



# Olive Leaves



June-July 2023

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## From Our Pastor

*Pastor Walt Harper*

*walt.harper@mtolivesc.org*

In every church I have ever attended, church attendance on Easter Sunday was not only the highest of the year, but it was often dramatically higher. Sometimes it was more than twice the average week.

And of course, the week after Easter was sadly called "Low Sunday." To be more specific, if an average week was 250, then on Easter you might get 500 people in church, and the week after Easter you would get 200.

Easter 2023 is now my fourth Easter at Mt Olive (that sounds weird to say, doesn't it?), and I have noticed that neither of these realities happen here.

Here, Easter attendance is higher than normal, but not quite as much so as elsewhere. I remember the first couple years I would think, "We don't get such a big Easter Bump." But then to go along with that, the week after Easter was not really all that low, either.

Here is something funny: In 2023 the week after Easter our church attendance was actually higher than an average week.

Of course, every pastor loves to see consistent (and even growing) church attendance. It has been very encouraging to see our congregation do just that. What does this mean? The majority of our people just come to church pretty regularly. For many, weekly church attendance is just "what we do."

No surprise, this is the way you really have to do it. If you wake up on a Sunday morning and wonder, "Shall we go to church today or not?" then you will sometimes answer "Yes," and sometimes "No." But if you just assumed "We're going," then you are probably pretty much just getting ready to go.

Here at Mt. Olive, this can be either Sunday morning or Saturday night. Even more delightful to the heart of the pastor is those normal Sunday attenders who come on Saturday just because they have something else going on Sunday.

All that to say this: It is now summer! Church attendance will dip a little. Naturally, in any given week some people are on vacation, and you cannot be at Myrtle Beach and at Mt. Olive at the same time. This much makes sense. But if you are in town, then it is always great just to keep up the habit. (That is how habits work, come to think of it.)



Here is a related question: Do you go to church elsewhere when you are out of town? Sometimes it is quite wonderful to visit with another "tribe" of the people of God. What is familiar? What is different? Not to ask those questions as a critic; but to observe the wonderful variety that exists in the Kingdom of God.

I pray that everyone has a most blessed Summer, including at some point a much-needed and refreshing "time away." And when you are "in town," I will look forward to worshipping with you on Saturday or Sunday.



## **The Board of Parish Fellowship**

*Jill Brabham, Chairperson*

***"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." Colossians 3:16***

Our fearless music director and choir director, Karen Meetze, has decided to retire at the end of June after decades of amazing service to the congregation of Mt. Olive. You are hereby invited to a church-wide potluck in her honor on Sunday, June 25th following the 2nd service in the fellowship hall. BBQ pulled pork, ribs and chicken will be provided but we are asking everyone to bring their favorite dish to share as well. Hope to see you there!

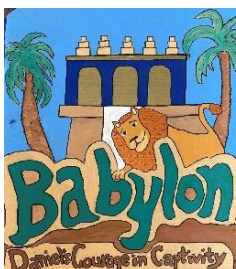


## **The Board of Education**

*Jessica Dennis, Superintendent*

Do you remember back in February and March, when Pastor Walt started announcing that VBS felt far away but that it was really right around the corner? Well, I blinked and it is HERE! Babylon IS coming in just a few weeks! There is MUCH to do in the meantime and I am so thankful for the enthusiastic volunteers. This VBS is going to be really special! If you have offered to bring in items for us to borrow for VBS, please plan to have those at church by Sunday, June 11. We will be building Babylon after the late service that day. We will appreciate any able hands who can stay to help us put up tents, build the Babylonian palace and hanging gardens, and set up shops. Lunch will be provided to volunteers. Pretty please and thank you in advance! It will be so fun to see this VBS come to life!

We hope that you have registered your children for Babylon, June 14-16. If not, please visit Mt. Olive's Facebook page or the church website for the link to register, or you can find registration forms at the VBS table in the Narthex. Also, there are invitations on this table - please take one and invite your friends and neighbors!



I pray that this VBS is a blessing to all of the children that attend, along with all of the adults who participate. God never left His people's side, even as they went into captivity. The book of Daniel reminds us that the one, true God is sovereign on earth and in heaven. In spite of how things may seem, God is in control amidst all of the evil powers of this world and is always working on behalf of His people. I can't wait to experience Babylon with all of you!

