



Olive Leaves



October 2023

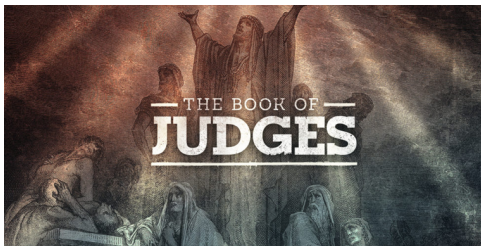
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From Our Pastor: The Book of Judges, and Reformations

Pastor Walt Harper

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If you read the Bible-reading plan printed in our bulletin, you'll be reading through the book of Judges for the first half of October. This fits very nicely with our celebration of the Reformation later this month.



The background of the book of Judges is that the people of Israel have been led out of slavery, God having worked through Moses. Moses was followed by his capable assistant, Joshua. Both of these men were powerfully used by God, and although times were never perfect, there was a general posture of following God.

Alas, it did not remain so. According to Judges 2:8-10, "Joshua, son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten. And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what He had done for Israel."

It always boggles the mind. If their parents knew the Lord, how is it said that the next generation did not? This phrasing doesn't mean that they'd never heard of the Lord, but that they no longer followed Him.

Here we are in chapter 2, and we're already discussing what will become the theme of the rest of the book. One generation will turn away from God; times will get tough; and eventually they will turn back to the true God, who will forgive and bless them.

Unfortunately, that cycle would repeat itself. Enjoying their blessings, they'll forget about God again, leading to tough times, leading to repentance and restoration. And so the pendulum would swing, over and over and over.

One important part of the book of course is the names of the specific judges, men and women of God, who led those reformations. God is always the One at work, but He does that work through the agency of human leaders.



Why does this matter? Because we live in a world that still does that same back-and-forth. When a nation decides to go its own way, the same social problems will re-emerge.

At that point, it becomes a matter of what follows. By the way, for believers the challenge is not to think that "If it has gotten bad, it will always continue to get worse." According to the book of Judges, the other very strong possibility is that people will notice the cost of going man's way, and decide to return to the God of the Bible.

Being human, I naturally don't know when the "next" reformation will come. But I do know that such a thing is always possible.

The invitation of the Lord remains in effect at all times: **"If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."** II Chronicles 7:14

The book of Judges is full of several "reformations." The history of the Church is full of the same; one of them having been led by Martin Luther. That remains a possibility in our time, and we pray that it would come to us.



From our President

James Crosland, President

Happy Halloween! October is a busy month for our boards and committees as they continue to work on their 2024 budgets, keeping in mind good stewardship. Church council will present the proposed budget to the Voters' Assembly at the November meeting.

COUNCIL UPDATE

As I write this article, we are still in limbo for an Associate Pastor, but the call meeting is coming on October 1st. We had a great visit with a candidate from Michigan who enjoyed some awesome southern hospitality at a delicious potluck!

Safety Tip: The vehicle break-in bandits are at it again. Please keep your valuables out of sight and lock your doors. A good reminder is to "Lock it at 9". The bandits are pulling doors hoping to find an unsecured vehicle to rummage through. Do not become a victim!



The Board of Parish Fellowship

Jill Brabham, Chairperson

Cooler weather is in the air, finally! We had a delicious potluck in September for Pastor Ford's visit so we will not have one this month. As always, the food and fellowship were wonderful. Please keep an eye out for information to come next month on Christmas Baskets and Advent Lunches.

The Board of Evangelism: "Love Drives Prayer"

Aresa Boykin, Board Member

"Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes."

Romans 10:1-4 NASB2020

Have you ever wondered how to love people who do not know Jesus? Here in Romans 10, Paul is calling to the Jewish people, his brothers and sisters, and sharing his heart's desire for their salvation. He testifies that they have a zeal for God but are ignorant of His righteousness, attempting to establish their own. They don't understand that Christ gives to those who trust in Him everything they are trying to get by keeping His laws.



