



Olive Leaves

March 2023



Table of Contents				
From Pastor Walt Page 1	Board of Public Relations Page 4	Board of Social Ministry Page 5	Bible Classes Page 6	Signs of the Season Page 8
From our Vice President Page 2	Pastoral Acts Bible Page 4	Mt Olive Preschool Page 5	Read the Bible in 3 Years Page 7	Announcements Page 9
Board of Fellowship Page 3	March Lectionary Page 5	Board of Education Page 6	March Anniversaries & B-days Page 7	Kid's Korner Page 10
Board of Stewardship Page 3			Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards Page 8	March Calendar Page 11

From Pastor Walt: "What's Going on Here?"

Pastor Walt Harper

walt.harper@mtolivesc.org

If you decide to read all the way through the Bible (and I always encourage people to do so), then you wind up reading plenty of beloved passages of the Bible. But you also wind up reading some tough parts, and even some parts that make you wonder: What's going on in this passage?

In our bulletin we print a three-year Bible reading plan. And just a few days ago we were in Second Samuel 4. It's a perfect example of: "What's going on here?"

If you have a Study Bible it will label the chapter "The Murder of Ish-Bosheth," which right away raises the question: Why are the names so hard?



David and Ish-bosheth

- David receives news of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. He mourns. (2 Samuel 1:19-27)
- He goes to Hebron where the tribe of Judah appoints him to be their king. (2 Samuel 1-7)
- Saul's captain, Abner, appoints Ish-bosheth as king over Israel. (2 Samuel 2:8-11)
- War erupts. Ish-bosheth is slain and David rules all Israel (2 Samuel 5:1-5)

But what else is going on? Ish-Bosheth was one of the sons of King Saul. At the end of First Samuel, Saul and most of his sons died at the Battle of Mount Gilboa. Ish-Bosheth was not killed, and many people assumed that he would be the next king.

Of course David was the man God had chosen to be the next king, and many of the key leaders in the government and in the military had gone over to support David. For a brief while Ish-Bosheth held out hopes of becoming king; but when the greatest general supporting him switched sides, Ish-Bosheth decided that it was not to be. Rather than leading a long and protracted civil war, he decided to retire to his home to lead a quiet life.

But two scoundrels decided to take things into their own hands. They came into his house with false pretenses, and stabbed him to death.

The two men went to David to tell him what they had done. They assumed that they would have the king's favor, thinking that they'd eliminated his chief rival.

David made it immediately clear that they had done no such thing. In David's view they had killed an innocent man; and he ordered their immediate execution. When the nation heard about David's actions they rejoiced to know that such a man was now to lead them.

Okay. But still the question, "Why is this in the Bible?" Consider these things:

- 1) Very often the Bible just "tells it like it is," whether that news is good or bad. If difficult and unjust things took place, then the Bible just lays it out. This injustice is what happened. Many commentators describe such passages as being "descriptive, not prescriptive." That is, these are the facts, without the Bible endorsing those facts.
- 2) The passage shows that in real life terrible injustice happens, and will, this side of heaven, always happen. People always hope that "justice will finally prevail." But it just never arrives. Rivalry, evil, scheming, and the terrible actions of evil men fill the history books and the Bible itself.
- 3) Will I work for justice even in the midst of the ugliness? The murder of Ish-Bosheth is nothing less than murder and political assassination. David could not prevent that from happening, but he could choose how he would respond to it. So that remains the question for believers of every age: Given that injustice will happen, will I be a force for a proper and just response?

So that's what we make out of texts like this. We read all the passages of the Bible. As we read, we ask ourselves: What does this text say about the world around me? How have the people of God responded to that reality? What does this text say to me and my situation? How can I implement a proper and godly response?

Blessings in your reading!



From our Vice-President: Volunteers Needed!

Jason Dennis, Congregational Vice President

"This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone." Titus 3:8



This is the time of year where I have the privilege to pull together the nominating committee. We are in search of volunteers to donate their time, talent, and ability to serve our wonderful church! Furthermore, we are extraordinarily grateful for those who tirelessly and consistently volunteer in service to our church, and we would also like some new faces to join in. There are many opportunities for you to get involved from church treasurer to financial secretary; fellowship, worship, and other boards, to name a few. On behalf of the nominating committee, we ask you to prayerfully consider offering your God-given talents and skills in support of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church and in service to God.

Editor's note: For more information, the elders & council bulletin board, located outside the church office, has photos of the current chairpersons and descriptions of each board. These individuals would love to talk with you about serving.

