



# Olive Leaves



November 2023

Table of Contents				
From Pastor Walt Page 1	Board of Stewardship Page 4	Join a Bible Class Page 5	Signs of the Season Page 7	Thoughts, Prayers, Calls Page 8
From our President Page 2	Board of Public Relations Page 4	Board of Education Page 6	November Birthdays & Anniversaries- Page 7	Announcements Page 9
Board of Evangelism Page 3	Mt Olive Preschool Page 5	November Lectionary Page 6	Read the Bible in 3 Years Page 8	Kid's Korner Page 10
Pastoral Acts Page 3				November Calendar Page 11

## From Our Pastor: "Thanksgiving" as a biblical word

*Pastor Walt Harper*

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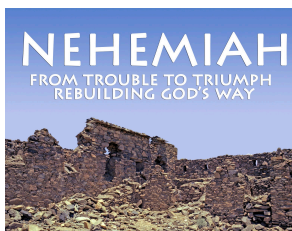
My "NIV Exhaustive Concordance" tells me that the word "thanksgiving" happens in the NIV Bible 25 times. Of course none of those usages are talking about the American holiday that happens on the fourth Thursday of November. But they are talking about an attitude, and sometimes even an action, that exists among God's people.

Of those 25 passages, five of them happen in the book of Nehemiah. That makes sense, when you think it out. At that time, Jerusalem was being re-built under the capable leadership of Nehemiah. Specifically, they were re-building the wall around the city.

That delightful Old Testament book, as is typical of Holy Scripture, does not give us a rosy-colored description of things.

The historical background is the Babylonian Captivity, and the destruction of the Holy City by Nebuchadnezzar. Once that Captivity was ended, and the Jews were allowed to return, they found the city a shambles.

There were three waves of returning Jews, and they had a lot of work to do. Sometimes they made great progress, and sometimes they faced severe opposition. But they remained faithful, especially under the spiritual and determined leadership of men like Ezra and Nehemiah.



Those once-defeated people re-built the Temple; re-started their farms and their businesses; and eventually built the protective wall again.

The Temple was naturally a larger project; but the wall was rebuilt in 52 days! How so quickly? I've heard many commentators call it the "Nehemiah Principle." Everyone re-built the wall that was just outside their own house. With so many involved, the project went that much more quickly.

Here are the passages on thanksgiving from this great little book:

11:17, "Mattaniah...the director who led in thanksgiving and prayer."

12:8, "Mattaniah, who, together with his associates, was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving."

12:24, "And the leaders of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua, and their associates, who stood opposite them to give praise and thanksgiving."

12:27, "At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving."

12:46, "For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there had been directors for the singers and for the song of praise and thanksgiving..."

Your own celebration of Thanksgiving will celebrate something other than the wall around Jerusalem. But that celebration will recall God's provision and Grace.

I hope that you have a great holiday, with much to celebrate, even as there are and have been challenges. "Praise and thanksgiving" is how the Bible often says it. Those two go together.



### **From our President**

*James Crosland, President*

Such exciting news this month! We have been blessed with an Associate Pastor, and welcome Pastor Ford to the best time of the year in South Carolina. He will surely be spoiled for the next nine months. In other news, Jason Dennis has formed the Finance Committee and they are ready to present their budget to council for approval. Once approved, it will go to the Voters' Assembly at the end of the month. Great team work to keep the wheels rolling at Mt. Olive. If you are not a registered voter yet, please join us after the 10:30 service on November 19<sup>th</sup> to be registered. Become part of the happenings at Mt. Olive!



**Safety Tip:** The Scammers have hit the airwaves! The latest focus is the use of cellphones. The best advice is, if you do not recognize the phone number, do not answer which sends them leave a voice mail. Most institutions will leave you a message for you to call them back. Usually, scammers will just try to move onto another potential victim. Please also remember no one is going to put you in jail for not making payments over the phone. Thank you for all that you do and be safe.