**From our President**  
*James Crosland, President*

There was a really good turnout for our Quarterly Voters' Assembly last month. If you have not, and would like take part in our meetings, please come to the next one in September and we will vote you in. It is a wonderful experience to have a part in the functioning of Mt. Olive helping to make those ever-important decisions about the future.



While we are on the topic of the May meeting, the voters passed the Nominating Committee's recommendation to the Church Council for vacant and rotating seats for our boards. I would love to see more volunteers bringing fresh ideas to our church body. We still have vacancies for the Financial Secretary and Treasurer positions, if you are being called to either of these positions. Pray that we fill these important positions.

**Safety Tip:** Summer is upon us. As we travel to our vacation destinations, please have situational awareness of your surroundings. Watch your belongings and possessions! Do not become a victim because of something you could have prevented. Praying that everyone has a fantastic and safe summer!



**The Social Ministry Board: Blood Drive – July 10th**

*Mary Keller, Chairperson*

"None of us can help everyone. But all of us can help someone. And when we help them, we serve Jesus. Who would want to miss a chance to do that?" Max Lucado



As outreach to our community, we will be hosting an American Red Cross Blood Drive this summer on July 10<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am until 3:30 pm. At our last blood drive in January, we ended up having a successful drive collecting 33 donations. This gave the Red Cross the ability to give blood to 89 people in need and save lives! Our blood donations go to our local hospitals in dire need.

Here are some interesting statistics on how blood is used to save lives:

- Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood and or platelets.
- Nearly 16 million blood components are transfused each year in the U.S.
- Sickle cell disease affects 90,000 to 100,000 people in the U.S. About 1,000 babies are born with the disease each year. Sickle cell patients can require blood transfusions throughout their lives.
- The average red blood cell transfusion is approximately 3 units.
- One blood donation can save more than one life.
- A single car accident victim can require as many as 100 units of blood.
- According to the American Cancer Society, more than 1.8 million people are expected to be diagnosed with cancer in 2023. Many of them will need blood, sometimes daily, during their chemotherapy treatment.

Every day, blood donors help patients of all ages: accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients, and those battling cancer. In fact, every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. Please consider donating your blood to help someone in need. There will be more details on how to sign up in the coming months.

**Seniors Retirees' Ministry** meets on Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 – 11:00 am and again on Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm. We meet in the fellowship hall for light refreshments, devotion, and fellowship. We will be taking a summer break in July and August.

**Board of Evangelism**  
*Richard Shealy, Chairperson*

**Five Smooth Stones - Taken from Open Doors with Brother Andrew**

"It is dangerous to learn the truth at a faster rate than we can practice it. That's why I do not distribute Bibles to new converts," said the Chinese evangelist to the representatives of a mission agency. The mission had given the evangelist 5,000 Bibles over the course of two years and many were still in storage because he had devised a rather unique method of self-discipleship. Out of a hundred converts, he picked five people at random and said, "You are going to lead a weekly meeting for 20 people." Then he gave each of the five leaders five smooth stones. On each stone, he chiseled a verse of the Bible and said, "each week, give a different member one of the stones. Let them live with the verse, think about it, pray about it, take it out with them to the fields. Then, the next week when you all come together, you are to listen to what God told them about the verse on the stone. Do this for all five stones. I'll see you in six months to find out how you are getting on and give you five more verses."



Later, when he returned, he was astonished to discover that nearly everyone was going on in faith. "Normally the fall-away rate is 40% or higher, he confessed, "but for those using the method of the five stones, it was only about 5%." He felt he had stumbled on a vital truth about discipleship and explained to the mission representatives that even when he had the opportunity to give new converts Bibles, he refused, insisting they start with his five stone method. Only after a year did he give them Bibles. He explained, "I don't want them to encounter too much truth too fast. Otherwise, they will get into the bad habit of never using what they know. A verse a week is the right pace. It slows them down to believe at the heart's pace. It is dangerous to learn truth faster than we can live it."

What a challenge to us! We have so many books to read. The Bible is available in many formats, yet do we slow ourselves down to ensure that the words dwell deeply in the heart?

**Open Doors Ministries - Serving Persecuted Christians**



**The Board of Public Relations**

*Aresa Boykin, Board Member*

**"I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world." Romans 1:8**

As many of you know, in April, Bill and I had the wonderful experience of traveling to Greece, western Turkey, and Rome *In the Footsteps of Paul*, a trip from *Imagine Travel & Tours*. Not only did we walk in many of the places that the Apostle Paul travelled, but we walked in some of "the footsteps" of Peter, John, Timothy, Titus, and many other founding church fathers. We learned so much about the ancient secular and pagan cultures of the areas and how Paul used the traditions and teachings to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in ways they could understand. We enjoyed our visits to the usual places like the Colosseum in Rome and the Acropolis area in Athens, but even more meaningful were the archeological sites of Ephesus, Philippi, and Corinth, three pagan cities that became strong Christian communities.