Nominating Committee: Jason Dennis, Dianne BouFawaz, Kevin Kibler, Gloria Meetze

Fellowship Board: Lenten Lunches

Jillian Brabham, Chairperson



Lenten Lunches following the noon Midweek Lenten services begin Wednesday, March 1st and continue through Wednesday, March 29th. Look for the signup sheet in the Narthex. You can sign up for the main course, side items, or desserts. These light lunches are always filled with yummy food and Christian fellowship, so please join us if you can!



Board of Stewardship: Lent

Naven Olson, Chairperson

On February 22, we entered the season of Lent, a season for remembering and focusing on the passion of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The cross of Christ has always been God the Father's only plan to save fallen and sinful mankind. As early as Genesis 3:15, God promised that a redeemer born of a virgin would crush the serpent's head: *"And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."*

And Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 vividly describe His crucifixion and the reason for it. Jesus' 4th word from the cross was Psalm 22:1a, *"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"* Psalm 22:16-18 vividly describes His crucifixion: *"For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers have encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots."* And Isaiah 53:5-6 states the reason for His passion: *"But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him."*

This Lenten season let us be in church on Sundays, on Wednesdays, in Sunday Bible class, and in daily Bible study and prayer. Let us give generously of our time, efforts, and resources to spread the Gospel of Christ crucified for our sins and raised for our justification. And let us reach out to unbelieving and unchurched family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.



The Board of Public Relations: Why Lent?

Sue Strouse, Chairperson

When Lent was first practiced in the 300's AD, Christians practiced repentance, denial of self, and a time of instruction for catechumens (a time to study the Apostles' Creed).



During the Reformation, many people wanted to omit Lent because it wasn't specified in the Bible. Luther wrote "Lent, Palm Sunday, and Holy Week shall be retained, not to force anyone to fast, but to preserve the Passion history and the Gospels appointed for that season" (Luther's Works, 53:90). Luther emphasized that this is not a way to be saved or sanctified, but an opportunity to strengthen our faith.



The 40 days of Lent correspond to the 40 days that Jesus spent overcoming evil in the desert, just before He started His ministry. The keeping of Lent is for our greater spiritual good by looking to our Lord for strength. It promotes striving for the resurrection of life in the here and now by living as the baptized people we are, repenting of sin and embracing the way of sanctification. So for 40 days we should be thinking of the eternal life that Jesus has given us through His suffering and death and resurrection.



February Pastoral Acts

	<p>Holy Baptism</p> <p>Millie Grace Waldrop</p> <p>February 12, 2023</p>	
---	--	---



March 2023 Lectionary

Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
March 5	Lent 2	Genesis 12:1-9	Psalm 121	1 Corinthians 9:1-23	John 3:1-17
March 12	Lent 3	Exodus 17:1-7	Psalm 95:1-7a	1 Corinthians 10	John 4:5-26
March 19	Lent 4	Isaiah 42:14-21	Psalm 142	1 Corinthians 11: 1-32	John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39
March 26	Lent 5	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Psalm 130	1 Corinthians 12:12-13:13	John 11:17-27, 38-53

The Social Ministry Board: USC Nursing Students

Mary Keller, Chairperson

**"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you,
and before you were born, I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:5 ESV**



Birthright of Columbia has been partnering with the USC Senior Nursing Students for 16 years this spring. The students complete their Public Health course requirements with an internship at Birthright where each student learns the operations of a nonprofit. They also learn to conduct client interviews, help provide important resources that help moms navigate throughout their pregnancy, and walk through the day to day operation responsibilities.

Their semester culminates with the students organizing, planning and conducting a baby shower. These showers are hosted 2 times to allow the spring semester nurses and fall semester nurses to participate in this most important community event. There are typically 8-10 students each semester and they have had anywhere from 30 to 80 pregnant moms participate by receiving items collected from the baby showers. This involves preparing over 200 bags of baby clothes, baby health care items, and various prizes donated throughout the year. For some of these moms this is the only baby shower they will be honored with. Many of these nurses will go on to work in OB/GN or NICU departments at hospitals so it's a great experience for them.

This bi-annual shower is a wonderful opportunity to help moms in need year-round, support the USC students, and reach out to our community! In March we will be partnering with Birthright of Columbia and the USC Students by collecting baby items for their spring shower. A comprehensive needs list will be provided in the weekly bulletin.

Senior Retirees' Ministry Group gathers two times each month. Join us on Thursday, March 9th, at 10:00 am and Tuesday, March 21st, at 1:30 pm!



Preschool News: Next Year Registration

Anna Brent, Preschool Director

803-781-7180 - preschool@mtolivesc.org

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

We are looking forward to all things "spring" and will begin learning about spring growth/changes and continue working our way through our alphabet with the help of our Zoophonics animal friends. We will also begin learning about Easter and celebrate our Risen Savior!

