



Olive Leaves



February 2022

Table of Contents			
From Pastor Walt Page 1	Board of Stewardship Page 4	Board of Evangelism Page 7	Epiphany Signs Page 9
From our President Page 2	Pastoral Acts Page 4	Sunday Morning Bible Classes Page 7	Announcements Page 9
February Lectionary Page 2	Olive Lutheran Preschool Page 5	Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards Page 8	Kid's Corner Page 11
Stephen Ministry Page 3	Board of Education Page 5	February Anniversaries & Birthdays - Page 8	February Calendar Page 11
Board of Public Relations Page 3	Board of Social Ministry Page 6	Read the Bible in Three Years Page 9	

From Pastor Walt: Christian Self Reflection

Pastor Walt Harper
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At our most recent Men's Prayer Breakfast I gave a presentation on my personal walk with God. Not to gaze at our own navels, but clearly each Christian has a life of experiences that deserve some reflection about how God has been at work, and how He has been there through the challenges that inevitably come.



Here was the other part of my presentation: I asked the men themselves to start to put together their thoughts about their own faith journey, and to prepare to share them with the rest of the group over the coming months.

This had me thinking: maybe it's not just the men who should formulate some thoughts on this. To that end I'm including here the questions that I've asked our guys, and I'd challenge all of us to think on these things:

- Some general introduction about myself.
- How long have I been a Christian? And how did I come to faith?
- If I drifted away, what was the road back?
- What are my reflections on my family of origin?
- Do I have a favorite Bible verse? What has it meant to me over the years?
- How has my faith affected my family life?
- What is/was my career? And how have I lived out my faith in that arena?
- Do I know what my Spiritual Gift(s) is/are? How has God used my gift(s)?
- Are there a couple of really clear "God moments"?
- Are there some challenges where God clearly helped?
- Is there something (or a couple things) that I'd point to as something I'm proud of? (In the good sense of that word.)
- Is there a particular Christian person (or maybe several) who has/have been a powerful mentor to me?
- What does it mean to live as Christian in our day and age?
- What is God up to with me now?

I ask these questions with the assumption that very often we're busy, and we run from one emergency to the next. We do that from one day to the next, to the next, to the next. Collapsing into bed at the end of the day, we think about all that needs to get done tomorrow. This is the enemy of reflection. And having not reflected, we then wonder: Has God really been at work?

I believe that once in a while it's good to look back and say, "Yes, there's God at work in this event, and at that time, and then this other time, too." So take a peek at these questions, and look for the activity of God.

*Thank You
Mt Olive*

The Harpers want to say a big Thank You to the congregation for your generous Christmas gift to our family. It's a blessing to us to be here with you, partnering in ministry in the greater Irmo area. We hope that you had a great Christmas with family and loved ones, even as you have been a blessing to us.



From our President: New Committees

Jim Crosland, Congregational President

The Church has been very busy lately, and it seems the future will hold the same. The Voters have requested two new committees be formed in an effort to review financial options along with space allocation for future growth of the Church. A big thank you to Dana Magic and Peggy Weed for stepping up and helping to fill those committees. Trustees also have been very busy with different projects around the Church. Please thank them for their selfless service in passing. The Elders are working on some big projects for the future too, so everyone is in high gear for the hope of some normalcy soon.



The Nominating Committee will soon be meeting to fill some vacancies already and soon some to be. If anyone feels the desire to serve, please reach out to Jason Dennis or me to put your name on the list. There is always plenty of room for more volunteers and fresh set of ideas.

Safety Tip: If you are following the news websites then you probably already have seen that car break-ins are extremely high right now. The new wave is that they are now breaking out windows. Please try to park in lighted areas and remove all valuables from your car, especially firearms.

Be Safe and stay Healthy.



February Lectionary

Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
February 6	Epiphany 5	Isaiah 6:1-8	Psalm 138	1 Corinthians 14:12b-20	Luke 5:1-11
February 13	Epiphany 6	Jeremiah 17:5-8	Psalm 1	1 Corinthians 15:12-20	Luke 6:17-26
February 20	Epiphany 7	Genesis. 45:3-15	Psalm 103:1-13	1 Cor. 15:21-26, 30-42	Luke 6:27-38
February 27	Transfiguration	Deuteronomy 34:1-12	Psalm 99	Hebrews 3:1-6	Luke 9:28-36

Stephen Ministry: Suspending Indefinitely

Bill Boykin, Leader

***"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."
Galatians 6:2***



Mt. Olive's Stephen Ministry has been active for ten years, training members of our congregation to provide care for those who are experiencing the usual crises of life – anything from the loss of a loved one, to being overwhelmed by a combination of circumstances, to every situation in between. Stephen Ministers generally visit with their care receivers on a weekly basis. However, the ministry has suffered during the pandemic because of the necessary isolation protocol. Therefore, we are suspending our ministry indefinitely.