## The Board of Evangelism: Evangelism Myths: Talking to Friends about Faith

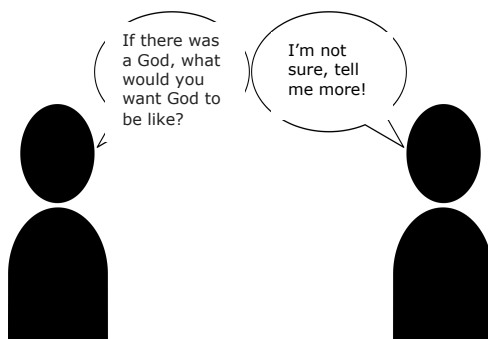
*Aresa Boykin, Board Member*

Who do you think your non-Christian friend or family member would rather talk to about faith, your pastor or you? Studies show your friend or family member is FIVE TIMES more interested in having a spiritual conversation with you over your pastor. Wow!

You may think your pastor is smarter and more eloquent than you. You may believe he has answers to questions you haven't yet thought through. Or maybe you don't know how to have conversations about Jesus without it feeling awkward.

But remember this: it's not up to you to save your friends and family. Take a deep breath. You may feel overwhelming pressure on your shoulders to *make something happen* in your loved one's life. But it's God's role to save. Your role is to simply show up, listen, and share what God has done in your own life.

A pastor in Chicago said: "Evangelism is simply saying: 'I once didn't follow God and now I do. This is what my life was like before I knew Jesus and now my life looks like this.'" It can be that simple.





You can start a conversation with your friends and family by asking simple questions like: "If there was a God, what would you want God to be like?" Or, "Are you waiting for a breakthrough in your life?" Then, listen to the response. You can BRIEFLY share an instance in your life that relates, keeping the focus on the other person. You have the option to ask if you can pray with them, or to add the concern to your daily prayer list.

The Bible is clear that we are all called to share the Gospel and all of us are equipped with the Holy Spirit. Secondly, relegating evangelism to a few select people simply isn't effective. Your pastor doesn't know your aunt or friend. He probably will never meet them. But your aunt and friend know you. And because they know you and you share memories and trust, a conversation about spiritual things isn't just more likely, it's more welcomed.



### Pastoral Acts

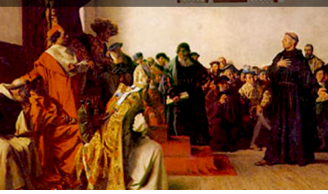
	<p><b>Holy Baptism</b> <b>William Jackson</b> <b>Crowley Setterlund,</b></p> <p>October 15, 2023</p>	
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## **Board of Stewardship**

*Naven Olson, Chairperson*

(All Scripture verses are from NASB)

### **THE DIET OF WORMS**



Martin Luther said at the Diet of Worms: "My conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, may God help me, Amen." He insisted that the doctrine and practice of the church should be based on Scripture alone. *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work,"* 2 Timothy 2:16-1. Embracing the authority of Scripture leads us in many ways. It leads us to reject evolutionism in favor of the Genesis account.

It leads us to reject any idea of salvation by our human works. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast,"* Ephesians 2:8-9. It leads us to reject the idea that there might be other ways of salvation than through faith in Jesus Christ crucified for our sins and raised for our justification. Jesus said in John 14:6, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me."*

It leads us to reject the idea that life is primarily about making this present world better either for we ourselves or for humanity as a whole. Jesus said in John 18:36 *"My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this world."* Paul stated in Philippians 4:20, *"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;"*.

Let us be at church weekly and in Bible class if possible. Let us be in Bible study and in prayer daily. Let us give of our time, efforts and resources to spread the gospel of Christ. Let us reach out to unbelieving and unchurched relatives, neighbors, friends, and co-workers. And let us be careful to always submit to the authority of Scripture in all matters which it addresses.



## **The Board of Public Relations**

*Sue Strouse, Chairperson*

November is the month we celebrate Thanksgiving. It is a great time to spend with family and friends. But we should be thankful every day.

My daughter's family has a dinner tradition called "good things and bad things" where each member shares the good thing that happened to them that day and then those that weren't so good. After everyone is done, they discuss the blessing that God has given them for the "good things" and then discuss why the not so good things may be a blessing in disguise. This tradition has helped the family be thankful for everything God has done for themselves and the family as a whole.