We would encourage you, if you are able, to venture on one of *Imagine's* pilgrimages to this area, the Holy Land, or to the Reformation trip to Germany. *Imagine* is a Christian travel company that is dedicated to connecting people to their Christian heritage. If you are past the age of extensive travel, please check out these places on Google so that you can see for yourself!

## Board of Stewardship

*Naven Olson, Chairperson*

**"Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" John 5:45-47**

The week after Easter, I went up to northern Kentucky to visit the **Answers in Genesis** Creation Museum and Ark Encounter with my sister Dr. Linda McLeod, a physician in Camden. We greatly enjoyed the visit and learned about the scientific evidence that supports the historicity of Noah's flood and the opinion that evolution and a billion-year-old earth cannot be true.

The position on creation of the **LCMS** as stated in the *Brief Statement of 1932* begins "We teach that God has created heaven and earth, and that in the manner and in the space of time recorded in the Holy Scriptures, especially Genesis 1 and 2, namely by His almighty creative Word, and in six days." Missouri Synod leaders understood that to accept evolution and/or millions of years is to contradict Jesus' affirmations of the historicity of Genesis 1-11 in Matthew 19:4-5, Matthew 24:37-39, Mark 10:6-9 and Luke 17:26-27. And the logical next step after that is to deny that Adam and Eve existed and to affirm that death came before sin. And in abolishing the first Adam, the need for the second Adam, Jesus Christ, is also abolished. This line of thinking is indeed dangerous and is becoming more evident today in several denominations.

Charles Darwin was a bitter opponent of Christianity. On Oct. 22, 1873 he wrote in a letter to his son George: "I have lately read Morley's Life of Voltaire and he insists strongly that direct attacks on Christianity produce little permanent effect; real good seems only to follow from slow and silent side attacks." (<https://darwinproject.ac.uk/letter/?docId=letters/DCP-LETT-9105.xml;query=1872;brand=default>)

Let us be grateful for a church that upholds the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. Let us be in church weekly, in prayer and Bible study daily and in Bible class when possible. Let us support this church with our time, effort, and resources. Let us reach out to unbelieving and unchurched family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors. I would urge you to visit the Creation Museum and the Ark Encounter. You can learn more at <http://www.answersingenesis.org>.

### June - July 2023 Lectionary

Date	Festival	Old Testament	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
June 4	Trinity	Genesis 1:1-5; 26-27; 2:1-3	Psalm 8	Acts 2:14a, 22-36	Matthew 28:16-20
June 11	Proper 5	Hosea. 5:15-6:6	Psalm 119:65-72	Romans 4:13-25	Matthew 9:9-13
June 18	Proper 6	Exodus 19:2-8	Psalm 100	Romans 5:6-15	Matthew 9:35-10:8\
June 25	Proper 7	Jeremiah 20:7-13	Psalm 91:1-10	Romans 6:12-23	Matthew 10:5a, 21-33
July 2	Proper 8	Jeremiah 28:5-9	Psalm 119:153-160	Romans 7:1-13	Matthew 10:34-42
July 9	Proper 9	Zechariah 9:9-12	Psalm 145:1-14	Romans 7:14-25a	Matthew 11:25-30
July 16	Proper 10	Isaiah 55:10-13	Psalm 65:9-13	Romans 8:12-17	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
July 23	Proper 11	Isaiah 44:6-8	Psalm 119:57-64	Romans 8:18-27	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
July 30	Proper 12	Deuteronomy 7:6-9	Psalm 125	Romans 8:28-39	Matthew 13:44-52

## Pastoral Acts



### Preschool News: Celebrating 16 years

*Anna Brent, Preschool Director*

803-781-7180 - [preschool@mtolivesc.org](mailto:preschool@mtolivesc.org)

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

We are so, so thankful for the opportunity to complete the 2022-2023 school year and to serve 33 students and their families. The Lord has continued to pour out His many blessings on our preschool and allowed us to finish the year strong with hearts that overflowed with the joy that comes from another year of learning and building relationships with one another. We are so incredibly thankful to return to having in-person events, full-time attendance, and special events. While it may sometimes seem like ABC's, crafts, and playground fun, the work that is being done in and through this ministry is invaluable to the children and families who we serve.