The first step towards loving those who do not know Jesus is to pray consistently for them. We must first talk to God about the people we want to see saved and then talk to those people about God. Paul's heart was broken for the people who didn't know Christ, and he prayed for them. We too must start with prayer. What if we prayed fervently for the lost people who don't know Christ?

Who in your life is far from God but close to you? God is giving you a mission field right there. There may be people for whom we have been praying for years and they are still uninterested in the Gospel of Christ. But we must not give up; we must keep praying. We must write their names down and pray for them daily. We must trust that God is working behind the scenes, even when we do not see it. We must persist in prayer.



We typically think of evangelism as talking to people about God, but it is also talking to God about people. We ask God to move in their hearts and draw them to Himself. Let us make it our daily practice to pray for the salvation of those who do not know Christ. Let us ask God to open doors for us to share the Gospel with them, to give us the right words.

Let God do His work. Take up the challenge to pray every day for the next week for that person. Ask God to provide an opportunity for you to point them to Jesus.



October 2023 Lectionary

Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
Oct. 1	Proper 21	Ezek. 18:1-4, 25-32	Psalm 25:1-10	Philippians 2:1-4; 14-18	Matthew 21:23-27
Oct. 8	Proper 22	Isaiah 5:1-7	Psalm 80:7-19	Philippians 3:4b-14	Matthew 21:33-46
Oct. 15	Proper 23	Isaiah 25:6-9	Psalm 23	Philippians 4:4-13	Matthew 22:1-14
Oct. 22	Proper 24	Isaiah 45:1-7	Psalm 96:1-9	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	Matthew 22:15-22
Oct. 29	Reformation	Revelation 14:6-7	Psalm 46	Romans 3:19-28	John 8:31-36

The Social Ministry Board: Birthright of Columbia Baby Shower

Mary Keller, Chairperson



The Social Ministry Board is sponsoring a Baby Shower to support Birthright of Columbia. The agency is collaborating with USC Nursing Students who choose to volunteer at the center as a part of their required first semester curriculum. The students organize, prepare, and host this massive baby shower benefiting expectant moms who need our support. **The collection receptacle will be in the narthex beginning Sunday, October 15th - through Sunday, November 5th.** A comprehensive list of needs will be published in the coming weeks.

Birthright began in Toronto, Canada, in 1968, when Louise Summerhill, a busy wife and mother of seven children, felt something should be done to help women facing unplanned pregnancies. Twelve years later, in 1980, Hank and Sally Chardos opened the Columbia SC chapter, now one of about 250 locations served by Birthright International. Some of the services they provide include:

Love & Support - Services are always free and available to any woman regardless of age, race, circumstances, religion, marital status, or financial situation. When expectant moms are ready to talk, trained Birthright staff and volunteers are ready to listen. Their services are non-judgmental and completely confidential.

Referrals - The center provides referrals for medical support, financial, legal and employment resources, housing, counselling and more. They also provide information about pregnancy, parenting, adoption, child safety programs, personal development and more. If you know of anyone who is desperate and confused, their National 24/7 Hotline Number is: 800-550-4900.

Senior Retirees Ministry meets on Thursday, October 5th from 10:00 – 11:00 am and again on Tuesday, October 17th from 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall for light refreshments, and spend time enjoying each other's company.



Pastoral Acts

	<p>Holy Baptism Lyanna Belle Matthews</p> <p>September 12, 2023</p>	
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The Board of Public Relations

Sue Strouse, Chairperson

Following is Martin Luther’s description of the seal he created after The Reformation:



First, there is a black cross in a heart that remains its natural color. This is to remind me that it is faith in the Crucified One that saves us. Anyone who believes from the heart will be justified (Romans 10:10). It is a black cross, which mortifies and causes pain, but it leaves the heart its natural color. It doesn't destroy nature, that is to say, it does not kill us but keeps us alive, for the just shall live by faith in the Crucified One (Romans 1:17). The heart should stand in the middle of a white rose. This is to show that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace—it puts the believer into a white, joyous rose. Faith does not give peace and joy like the world gives (John

14:27). This is why the rose must be white, not red. White is the color of the spirits and angels (cf. Matthew 28:3; John 20:12). This rose should stand in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that a joyful spirit and faith is a beginning of heavenly, future joy, which begins now, but is grasped in hope, not yet fully revealed. Around the field of blue is a golden ring to symbolize that blessedness in heaven lasts forever and has no end. Heavenly blessedness is exquisite, beyond all joy and better than any possessions, just as gold is the most valuable and precious metal.



