



Olive Leaves



March 2021

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From Pastor Walt: Two Things This Month

Pastor Walter Harper
walt.harper@mtolivesc.org

First, and I'm terribly slow at this, but I want to say a "Thank You" to the people of Mt. Olive for your generous Christmas gift to my family. It's a cliché by now so say that we live "in crazy times." But throughout, your love and support are a constant source of encouragement.

Second, some words about the Lent Midweek Services.

This year we'll be doing a series of readings called "The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Taken from the Four Gospels."

Why the phrase "taken from the four Gospels"? Because this isn't a reading from just one Gospel, but it's Passion Narrative taken from everything that all four Gospels say, combined into one sequential reading.

You of course know the old saying that if four people see the same car accident they all describe it in different ways. What they say will be based on their unique perspectives, on how much of the event they saw, and of course on which details they think merit attention.

Not that the Gospels are about a car accident (they are instead based on what God has done in Christ!), but they are clearly written by four different men.

We need to know that this doesn't take anything away from the Inspiration of Scripture. The Holy Spirit inspired the prophets and the apostles to write the Bible. And in the mystery of that work, He also did not obliterate their personalities or their experiences when He had them write. There is, just to take one example, a vocabulary that belongs to John, and one that belongs to Matthew. Their writings are inspired; and at the same time, John still sounds like John and Matthew still sounds like Matthew.

Just to point out some particulars:

- In Matthew 27:19 we read that the wife of Pontius Pilate sent a message, "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of Him." This is not recorded in the other three Gospels.
- You've probably heard sermons on "The Seven Last Words of Jesus." Did you know that no one Gospel contains all of those sayings, but that we have them only by reading from all four Gospels?



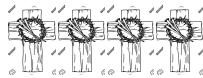
- In Mark 14:51-52 we read, “A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.” This detail is only recorded in the Gospel of Mark; and some people think that the verse is a reference to Mark himself.
- In John 18:10 we’re told that Peter drew a sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest. The other Gospels mention it, too, but only John continues with the words, “The servant’s name was Malchus.”

So it took some work to figure out the proper sequencing of all the details, painstaking work that thankfully has already been done for us. “The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Taken from the Four Gospels” puts all those details into one combined reading.

Of course, when you put it all together you wind up with a thorough, and also lengthy, reading. To read all the way through it will take us all the Wednesdays of Lent. We’ll do those readings, then have a sermon that meditates on the particulars of each week’s reading.

Services will be on Wednesdays, from February 24th through March 24th, at noon and at 7:00 PM. I’d love to see you there.

May the Lord richly bless you and your loved ones in this Season of Lent, all the while reflecting on what Jesus Christ has done for us.



Stephen Ministry: The Basics

Bill Boykin, Leader

Just what is a Stephen Minister? Stephen Ministers are laypeople—Christian men and women—trained to provide one-to-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, relocation, or separation due to military deployment. Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life, yet have one thing in common: a passion for bringing Christ’s love and care to people during a time of need.

Stephen Ministers are Care-Givers; God is the Cure-Giver! The role of Stephen Ministers is to give care. They listen, empathize, encourage, pray, and provide emotional and spiritual support on a weekly basis to hurting people for as long as the need persists. God works in and through them to bring hope and healing.



How does Stephen Ministry Happen During the Pandemic?

During *normal* times, a Stephen Minister would visit you for an hour each week either at your home or in another convenient place. However, with social distancing, the Stephen Ministers have adapted to other means of meeting. Of course, face-to-face ministry is best; however, care can be achieved through phone calls, video chats, texts, emails, and written notes. If the weather were seasonable, meetings could be held outside. Providing care is what Stephen Ministry is all about, and our Stephen Ministers will “meet” most any way.

If you are feeling lonely, experiencing a crisis, struggling through a difficult time, or simply overwhelmed by everyday life, talk with Pastor Walt or Stephen Leader Bill Boykin to learn more about Stephen Ministry. **Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!**

From our President

Jim Crosland, Congregational President

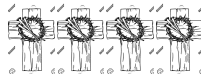
Natalie and I would like to thank everyone this past month for all of the birthday wishes we have received. We love our Church family and can't wait to see everyone on a regular basis.

