



Olive Leaves

August 2020



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From Pastor Walt: Life Before Becoming a Pastor

Pastor Walter Harper

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Pastor's New Cell Number: (803) 229-2154

This year is the 20th anniversary of my ordination into the ministry. It is amazing how "time flies," but you probably already know that.

The other thought that I always have when I think about becoming a pastor is that I am a second-career pastor. That means that I worked in the "real world" for 11 years before going to the Seminary. (Related question: Does it count as "real world" to have worked in the U.S. Department of Defense inside the Capital Beltway? That's a discussion for a different day. For now, we're going to assume that it was "close enough.")

Seminary is a four-year program; so those four years, plus the 20 years in ministry, mean that I haven't been out there in that proverbially "real" world for 24 years now. That is nearly a quarter of a century!

Thinking on this, I have created a list of some things I remember from my life before being a pastor:

- 1) Not everything outside the Church is hostile to the Faith. Some of my co-workers were believers. Most of my non-Christian friends were decent people. We forget this when those of us inside the Church talk too much about life "out there."
- 2) The biggest challenge to my Faith Walk wasn't persecution, but the pressure to fit in. If everybody in the office was "fudging" a little on one of the forms, then why wouldn't you? I didn't, of course; but it certainly made you seem like an oddball, maybe even naïve.
- 3) I struggled making time for Bible-reading and prayer. Well, let's pause there and say: I still do. The most notable feature of modern life is its hectic pace. Time with God is nearly the opposite: un-hurried and quiet, with an open book, and concentrated thought. Everything about our typical day trains us away from devotion. Then having neglected the Word and prayer, our next comment will be: Spiritually, I'm running on fumes.

- 4) I looked forward to going to Church. Mostly that means I looked forward to seeing people I loved. Much less so was I there to hear a good sermon. A good sermon was nice, but I was more encouraged to know that there were other people who believed what I believed. If I thought about the Sacrament I was refreshed by it. Honestly, I sometimes received it devotionally ("This is the body and blood of Christ for me for the forgiveness of my sins; I leave here renewed"), and other times I just went through the motions ("The usher called my row, so now I go stand here").
- 5) I be-friended everybody in my office, but felt a special affinity for the other Christians. In my Defense Department job many agents were rather crusty sorts. But there was one Catholic woman in my office who practiced her Faith, and we became very close. You can talk all you want about "the differences between Lutherans and Catholics," but in that environment we felt much closer than the Theology books would suggest.
- 6) There were only a few active believers; but there was a surprising number of fence-sitters. These folks were not active in a Church, and didn't overtly identify themselves as Christian. But in a private conversation they'd let you know that the words of one of the atheists the day before had stepped over the line.
- 7) Faith didn't come up every day, but it could come up any day. Most days the conversation was more like, "Walt, do you have that report ready for review?" Some of the conversation was about football. A lot of it was about politics (remember that we lived in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. at the time). But now and again someone would begin a question with the words, "Hey, Christian ..."
- 8) When that happened people never asked questions about Academic Theology ("Differentiate the Lutheran and the Catholic understanding of Soteriology"), but they did ask about practical matters ("Why are Christians opposed to abortion?"). Of course some people picked controversial topics to put you on the spot. But some of them really did want to know why you said what you said, and they would consider your response thoughtfully. They also wanted you to speak "in your own words." If they felt like you were quoting some Church "position paper," then the conversation was over.

Is that what it's still like? How is it the same? How is it different? How do we need to equip ourselves to continue to **"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1st Peter 3:15)?**



From our President

Jim Crosland, Congregational President

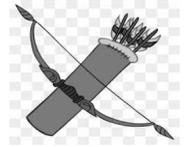
Wow, I guess its officially summertime now! Hope everyone is staying cool or at least hanging out in the swimming pool. Record numbers of COVID-19 cases have been reported in the last few weeks, and it is not slowing down. Many counties, municipalities, and stores have implemented mask ordinances. And as always sanitizing, washing your hands, and keeping 6 feet apart always help in stopping the spread.

Mt. Olive is still open, with precautions in place. In September, new board members will step into their roles, if you would like to be involved, please reach out to your elder or a council member for information. I pray that everyone stays safe and healthy!

