 PM**. All ladies, including teens, are welcome to attend. The February study will be on Deborah, “How to Lead When Called by God to Do So.” You can find Deborah’s account in the book of Judges, chapters 4-5. Come join in the study and Christian fellowship.



Men’s Prayer Breakfast

The next Men’s prayer breakfast will be **Saturday, February 15th**. Come and bring your sons and neighbors for a hearty breakfast, devotion from Pr. Walt, and prayer.

Sharing God’s Love: Ongoing Donations

Ongoing needs include cold weather items: All sizes of comforters & blankets, king & queen sheets, tea, coffee, soup, chili, grits, oatmeal, shoes, boots, slippers, all sizes of children’s winter clothing, and always, JELLY! Please bring your items to the grocery cart at church or drop them off at SGL Monday-Saturday, 9 AM – 12 Noon. Thank you for helping!

Social Ministry: Save the Dates in February

February 1st-2nd – The Souper Bowl of Caring – Save up your \$\$ to donate to Sharing God’s Love on Super Bowl weekend!

February 7th, 5:45 PM – Love One Another –Prepare for an evening of yummy food, good fun, and some interesting entertainment! Please turn in your reservations by February 2nd.

Circle of Friends

Katie Tyczynski, a certified special education teacher, is leading our Circle of Friends class. Our faithful volunteers continue to assist. If you know of families who have special needs children, please invite them to Mt. Olive. The Circle of Friends meets during Sunday School and the 10:30 AM worship service.



Nursery Reminder

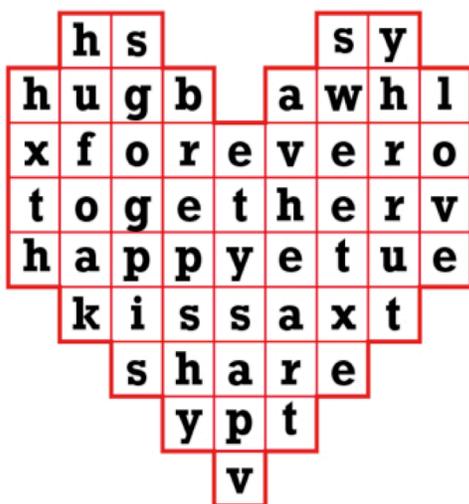
 Mt. Olive has a nursery that is located downstairs, just behind the sanctuary. Parents are welcome to stay with their children during any worship service. There is a speaker so you will be able to hear the worship service. If you know of anyone who loves small children and is interested in a part-time job on Sunday mornings from 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM, please contact the church.

Secure E Giving

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church and Preschool both offer secure electronic giving alternatives. You may set up your accounts from the website links on the home page or scan the QR codes in the Olive Seeds bulletin insert. Both recurring and one-time gift options are available via credit cards or bank draft. If you need help setting up your account or making changes to your existing account, please contact Aresa Boykin, who will be glad to help. Your information will be kept confidential.

KID’S KORNER

Word Search



**Love
Heart
Happy
Kiss
Forever
Share
Hug
Together
Sweet**