Mt. Olive will always be a Stephen Ministry Church and those who have been trained will always be Stephen Ministers. We have helped other churches establish their programs. Several of our Stephen Ministers have moved and are continuing programs in their new churches! What a joy to know that our ministry continues to grow, even in other places! All trained Stephen Ministers have Christian caregiving skills ingrained in them and will continue to be individuals you can seek out when you are experiencing a difficult season of your life. They are able to provide Christian care through listening, walking beside you, offering a word of encouragement from the Bible, and praying for or with you.

Please thank all the Stephen Ministers for their dedication and service, including our current group: Dianne BouFawaz, Aresa Boykin, Bill Boykin, Tina Dixon, Mike Knowles, Twila Sandt, and Nancy Thompson. Please keep Stephen Ministry in your prayers so that we will discern God's timing to revitalize the ministry.



The Board of Public Relations: Epiphany

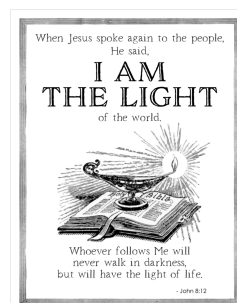
Sue Strouse, Chairperson

Epiphany means the shining light. Jesus is our shining light. When we keep our eyes on Him, we will be in His kingdom forever. In the Nicene Creed, we say Jesus is "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God". He also said, "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life". John 8:12

Epiphany also means a shining forth. Just like the star of Bethlehem brought the Magi to His cradle, His light brings all nations to eternal life. John 3:16 tell us that "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Epiphany also means appearance or revelation. The transfiguration of our Lord shows the revelation to all people that Jesus is the light. His face shone like the sun and His clothes became so white that they looked like light.

As we enjoy the season of Epiphany, think about how much God loves us to give us His Son to be our guiding light.



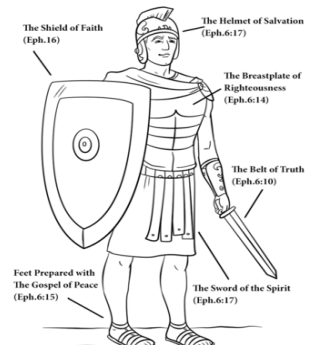
Board of Stewardship: Facing Conflict

Naven Olson, Chairperson

(All Scripture verses are from NASB)

As our society and culture become more openly hostile to Biblical Christianity, I am considering a decision that I might possibly be forced to face in my workplace. Here are some Bible verses to remember if one of us (or possibly someone one of us knows) should ever face such a conflict:

"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." Mark 8:36-38
"Remember Lot's wife." Luke 17:32



And here are words of promise from Jesus Christ Himself for any Christian who might face such a conflict taken from Matthew 6:31-34:





"Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?'. For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

May God grant us wisdom and grace to avoid potentially compromising worldly entanglements; the courage, strength and grace to avoid compromise and denial (Remember Peter on Good Friday); and the caring love, wisdom, strength and grace to reach out to the people of the unbelieving world. May He overcome our timidity?

Let us give generously of our time, talents and resources to further the proclamation of Christ crucified for our sins and raised for our justification; be in church weekly and in group Bible studies when possible; be in Bible study and prayer daily; and reach out to unbelieving and unchurched family, friends, neighbors and coworkers.



December- January Pastoral Acts

	<p>Holy Baptism</p> <p>Camden Gray Stuck</p> <p>December 5, 2021</p>			<p>Holy Baptism</p> <p>Elinor Faith Watford</p> <p>December 18, 2021</p>	
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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 30 students and their families who are being served this school year in the preschool are flourishing! We are so, so thankful that we have had the opportunity to open our doors and continue learning since September. Our amazing staff, a warm and loving environment, small class sizes and high-quality learning experiences are just a few of the reason that our preschool is loved by many. 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. Anna is always happy to talk with families and provide tours of the preschool.

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.