Safety Tip: Word on the streets is there are many fraudulent so-called grant companies that want to help you receive government money for COVID-19. If you are contacted, hang up and notify your local law enforcement agency. Remember the old saying, "If it's too good to be true, it probably is."

Board of Christian Education

Natalie Crosland, Chairperson



"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother". Mt. 19:5 NIV.

Parents, read this letter. God gave you your children on a lease, with an expiration date. Poet Khalil Gibran said, "They come through you but not from you...you are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth" (See Ps. 127:4). Parenthood isn't about ownership, it's about stewardship. Your first assignment is to provide *love* to make them secure, *laws* to make them wise, *light* to walk in, and a *lifestyle* to follow. Your next assignment is to prepare them to go out into the world and put into practice the things you've taught them. So release them, celebrate the investment you have made, pray for them, and ask God, to be with them as they go through life. (This is from a friend who sends daily devotionals. These have a great impact on me.)

It is August and that means, BACK TO SCHOOL!!! Some of our children will be leaving to go to college, and others, like mine have joined the military. Still others will be returning to elementary, middle, or high school – but not as they left it in March. Please be mindful of the stresses our children face, and as always, pray for them to know what to do when you are not there.

The Board of Education is being prayerful about what to do in September when it is time to begin Sunday School. Safety information is ever changing. When the time comes, we will make the best possible decisions, and will keep everyone posted.



Stephen Ministry

Bill Boykin, Stephen Leader

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

James 1:17 NIV

Mt. Olive's Stephen Ministry team began meeting again in mid-June after staying at home since March. The group is taking precautions by wearing masks, using social distancing by everyone sitting at different tables in the fellowship hall, and eating pre-packaged, rather than buffet-style snacks. Even with all these changes, it is still wonderful to be back together twice a month.

Stephen Ministries, St. Louis has been working hard to update every aspect of their curriculum, so as we review the basics, we are able to employ these updated materials. It is very refreshing to see how Stephen Ministries incorporated these innovations and fresh ideas into its time-proven foundations.



And as always, for more information about receiving support from one of our Stephen Ministers, please contact Lay Minister, Bill Boykin. You may ask questions of any of our other Stephen Ministers & Leaders: Dianne BouFawaz, Charlie Sandt, Aresa Boykin, Tina Dixon, Nancy Thompson, Mike Knowles, Twila Sandt, Shari Selke, and Matt Williams.



The Board of Public Relations: Website Member Page

Aresa Boykin, Chairperson

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." Hebrews 10:24 NIV

The Mt. Olive website, www.mtolivesc.org, now has a secure page for members only. Currently, the pictorial directory is on the page. The directory is not in its final form yet; however, it will be convenient if you are on the go and need to find contact information on your mobile device. Once you have your login, you will see all of the photos from the current directory followed by the list of contact information. Once the page is finalized, you will be able to search by last name. But until then, we will make do with this format.

Since the page is secure, you will need to create a login that has to be approved by me. That way, unauthorized users will not be allowed. **To create your login, follow these steps:**

1. Go to www.mtolivesc.org.
2. Go to the "About" tab, and hover until the drop-down menu appears.
3. Click on Directory (Member Log-in).
4. You will create your username (email) and password. Then click "Register."
5. I will receive an email that someone needs approval. I will make sure it is you before approving.
6. You will receive an approval email in 2 business days from prchair@mtolivesc.org. (Please check your spam folder or add this email to your contacts.)

I look forward to getting all your registration emails!



Board of Evangelism: Salesmanship 101

Richard Shealy, Chairperson



"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." Colossians 4:5

Recently, I was reminded of a story about a young boy who, in a bygone era, was selling apples aboard a passenger train. A gentleman on the train noticed that the boy was not having much success and took the boy aside and asked for one of the apples. He then took the apple and slowly walked up to the front of the train eating the apple and commenting on how tasty and refreshing the apple was. As the boy followed behind, passengers began buying the apples. The apples were selling because the idea of wanting the apple was made appealing to the riders by the man's comments.

In a like manner, we can get others interested in the Gospel of Jesus Christ through our personal witnessing. Those who see us demonstrate love and compassion for others will become curious and that curiosity will create an opportunity for us to tell them about God's love for them. We never know when God will put us into an opportunity to witness. Just be ready with your personal testimony. There will be no advance notice or second chance when the opportunity arrives.