Many times we ask God for things. Instead of always asking, we need to be thankful for what He has given us.

## Mount Olive Preschool

*Anna Brent, Preschool Director*

*803-781-7180 - preschool@mtolivesc.org*

*Web: mtolivesc.org/preschool - Facebook.com/mountolivepreschool*



Greetings from the preschool! The two-year-olds have been learning about creation and are creating an art project to go along with their learning. The three-year-olds and four-year-olds have been busy learning about letters A through E, including **A**pples, **B**ears, **C**ats, **D**inosaurs, and **E**lephants - just to name a few! We have beautiful student artwork on display in the hallways and would love for you to please feel free to come down to the preschool area (outside of preschool hours) to see the students' artwork and what they are learning!

Your generosity and unwavering support of the preschool is a huge blessing as we strive to 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." As we enter this season of thanksgiving, I ask you to consider supporting the preschool through prayer. Last Sunday you received a prayer bookmark with the name and picture of a preschool student in your worship guide. Please use this bookmark as a reminder to pray for the children who are impacted by the preschool ministry each day.

We are so thankful for the Lord's continued protection and health as we enjoy being back together again, with parents in and out of the building. We are excited to have the opportunity to resume our Thanksgiving feast for our preschool "family" on November 20!



## 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.	
PK3 – 4th Grade	Upstairs Classroom	Jessica Dennis, Amanda Dalton, & Brandy Maye	The Book of Judges - "Wanted: Israel Wants a Leader, God is Patient"
Confirmation Class	Preschool Area	Pr. Walt Harper	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	Barry Bost	A Closer Look at the Epistles
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

**The Board of Education**  
*Jessica Dennis, Superintendent*

Children's Sunday school is wrapping up our lessons - "Road to a King." We've worked our way from Egypt to the Promised Land, through Judges to Samuel the prophet. This month, we'll learn about Israel's second king, David, and how God will work through his family line to provide the King of all kings - Jesus Christ the Savior, just in time for Advent to begin! This Sunday, children will start learning Christmas songs with motions to sing on December 17th at the beginning of late service. We all look forward to hearing them each year.



It is only one more month until *A Night in Bethlehem!* Children will enjoy the same feel from last year - but with new stations and all new crafts. Each child will take home a painted 3D Nativity ornament as well as their own Nativity keepsake. Also new this year: the children will meet the wise men and the shepherds as they journey through Bethlehem. Registration has begun - please let us

know if you plan to join by filling out a registration card in the narthex. Also, please invite a friend by taking one of the invitations on the event table in the narthex.

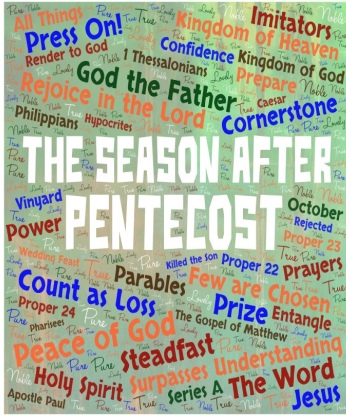
Lastly, mark your calendars and carol with us on December 14th. We will meet at the church at 6:30 pm and split into groups to go about town. We had a great time doing this a couple of years ago. Feel free to call me with any questions!



**November 2023 Lectionary**

Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
November 5	All Saints	Revelation 7:9-17	Psalm 149	1 John 3:1-3	Matthew 5:1-12
November 12	Proper 27	Amos 5:18-24	Psalm 70	1 Thess. 4:13-18	Matthew 25:1-13
November 19	Proper 28	Zephaniah 1:7-16	Psalm 90:1-12	1 Thess. 5:1-11	Matthew 25:14-30
November 22	Thanksgiving Eve	Deuteronomy 8:1-10	Psalm 67	Phil. 4:6-20	Luke 17:11-19
November 26	Proper 29	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	Psalm 95:1-7a	1 Cor. 15:20-28	Matthew 25:31-46

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



The Sundays following Pentecost, observed as “the time of the church,” share a somewhat similar theme as that of Epiphany. Affectionately called the season of the “green meadow,” no doubt due to the fact of green being the established color, these Sundays also emphasize the subject of growth.