Even though the preschool area is quiet this time of year, please continue to pray for the school year ahead as we are busy preparing and planning for the ways in which the Lord would have us fulfill our mission to "grow in faith and love by spreading the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by providing a Christ-centered experience for young children." We currently have very limited openings in our 2's and 4's classes for next year, so if you know someone who is looking for a Christ-centered preschool for their little one, please give send them our way!

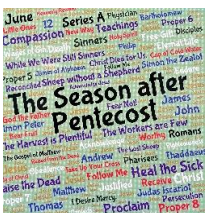
**Calling all rising kindergarteners!** If you know of a rising kindergartener (even if they didn't attend preschool at MOLP), we will have our Kindergarten Kamp on August 9<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 1 pm. Information about the camp and registration forms can be found on the preschool website!



Thank you for your unwavering kindness and I am especially thankful for your trusting in me as we share in this ministry together. Have a wonderful summer!



### Signs at the Church Entrance: The Season after Pentecost



June is here and with it, the longest church season, the Season after Pentecost begins. During this season the weekly Gospel scriptures will focus on the life and ministry of Jesus. From June to November, there will be monthly signs that have key themes and words from the Gospel. Why not walk up the ramp and study the sign as you prepare for worship.

## Join a Bible Class

Spring - Summer 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	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		Summer Break	Attend the Middle School Class
Middle School Youth	Wagner House	Rick Baden	Bible Study
High School Youth	Wagner House	Joel & April Fancey	Bible Study
Adults	Fellowship Hall	Barry Bost Pr. Walt Harper	“A Longer Look at the Epistle” TBA
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

### Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

***“Be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” Ephesians 6:18b***

Summer is here and with it comes the famously hot South Carolina temperatures! For our members who are confined at home or at a facility, or cannot drive, they continue to remain isolated from their Christian community. Let’s continue our ministry to these lovely people by lifting them up to God in prayer. And please send cards, visit, 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	Mandy Schultz
Nadia R. BouFawaz	Betty Hunter	Laura Meetze	Cyndi Nelson	Linda Schmidt
Phil Carter	Harold/Sarah Jones	Laurie Meetze	Polly Roland	Shirlean Sons
Shirley Curry	Carolyn McCartha	Margaret Meetze	Twila Sandt	Henry/Louise Weed
		Thelma Miller		



### Read the Bible in Three Years – June 2023

June 2023							
Jun 1	Psalm 2	Jun 8	Psalm 9	Jun 16	Psalm 17	Jun 24	Psalm 25
Jun 2	Psalm 3	Jun 9	Psalm 10	Jun 17	Psalm 18	Jun 25	Psalm 26
Jun 3	Psalm 4	Jun 10	Psalm 11	Jun 18	Psalm 19	Jun 26	Psalm 27
Jun 4	Psalm 5	Jun 11	Psalm 12	Jun 19	Psalm 20	Jun 27	Psalm 28
Jun 5	Psalm 6	Jun 12	Psalm 13	Jun 20	Psalm 21	Jun 28	Psalm 29
Jun 6	Psalm 7	Jun 13	Psalm 14	Jun 21	Psalm 22	Jun 29	Psalm 30
Jun 7	Psalm 8	Jun 14	Psalm 15	Jun 22	Psalm 23	Jun 30	Psalm 31
		Jun 15	Psalm 16	Jun 23	Psalm 24		

## Read the Bible in Three Years – July 2023

July 2023							
Jul 1	Psalm 32	Jul 9	Psalm 40	Jul 17	Psalm 48	Jul 25	Proverbs 6
Jul 2	Psalm 33	Jul 10	Psalm 41	Jul 18	Psalm 49	Jul 26	Proverbs 7
Jul 3	Psalm 34	Jul 11	Psalm 42	Jul 19	Psalm 50	Jul 27	Proverbs 8
Jul 4	Psalm 35	Jul 12	Psalm 43	Jul 20	Proverbs 1	Jul 28	Proverbs 9
Jul 5	Psalm 36	Jul 13	Psalm 44	Jul 21	Proverbs 2	Jul 29	Proverbs 10
Jul 6	Psalm 37	Jul 14	Psalm 45	Jul 22	Proverbs 3	Jul 30	Proverbs 11
Jul 7	Psalm 38	Jul 15	Psalm 46	Jul 23	Proverbs 4	Jul 31	Proverbs 12
Jul 8	Psalm 39	Jul 16	Psalm 47	Jul 24	Proverbs 5		