It is registration time for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year. We currently have a few openings in 2's class for next year. We are excited to begin planning for another school year and look forward to seeing how the Lord is going to work in and through the preschool during the upcoming year! So, if you know anyone who has a child that will turn 2 by September 1st, 2023 and is looking for a Christian preschool, please have them contact me at the phone number or email above.



The Board of Education:

Jessica Dennis, Superintendent



Thank you for your generous support of the Youth Group service project in February. Last year, they collected \$698 during Souper Bowl Sunday. This year, we topped that and collected \$750 for Sharing God's Love! This will support their wonderful ministry to those in need in our community. We have a goal of 500 cans and have one more weekend to go. We are well on our way to making that goal as well. Thank you!

Please be on the lookout for VBS volunteer signups. It's that time again and we're excited! This year we will be journeying through "Babylon" and learning of God's care for Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Our kids will be reminded that God cares for them, too! Mark your calendars for Wednesday June 14th- Friday June 16th, from 6-8 pm. Please let me know if you'd like to teach, chaperone groups, or help with props and decorating.



Join a Bible Class

March 2023 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, Megan Weed, & Brandy Maye	God's Creation
Confirmation Class (5th grade & up)	Preschool Big Room	Mr. Bill Boykin & Pr. Walt Harper	A two-year study of The Small Catechism & The Bible
Middle School, including recently confirmed students	Wagner House	Rick Baden	Bible Study
High School Youth	Wagner House	Joel & April Fancey	Bible Study
Adults	Fellowship Hall	Pr. Walt Harper Sandy Osborne	Jeremiah, through March 12th Starting March 19, "Biblical Reconciliation" (See below.)
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

"The Bible talks a great deal about forgiveness and its ultimate foundation, reconciliation. But what is reconciliation? What does the Bible say we should do about it? Why do we need it? And what does it actually look like in real life?

"Reconciliation has much to do with transformation. It is the moving from a place of separation, hurt, and brokenness to a place of healing, wholeness, forgiveness, and reunion. It's taking the wrong and covering it with the cleansing power of God." (Jessica Brodie)

Join us for this exciting class where we will look at reconciliation in several Biblical accounts and in our own lives and ministry.

Read the Bible in Three Years –March 2023

March 2023							
Mar 1	II Samuel 8	Mar 9	II Samuel 16	Mar 17	II Samuel 24	Mar 25	II Peter 3
Mar 2	II Samuel 9	Mar 10	II Samuel 17	Mar 18	I Peter 1	Mar 26	Genesis 1
Mar 3	II Samuel 10	Mar 11	II Samuel 18	Mar 19	I Peter 2	Mar 27	Genesis 2
Mar 4	II Samuel 11	Mar 12	II Samuel 19	Mar 20	I Peter 3	Mar 28	Genesis 3
Mar 5	II Samuel 12	Mar 13	II Samuel 20	Mar 21	I Peter 4	Mar 29	Genesis 4
Mar 6	II Samuel 13	Mar 14	II Samuel 21	Mar 22	I Peter 5	Mar 30	Genesis 5
Mar 7	II Samuel 14	Mar 15	II Samuel 22	Mar 23	II Peter 1	Mar 31	Genesis 6
Mar 8	II Samuel 15	Mar 16	II Samuel 23	Mar 24	II Peter 2		

At the end of February, we began reading II Samuel and in March, we will finish the book and move on to the two books penned by the Apostle Peter. Then lastly, we will end the month at “the beginning” in Genesis.

In II Samuel, we will study King David and his great reign. Here’s an interesting fact: There is more written in the Scriptures about David than about any other person except Jesus Christ.

In his books, Peter encourages the early Christians who are suffering through persecution to remain steadfast in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and in living godly lives. This is the eternal hope for the people as they endure unbearable times.

During the last week of March, we read the first 6 chapters of Genesis, recounting God’s creation, the fall of mankind, and the beginning of God’s redemption through the family of Noah, the only righteous man on the earth.



March 2023 Anniversaries

3/5	Chris & Hannah Hennighan	3/17	David & Paula Meetze
3/7	James & Abigail Sharpe	3/18	Todd & Shari Selke
3/15	Stuart & Pam Dalton	3/20	Brian & Laura Laprise
3/16	Al & Annette Holladay, Jr.		