The Board of Education: Youth Gathering

Jessica Dennis, Superintendent

The Youth Group would like to share a **BIG** thanks for your support of their National Youth Gathering -Krispy Kreme fundraiser. They put away almost \$200 towards their trip, thanks to your generosity. Travel plans are being arranged and they are looking forward to July. They will spend 4 days worshipping with LCMS youth from all over the country. This year's gathering focuses on the theme: "In All Things," based on Colossians 1:15-20.



¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

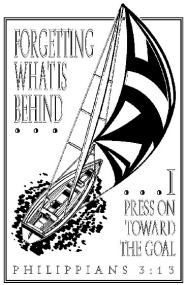
Pastor Gonzales, Director of LINC Ministries explains, "From the beginning of the Christian story, we learn that God is 'the Creator of all things.' In Colossians, Paul tells us that 'Jesus is before all things, in all things, and holds all things together.' God's word tells us how things will end, 'Jesus will return to make all things new.' The NYG will explore how, we, as the church should live, serve, and love until that return." What an awesome experience this will be for our Youth Group!

The Board of Education is beginning to plan for VBS 2022. If you would like to volunteer or help with planning, please let me know.

Social Ministry Board: Resolution Thoughts for a New Year

Mary Keller, Chairperson

Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, Philippians 3:13



How many of last year's resolutions did you keep? If you're anything like me, last year's resolutions are still a work in progress! They say, 'Procrastination is the thief of time.' We keep promising ourselves we'll do better. But, as you know, 'resolutions' only happen when you're 'resolute'. That means having a mind that's made up. So here are four resolution thoughts to help stay focused: 1) *Take time for what really matters.* Get up early in the morning to read your Bible and pray before entering the day. Make more time for your family. Take better care of your body, it's God's temple. 2) *Tackle one thing at a time.* Taking on too many things at once dilutes your focus and makes it harder to stick with things. When you start too much, you finish too little. So start where you are and build on your successes by staying focused on one thing at a time. 3) *Start small.* Don't try to accomplish the whole task in one bite; start with baby steps. Think in terms of what you will do instead of what you won't. 4) *Record your progress or lack of it.* You can't manage what you can't measure. Throw yourself into your tasks, so you can see how far you've come and what you still need to accomplish. Make your mind up, be resolute, and always keep working on it!

Our board is praying that the spirit would guide our efforts while we work on developing two new ministry concepts this year. If your gift is listening and you enjoy having a phone conversation or if you like to cook and bake, you have an opportunity to hone the gift God has given you! If the spirit is urging you to find out more details, please contact me at the church office. We need YOU to make this happen! "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)



The SOUPER BOWL OF CARING – February 12-13, 2022



Both the Super Bowl and the Souper Bowl of Caring are fastly approaching! Mt. Olive's youth will be collecting donations for the annual Souper Bowl of Caring after church services on February 12th and 13th. Donations will go directly to our local food pantry, Sharing God's Love. Please show your support with a generous donation as you participate in this national event that began 30 years ago right here in Columbia, South Carolina. Since 1990, over \$100 million dollars has been raised for local charities nationwide!

The mission of Souper Bowl of Caring is: *"Using the energy of the Super Bowl to mobilize youth in a united national effort to care for people in their local communities who are hungry and in need"*. They believe the idea for Souper Bowl of Caring is a gift from God, transforming the excitement around the Super Bowl into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving. Let us join in the prayer that started it all:

"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat."

In addition to your monetary contribution, please bring in **1 can of soup for the Sharing God's Love grocery cart**. If everyone brings in 1 can of soup it will be enough to feed each person receiving help at Sharing God's Love for an entire week!

Thank you for your support for this much needed event.

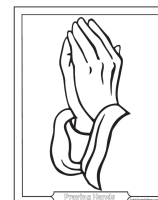
The Board of Evangelism: A Focus on Evangelism

Richard Shealy, Chairperson

Ephesians 3:19 *Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,*

While thinking about a subject to write for this article I looked through an old backup of my laptop and found an article entitled "Five Ways to Pray for Your Community" by Daniel Darling. The article is at least seven years old, but there were three items that seemed timeless and were chosen for this month's article.

Pray that the Church in the community will be faithful to present the gospel message, clearly, creatively, and faithfully. Pray that the Church will boldly present Christ to the community, *even as the gospel becomes more controversial in the broader culture.* Pray also for unity around this purpose within your local church and among Bible-preaching churches in the community. Your church can't reach every soul, it will take all believers to faithfully share Christ. Pray also for creativity in faithfully presenting Christ in a context that reaches people where they are.