Board of Social Ministry

Charlene Meetze, Chairperson

***"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces,
I would still plant my apple tree." Martin Luther***

School Supplies: Please begin shopping for school supplies, as we will be collecting those for Sharing God's Love in August. There will be a drop off box in the Fellowship Hall.

Boys Farm Inc.: Located in Newberry, the Boys Farm is a Christian refuge for the housing, care, and education of boys. Rev. and Mrs. W.D. Shealy established the farm in 1960. Please visit www.boysfarm.org to learn more about this children's home. Their needs are noted below. Contributions can be placed in a box in the Fellowship Hall.

<u>Boys' Needs</u>		<u>Cottage Needs</u>	
Bike Helmets	Wal-Mart Gift Cards	Board Games	Puzzles
Skate Boards	Skate Board Helmets	Beds	Towels/wash clothes
Roller Blades	Go-Karts	Paper Products	Furniture Fund
		Furniture for College Apartment	

Now that the parking lot is paved at Sharing God's Love, donations can be dropped off there or brought to the blue grocery cart at church. Current needs are:

Pantry needs: bottled water, instant grits and oatmeal, canned soup, canned fruit, spaghetti sauce

School supplies: backpacks (gently used or new), marble composition books, #2 pencils, dividers, 2-pocket folders w/prongs, mechanical pencils, cap erasers, college ruled notebook paper, colored pencils, blue ink pens, 3 X 5 index cards

Children's clothing: all sizes (clothes, shoes, socks, underwear)

*Thank you
Natalie*



Children's Sunday School

Jessica Dennis, Sunday School

This month we are wrapping up another calendar year for our elected church board members. It has been the greatest pleasure working with Natalie Crosland the past 2 years on the Board of Christian Education! From all us, we will miss you on the team, Natalie! Your dedication to VBS, Rally Day, Mt Olive's Sunday School program, and everything in between has been so appreciated by our church! To all outgoing board members, thank you for your time and dedication to bettering our church and for being true servants!

As we all await better news on this virus slowing down, we have cancelled VBS and Rally Day for this year. We are anxious to return to children's and youth Sunday School, but will continue to wait until it is safe to do so. We will be singing from the church roof when we are able to get back to our classes! We are praying for everyone to stay safe!

Board of Stewardship: Show your love

John Meyerhoff, Chairperson



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This month I have a very personal story of giving to share.

Our 12 year-old great-nephew Ayden was born with hypoplastic left heart syndrome, a very rare heart condition where the left side of the heart does not develop properly. At 12 years of age, Ayden needed a heart transplant or face the end of his young life.

Through the Grace of God, on July 14th, Ayden received his new heart! As of today (July 16th) he is doing well. He still has a long road to recovery but we are so thankful for the transplant team, hospital staff, and especially for all of the prayers from our church family at Mt. Olive and others we count as dear friends. Most of all we are thankful for God hearing and answering our prayers to protect Ayden.

So what does this have to do with Stewardship? Stewardship is about taking care of what God has given us and giving back. While we focus on Ayden receiving a lifesaving gift, this also means someone had to lose his/her life, so Ayden could live. There is a family somewhere, who even though they were suffering tremendous grief from the loss of their loved one, were willing to give the gift of earthly life to our great-nephew. What true love, sacrifice and giving.

I truly pray none of us ever faces the decision the donor family had to make. But I do hope hearing a true story like this helps us to focus on the multitude of gifts our Heavenly Father has bestowed on us and encourages us to look for ways to use our individual talents and treasures to help those in need.

Prayer: Dear God, please remind me daily as your Son proclaimed, **"It is more blessed to give than to receive"** (Acts 20:35). Please open my eyes to the needs of others and to use the gifts You have blest me with to help in any way I can. In Your name we pray. Amen.



July Pastoral Acts

	Memorial Service	
	George F. Boatwright, IV July 8, 1968-June 28, 2020 July 3, 2020	
	Memorial Service	
	Charles Sandt, Jr. January 11, 1972-July 2, 2020 July 18, 2020	

	Holy Baptism	
	Jovie Rae Peeples July 5, 2020	



Preschool News

Anna Brent, Preschool Director

803-781-7180 – preschool@mtolivesc.org

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

It is hard to believe that we are entering into the last stretch of summer!