March 2023 Birthdays

3/6	Gerry Fletcher	3/14	Charles Stuck, II	3/21	Ryan Voyles
3/6	Stacey Robinson	3/14	John Tedder	3/22	Jimmy Crosland
3/6	Myrna Rush	3/15	Rebecca Curry	3/23	Donna Sons
3/6	Mandy Schultz	3/17	Caitlin Voyles	3/24	Karen Meetze
3/7	Sandy Stepanovic	3/19	Sara Jones	3/24	Nelson Thompson
3/8	Sandra Stocker	3/21	Norma Hessary	3/27	Matthew Polkowsky
3/12	Owen Dennis	3/21	Liz Rosinski	3/29	Eddie Magic
3/13	Pam Stuck			3/29	Taylor Martin

Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

***"Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.***

***Yes, the Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.***

***Righteousness will go before him
and make his footsteps a way."* Psalm 85:11-13**

It's March! The weather is a little warmer and hopefully sunnier. Each day grows a few minutes longer until Daylight Savings Time returns on the 12th! We pray that those who have endured the darkness of winter will anticipate the sprouting daffodills, flowering trees, and other signs of God's renewed creation!

God uses His family to bring His light and renewal to those who need it most. Let us 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!

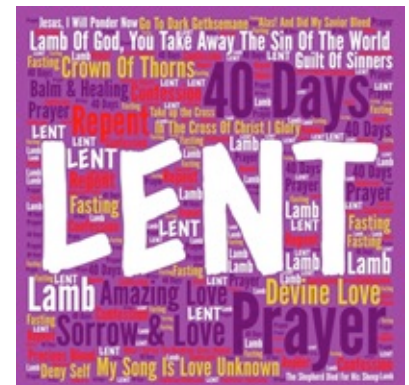


Don Angen	Cleta Dunaway	Anita Meetze	Eva Mae Monts	Linda Schmidt
Nadia R. BouFawaz	Teresa Hoefer	Laura Meetze	Cyndi Nelson	Shirlean Sons
Phil Carter	Betty Hunter	Laurie Meetze	Polly Roland	Flora Weed
Shirley Curry	Harold/Sarah Jones	Margaret Meetze	Twila Sandt	Henry/Louise Weed
Jim/Andrea Doty	Carolyn McCartha	Thelma Miller	Mandy Schultz	



March Signs: The Season of Lent

As March begins, the church is already a week into Lent, as Ash Wednesday was on February 22nd. The theme of reflection and repentance marks the season of Lent. Throughout the 40 days of Lent, remember Jesus' steadfast love for His children and how He willingly prepared to go to the cross to redeem each one who believes. When you enter or exit the church, pause by the purple Lenten sign and take with you a special word or hymn title to ponder throughout the coming week.



Announcements & Opportunities

Women's Book Club



The Women's Book Club will meet on Tuesdays, March 7th and 21st at 7 PM. ALL women of the congregation are welcome to join in at this twice monthly class in the Fellowship Hall. We are reading from the book, *Be Thou My Guide* by Margo Heath Dupre, which can be purchased at CPH.org.

Guided Painting Class

On Saturday, March 11, 2023 at 10 AM in the Fellowship Hall, we are having another painting class. Bring a dish to share and your \$6.00 for the class. It is a great time to socialize with our friends and you may surprise yourself with your artistic skills!



Men's Prayer Breakfast followed by the Church Workday

Saturday, March 18th the men will gather for their monthly prayer breakfast at 8:00 AM. Then at 9:00 AM, please join in for the spring workday! There will be several projects, both inside and outside. All are invited to participate! Remember, many hands make light work!

April Newsletter Deadline –March 27, 2023

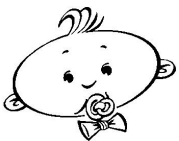
Your next deadline for submitting articles for April 2023 issue of the Olive Leaves is **March 27, 2023**. Remember to send your ½ page articles to Sue Strouse at slstrouse@gmail.com.



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 newly renovated 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 tidy up and sanitize the toys with which your child has played.

Kids Korner: A Planting Parable

Jesus had to explain his Parable of the Sower to the confused disciples.

Directions: Use the word bank to answer the clues. Then fill in the correct words below to complete Matthew 13:23, NIV.

WORD BANK: sow, soil, wither, root, thorn, crop, seed, farmer

1. Plant part that absorbs water _____
2. Contains what's needed to grow a plant _____
3. To plant _____
4. Sharp part of a plant _____
5. What is harvested. _____
6. To dry up and shrivel _____
7. Person who plants _____
8. The earth a plant grows in. _____

“But the _____₂ falling on good _____₈ refers to someone who hears the word and understands it.

This is the one who produces a _____₅, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was _____₃ n.”

M A T T H E W 1 3 : 2 3 , N I V