Pray that your church would be biblically faithful in its evangelistic approach. Evangelism is at the heart of God's mission, it's our purpose as ambassadors for Christ. So pray that your church doesn't become so enslaved to the God of pragmatism that you lose the heart of the gospel itself, that your ministry becomes so much about what the wider culture thinks about you than glorifying God. Where this line is may be different for every church, but mostly pray that your church keeps at the core of its mission the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Pray that YOU will be the one God sends. That you would have such a fire and passion in your heart for those who don't know Jesus that it would motivate you to be a missionary in your community. And pray that God will expose you to potential relationships with unsaved people, where you can assemble the building blocks of fruitful, gospel-transferring relationships.

Join a Bible Class

February 2022 Sunday School & Bible Classes – 9:15 AM			
Infants – age 2	Nursery	Parents may stay with their infants & toddlers in the nursery. Please listen to the worship service through the speaker and sanitize the toys with which your child has played.	
Circle of Friends	Preschool Area	Katie Tyczynski & Faithful Group of Volunteers	Bringing Jesus to Special Needs Children
PK3 – 4th Grade	Upstairs Classroom	Jessica Dennis & Volunteer Helpers	The Promises of Jesus
Confirmation Class (5th grade & up)	Preschool Area	Pr. Walt Harper	A 2-Year study of the Bible and Luther's Small Catechism
Middle School, including recently confirmed students	Preschool Area	Rick Baden	A variety of lessons from the Bible
High School	Wagner House	Pastor Walt	February 6 – March 27
Adults & High School	Fellowship Hall	Sandy Osborne	The Names of Jesus
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." Philipians 2:3-4

The darkness of winter is upon us and people may feel sad and lonely because of the shortness of daylight hours. God uses His family to express His encouragement to those who need it most. Let's continue our ministry to those in our congregation by lifting them up to God in prayer. And please send cards and/or phone them, too.

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!



Don Angen	Betty Hunter	Carolyn McCartha	Cyndi Nelson	Molly Kate Shealy
David Buck	Bonnie Jones	Anita Meetze	Dorothy Prater	Shirlean Sons
Phil Carter	Harold/Sarah Jones	Charles/Laura Meetze	Polly Roland	Fred Stalbaum
Shirley Curry	Melvin/Judy Jones	Margaret Meetze	Mandy Schultzt	Flora Weed
Cleta Dunaway	Ron/Pat LaGrange	CR/Thelma Miller	Linda Schmidt	Henry/Louise Weed
Teresa Hoefer	Herb Loebis	Eva Mae Monts	Mary Schott	Waneta White



February 2022 Anniversaries

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

February 2022 Birthdays

2/2	Chuck Bauer	2/12	Daniel Zahn	2/18	Natalie Crosland
2/2	C.R. Miller	2/12	Rosemary Sharpe	2/19	William Baden
2/3	Susie Hoffman	2/13	Kathie Bost	2/19	Carole Mueller
2/7	Sally Kinard	2/14	Trent Boykin	2/19	Susan Strouse
2/8	Beth Lipkin	2/14	Paula Helming	2/20	Kathy Eargle
2/10	Phil Carter	2/14	Xander Polkowsky	2/21	Chris McKinney
2/10	Joshua Thrun	2/14	Eric Matzko	2/22	David Buck
2/11	Seth Duncan	2/15	Hannah Hennigan	2/23	Teresa Hoefer
2/11	Bailey Stuck	2/15	Jeff Thrun	2/24	Barbara Spadaccini
2/11	Carly Stuck	2/16	Scott Birkelien	2/25	Kelsey Whitaker
2/12	Noah Laney	2/16	James Crosland	2/27	Hunter Robinson
2/12	Herb Loebis	2/17	Rachel Lewis	2/27	Suzi Slaughter

Read the Bible in Three Years – February 2022

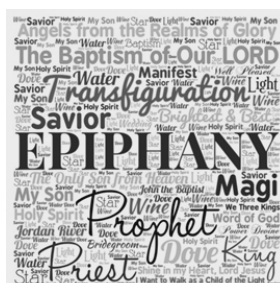
February 2022							
Feb 1	Acts 16	Feb 8	Acts 23	Feb 15	Leviticus 2	Feb 22	Leviticus 9
Feb 2	Acts 17	Feb 9	Acts 24	Feb 16	Leviticus 3	Feb 23	Leviticus 10
Feb 3	Acts 18	Feb 10	Acts 25	Feb 17	Leviticus 4	Feb 24	Leviticus 11
Feb 4	Acts 19	Feb 11	Acts 26	Feb 18	Leviticus 5	Feb 25	Leviticus 12
Feb 5	Acts 20	Feb 12	Acts 27	Feb 19	Leviticus 6	Feb 26	Leviticus 13
Feb 6	Acts 21	Feb 13	Acts 28	Feb 20	Leviticus 7	Feb 27	Leviticus 14
Feb 7	Acts 22	Feb 14	Leviticus 1	Feb 21	Leviticus 8	Feb 28	Leviticus 15