The Church Council held its last meeting via Zoom. In addition to our routine approval of minutes and reports, we approved volunteers for boards and discussed possibilities for our church in the future. The board members who were approved were: Hunter Robinson, Board of Elders; Charlene Meetze, Board of Evangelism; and, Chris Slaughter, Board of Trustees.

There have been few difficult topics during my tenure as Congregational President and one of them was at the February meeting: having one of our scheduled weekly worship services become a *mandatory face covering required service*. After much discussion, the Council voted unanimously for the Saturday evening worship service to be the one requiring mandatory face coverings. Thank you to all of our Board Chairs for your professionalism and compassion during this difficult decision.

Blessings to all and please be safe and stay healthy!

Safety Tip: Theft from Motor Vehicles is climbing in our area. Please make sure you lock your vehicles, even in your driveways, and take your valuables inside your house. When you are running errands, please hide your valuables from plain sight.



Board of Stewardship

Naven Olson, Chairperson

"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live I live by believing in God's Son, who loved me and took the punishment for my sins." Galatians 2:20

As we begin the Lenten season and look ahead to the commemoration of Good Friday on April 2nd, let us reflect on some commentary by Martin Luther on the above verse: "Why do we want to haggle with God, trying to exchange our stubble for grace and eternal life? Listen to this passage. It says there is so much evil in our nature that the world and all creation can't reconcile us to God. God's Son had to be offered for our sins.

"But consider the price of this ransom carefully. Look at Christ, who was captured and offered for you. He is infinitely greater than and superior to anything else in creation. How will you respond when you hear that such a priceless ransom was offered for you? Do you still want to bring God your own good works? What is that compared to Christ's work? He shed his most precious blood for your sins."

(This quotation is abridged from the devotion for May 1st from *Through Faith Alone 365 Devotional Readings from Martin Luther*, published by Concordia Publishing House.)

So let us trust in Christ alone for salvation, and let us trust in Him to provide for us in this life. And let us be in church whenever possible; involved in Bible study; in prayer for yourself, family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and this church, and the church at large. Reach out to family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers with the Gospel of Christ crucified for our sins and raised for our justification. Generously support this church with your time, talents, and resources.

Preschool News

Anna Brent, Preschool Director

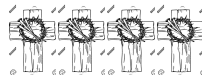
803-781-7180 - preschool@mtolivesc.org

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



Through the Lord's blessing, the preschool ministry is continuing to thrive, and we are staying busy even though we have been stuck inside during the past few weeks of rainy weather! We are looking forward to all things "spring" and will begin learning about Easter, spring growth and changes, and continuing to work our way through our alphabet with the help of our *Zoophonics* animal friends.

It is registration time for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. We currently have only a few openings in our classes for next year. We are excited to begin planning for another school year and look forward to seeing how the Lord will continue His work in and through the preschool! So, if you know anyone who might be interested, please have them contact me.



Board of Trustees

Chris Slaughter, Board Member

During the second part of January and the first part of February, the Trustees have been busy making improvements to our church.

The trustees installed 16 Cree LED Flood Light bulbs in the front of the Sanctuary. We installed the bulbs in both the pendant lights over the pews and the flood lights. They use 97% less energy to light the Sanctuary, yet there is no difference in their brightness.

Board members have also replaced a ballast in one of the fluorescent light fixtures in the Fellowship Hall.

The board is planning a Work Day on Saturday, March 20th, at 10:00 AM, and we will need your help with the following items:

- Removal of a dead tree in the overflow parking lot behind the Wagner House,
- Demolition of a shed behind the Wagner House,
- Trimming of tree limbs that hang over the parking lot at the Preschool entrance.

Please plan to serve our church during the Work Day on March 20th if you are able, as "many hands make light work". Your contributions to our church are very much appreciated!