### June & July 2023 Birthdays

6/1	Kara Meetze	6/24	Duck Kinard	7/14	Don Mueller
6/2	Judy Jones	6/24	Genevieve Maye	7/15	Jim Harper
6/3	Christian Watford	6/25	Mandy Kibler	7/15	Zay Weed
6/5	Bill Boykin	6/25	Jan McCarthy	7/16	Herbie Meetze
6/5	Zachary Laprise	6/25	Marlene Nes'bit	7/17	Renee Harper
6/7	Kevin Kibler	6/27	Naven Olson	7/19	Michael Whitaker
6/8	Harold Meetze Sr.	6/28	Jill Brabham	7/20	John Perkins
6/9	Matthew Hennighan	6/29	Nate Marberry	7/20	Connor Robinson
6/10	Louise Weed	6/30	Kelly Thrun	7/21	Haley Weed
6/11	Charlene Meetze	7/1	Patricia Eiserman	7/22	George Walker
6/12	Matthew Fletcher	7/1	Betty Hunter	7/24	Todd Selke
6/12	David Stepanovic	7/1	Melvin Jones	7/25	Al Holladay
6/16	Carroll Barrett	7/2	Jo Ann Barrett	7/25	Sue O'Dell
6/16	Birdie Brabham	7/2	Kinsley Kearse	7/28	Amy Carey
6/17	Richard Chesley	7/4	Harold Jones	7/29	Joseph Perkins
6/18	Catherine Harper	7/9	Michael Dosen	7/29	James Sharpe
6/18	Jill Scuderi	7/9	Tim Stuck	7/30	Brandy Maye
6/21	Gannon Trask	7/12	Odell Stuck	7/30	Katherine Schaefer
6/23	Hank Weed			7/31	Gabriel Sharpe

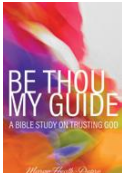
### June - July 2023 Anniversaries

6/1	Herbie & Karen Meetze	6/28	Brad & Amy Schaefer
6/3	Bill & Aresa Boykin	6/30	Frank & Sandy Osborne
6/3	Eric & Katie Matzko	7/1	Eric & Megan Weed
6/4	Walter & Kathy Arnold	7/3	Kim & Dianne BouFawaz
6/6	Jim & Catherine Harper	7/9	Jason & Jessica Dennis
6/7	Raymond & Veronica Kapalka	7/13	Christopher & Marie Waldrop
6/9	Charles & Gerry Fletcher	7/14	George & LaVelle Walker
6/10	Greg & Sherry Ervin	7/18	Matt & Cindy Williams
6/13	Barry & Kathie Bost	7/19	Melvin & Judy Jones
6/15	Mitch & Katie Greer	7/26	Stephen & Luanne Curry
6/17	Norma & Kas Hessary	7/27	Jimmy & Calma Cook
6/18	Al & Janet Jabs	7/30	Henry & Louise Weed
6/24	Don & Carole Mueller	7/31	Paul & Rebecca Selle
6/28	Joel & April Fancey		



## Announcements & Opportunities

### Women's Book Club



The Women's Book Club will meet on Tuesdays, June 6th and 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

### August Newsletter Deadline – July 24, 2023

Your next deadline for submitting articles for August 2023 issue of the Olive Leaves is **July 24, 2023**. Remember to send your ½ page articles to Sue Strouse at slstrouse@gmail.com. There is usually lots of information for the August newsletter as programs and meetings that have been on hiatus for the summer return to the schedule. Be thinking ahead of what all needs to be included from your board.



### 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: Hidden Books**

**How many books of the Bible can you find in the paragraph below? There are 15 books from the Old and New Testaments. The first one is *marked* for you.**

I once made some **remarks** about hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu - kept some people looking so hard for facts and studying for the revelation that they were in a jam. Especially since the books were not capitalized. But truth finally struck numbers of readers. To others, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy to spot. Others require judges to determine. We must admit it usually takes a minute to find one, and there will be loud lamentations when you see how simple it is. One woman says she brews tea while she puzzles her brain. Well, get to work if you want to complete it. Good Luck as you search for the 15 Bible books in this paragraph!