The first half of February, we will be continuing reading through the book of Acts, following the spread of Christianity throughout the area around the Mediterranean Sea.

Next, we will jump back to the Old Testament and read the book of Leviticus. The purpose of Leviticus is to provide instruction and laws to guide a sinful, yet redeemed people in their relationship with a holy God. There is an emphasis in Leviticus on the need for personal holiness in response to the holy God. Sin must be atoned for through the offering of proper sacrifices. Other topics covered in the book are diet, childbirth, and diseases. Chapter 16 describes the yearly Day of Atonement when an annual sacrifice is made for the cumulative sin of the people. Furthermore, the people of God are to be intentional in their personal, moral, and social living, in contrast to the practices of the pagan peoples who live around them.



Epiphany



During the Season of Epiphany, our bright yellow sign will recount how Jesus revealed himself as both fully God and fully man, and as the Savior of the world including the gentiles. The last Sunday of the Epiphany Season, February 27th, always recounts Jesus' Transfiguration. As you enter and leave Mt. Olive, look closely at the bright yellow sign and find phrases from the week's scripture readings and the names of some of our well-known Epiphany hymns.

Coming in March: The Ash Wednesday and Season of Lent signs.



Announcements & Opportunities

Social Ministry: Save the Dates in February

February 25th – Fun Friday - 10:00 am: Craft this Month: Walking Water Experiment
- Age 4 Mt. Olive Preschool students with parent **and** Mt. Olive Age 4 children with parent are invited.



Small group Bible study to begin Friday, February 14, 2022.

We will be studying *Luther's Small Catechism - A Manual for Discipleship* and meeting every second Friday of the month. For contact information: Dennis and Tina Dixon at dennis.dixon@comcast.net.

The 5:00 PM Saturday Service

The 5:00 PM Saturday Service requires a face covering for the entire service. 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.



March Newsletter Deadline – February 23, 2022

Your next deadline for submitting articles for the February 2022 issue of the Olive Leaves is February 23, 2022. Remember to send your ½ page articles to Sue Strouse at slstrouse@gmail.com.



Women's Book Club



Ladies Book Club! We will be meeting the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. We are studying the book by Shannon Bream, *"The Women of the Bible Speak"*. On February 1, we will be studying Hannah and on February 15, Miriam. Please feel free to come even if you don't read the book. We have great fellowship, and the leader will synopsise the chapter and you will learn so much from attending! For more information contact Renee Harper at 203-885-6733 or waltandrenee@att.net.

March 2th

Mid-Week Lenten Services begin on Ash Wednesday, March 2th. We will offer optional Imposition of Ashes at both services on this day. Wednesday mid-week services will continue through April 6th. Service times are 12 Noon and 7:00 pm. in the sanctuary.



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 with which your child has played.



Kid's Korner: No Kidding

Whatever our age, God calls us to model holy living for others.

Directions: Match the animal young with its parent. Then write the letter answers in order below to complete 1 Timothy 4:12 NIV.

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| 1. ____ bear | 9. ____ monkey | A. fry | I. hatchling |
| 2. ____ frog | 10. ____ platypus | B. fawn | K. foal |
| 3. ____ owl | 11. ____ alligator | C. gosling | L. owlet |
| 4. ____ horse | 12. ____ giraffe | D. cub | M. puggle |
| 5. ____ kangaroo | 13. ____ goose | E. kid | N. joey |
| 6. ____ deer | 14. ____ swan | F. cygnet | O. polliwog |
| 7. ____ goat | 15. ____ dog | G. infant | P. puppy |
| 8. ____ fish | | H. calf | |

“_on’t let any_ne _oo_ down o_ you _ecaus_
you _re youn_, but set an exa_ple for the bel_evers
in speec_, in _onduct, in love, in _aith and in _urity.”

1 TIMOTHY 4:12, NIV