MARCH 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

The Board of Evangelism

Charlene Meetze, Chairperson



Hello y'all. After seeing the vacancies on some of our boards, I decided to "do something" and accept the position on the Evangelism Board. This was prompted by the song "Do Something" by Matthew West, here is an excerpt of the lyrics:

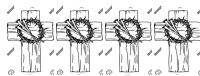
<p>I woke up this morning Saw a world full of trouble now, Thought how'd we ever get so far down, and How's it ever gonna turn around So I turned my eyes to Heaven</p>	<p>I thought, "God, why don't You do something?" Well, I just couldn't bear the thought of People living in poverty Children sold into slavery The thought disgusted me</p>	<p>So, I shot my fist at Heaven Said, "God, why don't You do something?" He said, "I did, I created you" If not us, then who If not me and you Right now, it's time for us to do something....</p>
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(Worship Fuel, CCLI Song # 6439976)



What is Evangelism? "All of the people of God are called to witness -- not just those who show the aptitude for it. None of us can escape the call and responsibility to give account of the hope that is within us and to locate the source of that hope in the Gospel that flows from the means of grace.

"The people of the world wonder about a Christian who wants to share a product but without sharing where the product is to be found. If I tell someone about a great frozen pizza I found and leave them to feed on this pizza in their heart without sharing where this pizza can be found and what is its name, I have given them nothing at all. As Lutheran Christians we believe that this is the true apostolic and catholic faith, that God works through His means of grace, He does what He has promised to do where He has placed His promise. So it can never be our goal to tell them about Jesus unless we bring them to the Church where Jesus is present in His Word and Sacraments, doing what He has pledged and promised to do. *'We cannot allow evangelism to be disjointed from the task of bringing people into the Church where the Word is rightly proclaimed (the Law/Gospel dialectic is most helpful here) and where the Sacraments are administered according to Christ's command and institution. We cannot allow evangelism to be disjointed from the task of bringing people into the Church where the Word is rightly proclaimed and where the Sacraments are administered according to Christ's command and institution.'*" Posted by Rev. Paul A. Rydecki as an article from *The Intrepid Lutheran*.

As you read this, please join me in spending a little time thinking about how you can assist the Evangelism Team to tell others about Mt. Olive and make a commitment to invite folks we encounter to visit and experience our awesome family of Christians.



Pastoral Acts

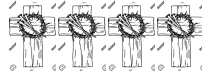
	<p>Funeral Service Eddie P. Roland, Jr. March 3, 1941 - January 25, 2021 January 28, 2021</p>	
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The Board of Public Relations: Painting Class

Sue Strouse, Chairperson



I am going to have a painting class on March 27th at 10 AM in the Fellowship Hall. We will be social distancing, with 2 people per round table. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex, and I can only accommodate 20 people. The cost will be \$6.00 and you can pay me on Saturday. Because of the pandemic, we will not be sharing lunch items, so please bring a snack for yourself. We will have a 20-minute lunch break to let the background dry before finishing up the painting.



Adult Bible Studies

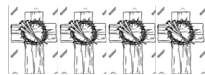
Sundays at 9:15 AM

Sandy Osborne is continuing the study on "Being the Remnant Church" through March 28th. The study is based on an LCMS blog series and selected topics. The declining influence of the Church in American culture can be a source of great concern for many believers, but God has always and will always have a remnant of believers to do His work.



Women's Book Club


Ladies, are you looking for something new? The Women's Book Club is beginning Tuesday, March 2nd at 7:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. At the first meeting, the group will plan their upcoming monthly meetings and book assignments. The tables will be socially distanced for your protection. If you have any questions, contact Renee Harper at 203-885-6733 or waltandrenee@att.net.