Please pray for wisdom for our state and local leaders as they make decisions as to what is best regarding opening schools and creating a plan that is best for teachers, students, families and the community. We plan to begin our new school year on September 8th with our annual parent meeting! The Lord has blessed us with 33 students who are already registered and we are hopeful to see them soon. With current registration, we have 1 opening in our 4-year-old class for the 2020-2021 school year. Registration information can be found on the preschool website and paper copies are available downstairs by the preschool entrance and on the preschool bulletin board.

While we would love to be able to provide Kindergarten Kamp again this year, the current situation with schools opening and health risks, we will not be able to do so. We pray that we will be able to resume again next August!

Thank you to church council for providing the means necessary for the downstairs of the church to be painted during the summer break. It looks beautiful and as always, we plan to utilize the assigned preschool space for His glory!



Read the Bible in 3 Years: August 2020

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

If you are looking for a good resource to help keep you focused, check out **Through the Word**. This resource has a 5-9 minute audio for every chapter of the Bible. You can access this plan on the YouVersion Bible app or at throughtheword.org. The commentary provides historical insight to what is happening and may explain an original Greek or Hebrew word and how it was used. After you listen, the app will also read the chapter to you, if you like. Hope you will give this a try.

August 2020

Aug 1	Proverbs 6	Aug 9	Proverbs 14	Aug 17	Proverbs 22	Aug 25	Proverbs 30
Aug 2	Proverbs 7	Aug 10	Proverbs 15	Aug 18	Proverbs 23	Aug 26	Proverbs 31
Aug 3	Proverbs 8	Aug 11	Proverbs 16	Aug 19	Proverbs 24	Aug 27	Ruth 1
Aug 4	Proverbs 9	Aug 12	Proverbs 17	Aug 20	Proverbs 25	Aug 28	Ruth 2
Aug 5	Proverbs 10	Aug 13	Proverbs 18	Aug 21	Proverbs 26	Aug 29	Ruth 3
Aug 6	Proverbs 11	Aug 14	Proverbs 19	Aug 22	Proverbs 27	Aug 30	Ruth 4
Aug 7	Proverbs 12	Aug 15	Proverbs 20	Aug 23	Proverbs 28	Aug 31	I Thess. 1
Aug 8	Proverbs 13	Aug 16	Proverbs 21	Aug 24	Proverbs 29		



Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10

Please continue to remember our homebound during the summer months, especially as they continue to be isolated. You may send cards, make phone calls, and include them in your prayers. Contact information is in the church directory.

Betty Barrett	Marge Carter	Phil Carter	Cleta Dunaway	Virginia Gable	Bill Hoefler
Betty Hunter	Bonnie Jones	Ron LaGrange	Mary Lawhorne	Margaret Ludwig	C.R. Miller
Mike McGriff	Carolyn McCartha	Anita Meetze	Laura Meetze	Carole Myers	Cyndi Nelson
Ed Nelson	Dorothy Prater	Eddie Roland	Myrna Rush	Henry Schmidt	Linda Schmidt
Mary Schott	Molly Kate Shealy	Shirlean Sons	Dan Stocker	Henry Weed	Louise Weed



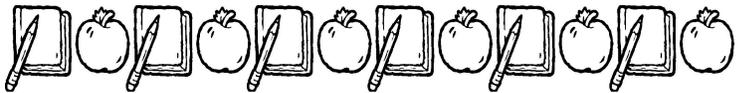
August 2020 Anniversaries

8/1	Richard & Claudia Schneider	8/18	Merle & Peggy Weed
8/4	Nelson & Nancy Thompson	8/23	Geoff & Phyllis Griesch
8/10	Carroll & Betty Barrett	8/24	Chuck & Marilyn Bauer
8/10	Pastor Walt & Renee Harper	8/26	Calvin & Charlene Meetze
8/11	David & Joy Fletcher	8/30	Harold & Kathryn Meetze
8/11	Randy & Linda Gifford	8/31	Thomas & Tiffany Meetze
8/17	Terry & Luanne Rodgers		