Join a Bible Class

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	The Book of Judges - "Wanted: Israel Wants a Leader, God is Patient"
Confirmation Class	Preschool Area	Pr. Walt Harper Mr. Bill Boykin	A two-year study of Luther's Small Catechism and the Bible
Middle School Youth	Wagner House	Rick Baden	Bible Study
High School Youth	Wagner House	Joel & April Fancey	Bible Study
Adults	Fellowship Hall	Sandy Osborne Barry Bost	"God Encounters" A Closer Look at the Epistles
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

The Board of Education

Jessica Dennis, Superintendent

Happy October! I'm so thankful that Fall is here. Cooler weather means that Advent will be here soon, and we can almost start decorating for Christmas! I've already started playing Christmas music, but I try to wait a bit longer on the decorations. Speaking of music, Children's Sunday school classes will begin practicing songs to sing during the 10:30 worship service on December 17th. If you would like your little one to sing with us, we will be practicing Christmas songs at the beginning of Sunday school hour each week leading up to the 17th.

"A Night in Bethlehem" preparations have begun. Please stop by the table in the narthex this Sunday to see ways that you can volunteer for this event or to get more information on "A Night in Bethlehem." Last year we had about 125 people join us, and 49 were children participating! It was an incredible evening of fellowship and pointing all to that blessed night when Jesus the Savior was born. All are welcome, so mark your calendars to join us on December 1st, at 6:00 PM.



Mount Olive Preschool

Anna Brent, Preschool Director

803-781-7180 - preschool@mtolivesc.org

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



October marks a month full of fun and learning and the preschool is now full of the sounds of precious children! This ministry is growing and touching the lives of so many families in our community. We currently have 31 students who are settling in well and enjoying school. There are only a few spots available in the 4-year-old classroom and one spot left in the 2-year-old classroom. Students must have turned 4 and 2 by September 1, 2023 to enroll.

Please take a look at the preschool bulletin board outside of the fellowship hall. It has the faces of the children whom the Lord has placed in our care this year. It will be updated monthly and will have information for you to get a glimpse of our school days. Also, we would love for you to take a look all the beautiful artwork that hangs in the hallways and classrooms downstairs.

Please continue to pray for our staff, students and families as the school year continues. Pray that the Lord protects us and keeps us healthy and equips us for His service each day. Pray for flexible spirits and for the Love of Christ to be evident in all we do.

October 2023 Birthdays

10/3	Polly Roland	10/13	Peggy Osborne	10/21	Cleta Dunaway
10/5	Billie Whitaker	10/13	Chayden Weed	10/23	Mark Selle
10/6	Larry Meetze	10/14	Jason Brabham	10/24	Dieter Steinborn
10/7	Gene Schmitzer	10/14	Tina Dixon	10/25	LaVelle Walker
10/8	Wynn Meetze	10/15	Robert Fong	10/26	Linda Gifford
10/9	Bruce Greer	10/15	Connie Kyte	10/26	Jack Robinson
10/9	Matthew Kearse	10/16	Harper Crelly	10/27	Eli Duncan
10/9	Carmen Witt	10/16	Ezra Sharpe	10/27	Debbie Meetze
10/10	Mark Carter	10/17	Eva Mae Monts	10/27	Jaime Stuck
10/10	Pete Witt	10/20	Jens Rosinski	10/27	Randy Voyles
10/12	Eric Weed			10/29	Rita Witt