March Lectionary Readings

Date	Festival/Sunday	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
March 7	Lent 3	Ex. 20:1-17	Psalm 19	1 Cor. 1:18-31	John 2:13-22
March 14	Lent 4	Num. 21:4-9	Psalm 107:1-9	Eph. 2:1-10	John 3:14-21
March 21	Lent 5	Jer. 31:31-34	Psalm 119:9-16	Heb. 5:1-10	Mark 10: 35-45
March 28	Palm Sunday	Zech. 9:9-12	Psalm 118:19-29	Phil. 2:5-11	Mark 11:1-11

**2021 LENT, HOLY WEEK, and EASTER SCHEDULE
of WORSHIP and EVENTS**

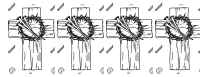
<p>Wednesdays in Lent March 3rd, 10th, 17th, & 24th</p>	<p>12:00 Noon & 7:00 PM</p>	<p align="center">Midweek Lenten Worship: "The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Taken from the Four Gospels"</p>
<p align="center">Saturday March 27th</p>	<p align="center">5:00 PM</p>	<p align="center">Celebrating Palm Sunday: Worship & The Lord's Supper</p>
<p align="center">Sunday March 28th</p> 	<p>8:00 AM & 10:30 AM</p>	<p align="center">Palm Sunday: Worship & The Lord's Supper</p>
	<p align="center">9:15 AM</p>	<p align="center">Bible Classes</p>
<p align="center">Thursday April 1st</p>	<p align="center">7:00 PM</p>	 <p align="center">Maundy Thursday Worship Service & The Lord's Supper</p>
<p align="center">Friday April 2nd</p>	<p align="center">7:00 PM</p>	<p align="center">Good Friday Tenebrae</p> 
<p align="center">Saturday April 3rd</p>	<p align="center">5:00 PM</p>	 <p align="center">The Easter Vigil with The Lord's Supper</p>
 <p align="center">Sunday April 4th</p> 	<p align="center">8:00 AM</p>	<p align="center">The Resurrection of Our Lord - Easter Sunday</p>
	<p align="center">9:15 AM</p>	<p align="center">Bible Classes</p>
	<p align="center">10:30 AM</p>	<p align="center">The Resurrection of Our Lord - Easter Sunday</p>

March 2021 Anniversaries

3/5	Hannah & Eric Hennighan	3/17	David & Paula Meetze
3/6	Ron & Pat LaGrange	3/18	Todd & Shari Selke
3/7	James & Abigail Sharpe	3/20	Laura & Brian Laprise
3/15	Stuart & Pam Dalton	3/24	Brian & Meghan Smith
3/16	Al & Annette Holladay, Jr.	3/24	Charles & Laura Meetze

March 2021 Birthdays

3/5	Charles Meetze	3/14	Charles Stuck, II	3/21	Ryan Voyles
3/6	Gerry Fletcher	3/14	John Tedder	3/22	Jimmy Crosland
3/6	Stacey Robinson	3/15	Rebecca Curry	3/23	Donna Sons
3/6	Myrna Rush	3/16	Kathleen Slaughter	3/24	Karen Meetze
3/6	Mandy Schultz	3/17	Lauren Brown	3/24	Nelson Thompson
3/8	Sandra Stocker	3/17	Caitlin Voyles	3/29	Stephanie Boatwright
3/12	Owen Dennis	3/19	Sara Jones	3/29	Eddie Magic
3/13	Carolyn Kibler	3/19	Dot Prater	3/29	Martin Taylor
3/13	Pam Stuck	3/21	Norma Hessary	3/31	Connor Howard
		3/21	Liz Rosinski		



Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

As the pandemic goes into its first anniversary of social distancing and isolation, we all are feeling the effects of our “new normal.” What better way to give our spirits, as well as theirs, a boost than to pray for, send cards to, or phone these precious members. A card with a handwritten note is a thoughtful way to brighten someone’s day especially during these endless months of isolation and quarantine. 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. Let’s make a special effort to connect with one another!

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. (1Thessalonians 3:12).