August 2020 Birthdays

8/1	August Kibler	8/17	Walter Arnold
8/2	Charlie Stuck	8/17	Jacob Thrun
8/2	Megan Weed	8/18	Calvin Meetze
8/4	Barry Bost	8/18	Geneva Meetze
8/6	Mikaela Weed	8/18	Lucas Patterson
8/7	Rich O'Dell	8/19	Christopher Boykin
8/8	Brian Smith	8/20	Elizabeth Griesch
8/8	Abigail Kibler	8/20	Sandy Osborne
8/10	Bobby Lewis	8/22	Grady Crosland
8/11	Megan Gotz Humphrey	8/22	Twila Sandt
8/11	C.J. Meetze Jr.	8/23	Aresa Boykin
8/13	Fred Stalbaum	8/23	Michael Dosen
8/14	Savannah Lewis	8/23	Jacob Gepfert
8/15	Becky Bass	8/24	Erika Dominick
8/15	Virginia Gable	8/26	Stephanie Smith
8/15	Mike Prater	8/27	Lucas Thrun
8/16	Joel Fancey	8/29	Mary Beth Schultz
8/16	David West		

August, 2020



<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
August 2 8:00 am/10:30 am Worship 9:15 Board of Public Relations 9th S. after Pentecost	3 Blood Drive 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm	4 7:30 pm Elders	5	6 6:00 pm Board of Education	7	August 1 5:00 pm Worship Altar Guild: Carole Mueller Luanne Curry <hr/> August 8 5:00 pm Worship Altar Guild: Becky Bass Marlene Nes'bit
9 8:00 am/10:30 am Worship 10th S. after Pentecost	10 6:00 pm Stephen Ministry CE & SG	11	12	13 7:00 pm Church Council	14	15 5:00 pm Worship <u>Altar Guild:</u> Darlene Schenemann Nancy Thompson
16 8:00 am/10:30 am Worship 11th S. after Pentecost	17	18	19	20 Preschool Board Newsletter Deadline	21	22 5:00 pm Worship <u>Altar Guild:</u> Carolyn Kibler Sherry Ervin
23 8:00 am/10:30 am Worship 12th S. after Pentecost	24 6:00 pm Stephen Ministry CE & SG	25	26	27	28	29 5:00 pm Worship <u>Altar Guild:</u> Lynn Schultz
30 8:00 am/10:30 am Worship 13th S. after Pentecost	31	Sept. 1	2	3	4	5 5:00 pm Worship <u>Altar Guild:</u> Carole Mueller Luanne Curry

Announcements & Opportunities

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Mt. Olive's next blood drive will be Monday, August 3rd, from 2 PM – 7 PM. To schedule your appointment, please visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter Sponsor Code: OliveLutheran. The ARC has taken extra precautions to keep their donors and volunteers safe. The COVID-19 antibody testing is included with blood donation.

Pr. Walt's New Phone Number: 803-229-2154

Pastor decided that he needed to get an 803-cell number so that when he calls, we won't think he is spam or a telemarketer because of his out-of-state area code. Please update your records.

Handmade Cloth Facemasks

A few ladies have begun the necessary ministry of making facemasks for our Mt. Olive family. There is a basket of masks in the narthex from which you can choose. Linda Gifford, Mary Keller, and Aresa Boykin will continue to make masks as long as there is a need. If anyone else would like to join in this ministry, talk to one of us or call the church office.

September Newsletter Deadline – August 20th

Your next deadline for submitting articles for the September 2020 issue of the Olive Leaves is **Thursday, August 20th**. Remember to send them to Sue Strouse at slstrouse@gmail.com. Outgoing board chairpersons, please communicate with your new chairpersons concerning the procedure for articles.



Secure E Giving Reminder

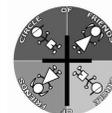
Since you are unable to attend church and are concerned that you cannot get your contributions to church, now may be the time to try e giving. The link is also on the website: on computers, it is in the top, right hand corner; on phones and tablets, scroll down to the bottom of the page. You may give through your checking account or credit card. Our e giving is powered by VANCO, a secure company that follows strict and safe policies. Even though the e giving page looks like our website, Mt. Olive will have no record of your account, your card number, or your personal information. If you need help setting up your account, contact Aresa Boykin.

Sharing God's Love

Sharing God's Love is accepting donations of non-perishable food items and personal care products. They also need financial donations as they help pay utility bills of the families in crisis. The needs are cold cereal, powdered milk, oatmeal, grits, peanut butter & jelly, canned or dried fruit, spaghetti sauce, soup, crackers, dried beans, canned carrots, peas or mixed veggies.

Circle of Friends

When Sunday School resumes, 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. Once we return to meeting together, 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.