October 2023 Anniversaries

10/6	Larry & Louise Meetze	10/15	Matthew & Emily Kearse
10/6	Hank & Jenn Weed	10/23	Ken & Connie Kyte
10/7	Jim & Natalie Crosland	10/26	Emily & Joshua Ranta
10/8	Rich and Mary Joel Keller	10/26	Bill & Shirley Vogel
10/9	Gary & Debbie Meetze	10/29	Michael & Susan Strouse
10/13	Berney & Kathy Eargle	10/30	Odell & Pam Stuck



Read the Bible in Three Years – October 2023

October 2023							
Oct 1	Judges 7	Oct 9	Judges 15	Oct 17	Malachi 1	Oct 25	Isaiah 9-10
Oct 2	Judges 8	Oct 10	Judges 16	Oct 18	Malachi 2	Oct 26	Isaiah 11-12
Oct 3	Judges 9	Oct 11	Judges 17	Oct 19	Malachi 3	Oct 27	Isaiah 13-14
Oct 4	Judges 10	Oct 12	Judges 18	Oct 20	Malachi 4	Oct 28	Isaiah 15-16
Oct 5	Judges 11	Oct 13	Judges 19	Oct 21	Isaiah 1-2	Oct 29	Isaiah 17-18
Oct 6	Judges 12	Oct 14	Judges 20	Oct 22	Isaiah 3-4	Oct 30	Isaiah 19-20
Oct 7	Judges 13	Oct 15	Judges 21	Oct 23	Isaiah 5-6	Oct 31	Isaiah 21-22
Oct 8	Judges 14	Oct 16	Obadiah	Oct 24	Isaiah 7-8		

Judges shows God's grace by showing that it was through the mercy of God that Israel was not absorbed into the pagan nations around her. There was a recurring cycle during the period that the judges ruled: the people's disobedience and rejection of God, followed by their crying out to Him, and then the nation's repentance, and God's deliverance through a judge....

Obadiah is the prophet that tells the Israelites that Edom (Esau's descendants) will not be the nation that the Messiah will come from, but He will come through the line of Jacob.

Malachi is the last prophet of the grace of God. He tells Israel about the coming of Jesus and the coming of the prophet John the Baptist.

The book of Isaiah gives Messianic prophecies to Israel: God is the "Holy One of Israel", who punishes his rebellious people and then redeems them.

Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

**"The Lord is the one who will go before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you or abandon you. Do not be afraid or discouraged."
Deuteronomy 31:8**

Autumn is here, and along with the cooler temperatures comes the beauty of God's creation as the leaves on the trees turn amazing colors! We pray that all of our homebound friends will enjoy watching this change.



As always, remember to pray for, call, or send cards to our homebound members. 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		



Announcements & Opportunities

*Thank
You*

I want to thank everyone for the cards and phone calls that I received after hurting my leg from a fall. I can't imagine not being part of a loving church; we are family that cares for one another, and I am so thankful I am a part of it. Sincerely, Marge Carter.



Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will resume meetings on the first and third Tuesdays in October at 7 PM. ALL women of the congregation are welcome to join in this twice monthly class in the Fellowship Hall. We will finish reading from the book, *Be Thou My Guide* by Margo Heath Dupre, and will be reading the book, *Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs starting October 17.

November Newsletter Deadline –October 31, 2023

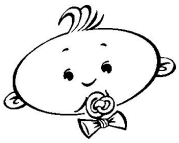
Your next deadline for submitting articles for the November 2023 issue of the Olive Leaves is **October 31, 2023**. Remember to send your ½ page, nonpolitical articles to Sue Strouse at slstrouse@gmail.com. The November newsletter will be sent out on November 3, 2023.



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:

GOD'S WILL

God wants us to follow his will, but how can we know what that is?

Directions: Write the letters on each vine in the correct order on the line provided to complete 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV.

e
7 2 4 1 c j
i
w y l a s a
3 5 2 4 6 1

-----,

continually,

p y r a
1 4 2 3

e g v i
4 1 3 2

in all circumstances; for this
is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

h n t a s k
2 4 1 3 6 5

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18, NIV