Don Angen	Virginia Gable	Mary Lawhorne	CR Miller	Mandy Schultz
Stanley Bouknight	Bill/Theresa Hoefler	Carolyn McCartha	Eva Mae Monts	Henry/Linda Schmidt
Phil Carter	Betty Hunter	Anita Meetze	Carole Myers	Mary Schott
Shirley Curry	Bonnie Jones	Laura Meetze	Cyndi Nelson	Shirlean Sons
Pam Dalton	Harold/Sarah Jones	Dot Monts	Dorothy Prater	Dan Stocker
Cleta Dunaway	Melvin/Judy Jones	Margaret Ludwig	Polly Roland	Flora Weed
David Fletcher	Ron LaGrange	Herb Loeb	Myrna Rush	

Read the Bible in Three Years: March 2021

March 2021							
Mar 1	Job 30	Mar 9	Job 38	Mar 17	John 4	Mar 25	John 12
Mar 2	Job 31	Mar 10	Job 39	Mar 18	John 5	Mar 26	John 13
Mar 3	Job 32	Mar 11	Job 40	Mar 19	John 6	Mar 27	John 14
Mar 4	Job 33	Mar 12	Job 41	Mar 20	John 7	Mar 28	John 15
Mar 5	Job 34	Mar 13	Job 42	Mar 21	John 8	Mar 29	John 16
Mar 6	Job 35	Mar 14	John 1	Mar 22	John 9	Mar 30	John 17
Mar 7	Job 36	Mar 15	John 2	Mar 23	John 10	Mar 31	John 18
Mar 8	Job 37	Mar 16	John 3	Mar 24	John 11		

As the year moves into March, we will be reading the last 13 chapters of the book of Job. We will finish the dialogue of Job and his three friends, and then move to God's response. God never answers Job's question of "Why;" however, He reminds Job (and us) that as a mere mortal, he cannot begin to understand the mysteries of God and how He works.

On the 14th, we will move to one of the most beloved books in the entire Bible, The Gospel of John. John is the story of Jesus: God who came down to save the world. John focuses on the deity of Christ. Enjoy reading of Jesus as we near the day we celebrate his resurrection!



Announcements & Opportunities

Saturday 5:00 PM Worship Service: Face Coverings are Required to be Worn



Starting, Saturday, March 6, 2021, face coverings will be required to be worn for the entire Saturday service. The Church Council and Pastor Walt agreed that the once a month, 3:00 PM service was not enough for our congregation members who must wear coverings. If attending church on Saturday is your preference but you cannot wear a face covering for the entire service, you may view the live worship service in the fellowship hall.

Worship Overflow Area in Fellowship Hall

Have you thought about attending worship services but would prefer a setting with less people? Why not come to Mt. Olive's fellowship hall and watch one of our three entire services that are simulcasted there? Very few people have taken advantage of this option. Tables are socially distanced over 6 feet. If you would like to receive communion, you can either come to the sanctuary or have an elder bring communion to you in the fellowship hall. (Please notify an elder when you arrive if you would like this option.)

April Newsletter Deadline – March 24th

Your next deadline for submitting articles for the April 2021 issue of the Olive Leaves is **Wednesday, March 24th**. Remember to send your ½ page articles to Sue Strouse at slstrouse@gmail.com.



Bulletin Board Photos

We are way past due to update the Elders and Church Council bulletin boards with the correct photos. If you are a new elder or board chair, please track down Aresa before or after worship services to have your picture taken.

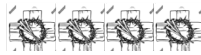
Secure E Giving Reminder

E giving contributions are on the rise. Have you thought about giving this a try? The link to set up your account is on the home page of our church website, mtolivesc.org. 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.

Nursery "Cry Room" 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. Parents, as you are leaving, please sanitize the toys of which your child has played. Thank you.



Kid's Korner

Puzzle!

Psalms 46:10

Using the code, fill in the blanks to discover what we should do each day.

CODE

A	1	B	F	2	G	K	3	L	O	4	R	U	5	V
D		E	H		I	M		N	S		T	W		Y

T

4	1	3	3	4	4	2	4	1	
1	3	1	3	2	4	4	1	3	
2	4	4	2	4	1				
1	1	4	4	2	3	3	1	3	1
3	3	4	5	4	2	1	4		
2	1	3	2	4	1				

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