Green is a neutral color, but there is nothing colorless about our need to grow and mature as disciples of Jesus Christ. That's why the “green meadow” time of the church year is so lengthy.

Time must be given to encourage all worshipers to maintain their faith through the constant use of God's means of grace.



### November 2023 Birthdays

11/2	Chris Bauer	11/15	Will Gepfert	11/19	Thomas Meetze
11/3	Connie Cook	11/15	Connie Kyte	11/19	Gerry Selle
11/3	Ken Kyte	11/16	Pam Dalton	11/20	David Meetze
11/7	Christian Baden	11/16	Linda Selle	11/20	Henry Weed
11/7	Al Jabs	11/17	Kathie Voyles	11/23	Luanne Curry
11/7	Linda Schmidt	11/18	Calma Cook	11/24	Kaley Laprise
11/11	Raymond Kapalka	11/18	Emily Ranta	11/24	Cyndi Nelson
11/12	Anita Meetze	11/18	Jacob Setterlund	11/25	Noreen Powell
11/13	Miranda Cook	11/19	Mike Knowles	11/27	Kathryn Meetze
11/13	Jim Harper	11/19	Paula Meetze	11/29	Katie Matzko
				11/29	Shirlean Sons

### November 2023 Anniversaries

11/2	John & Neva Meyerhoff	11/24	Patrick & Joyce Lauterbach
11/3	Michael & Billie Whitaker	11/25	Jim & Gerry Harper
11/9	Bruce & Darlene Schenemann	11/28	Mike & Sue Knowles
11/11	Bruce & Paula Helming	11/29	Christopher & Kara Meetze
11/22	Daniel & Noreen Powell		

## Read the Bible in Three Years –November 2023

November 2023							
Nov 1	Isaiah 23-24	Nov 8	Isaiah 37-38	Nov 16	Isaiah 53-54	Nov 24	I Thess. 2
Nov 2	Isaiah 25-26	Nov 9	Isaiah 39-40	Nov 17	Isaiah 55-56	Nov 25	I Thess. 3
Nov 3	Isaiah 27-28	Nov 10	Isaiah 41-42	Nov 18	Isaiah 57-58	Nov 26	I Thess. 4
Nov 4	Isaiah 29-30	Nov 11	Isaiah 43-44	Nov 19	Isaiah 59-60	Nov 27	I Thess. 5
Nov 5	Isaiah 31-32	Nov 12	Isaiah 45-46	Nov 20	Isaiah 61-62	Nov 28	II Thess. 1
Nov 6	Isaiah 33-34	Nov 13	Isaiah 47-48	Nov 21	Isaiah 63-64	Nov 29	II Thess. 2
Nov 7	Isaiah 35-36	Nov 14	Isaiah 49-50	Nov 22	Isaiah 65-66	Nov 30	II Thess.3
		Nov 15	Isaiah 51-52	Nov 23	I Thess. 1		



### Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

***"Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,  
for His steadfast love endures forever!" Psalm 107:1***

Thanksgiving is fastly approaching, and soon the bustling holiday season will take up a lot of time for those who are able! In the midst of this season, remember our homebound. In addition to your usual cards and prayers, why not reach out to members who aren't able to get out to see if they need assistance with seasonal preparations.



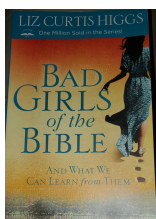
As always, you may include others who are on the weekly prayer page in the bulletin. Don't forget about family members and care givers, too. Contact information is in the church directory. Let's make a special effort to connect with one another!

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

**Pottery for helping with SGL-** As the holiday season approaches, many people will be relying on Sharing God's Love for help with food. Our congregation has been very giving to SGL, so I will be giving pottery to any family that brings food for their pantry needs. I will be in the Fellowship Hall before the Saturday service on November 11th, and between services on Sunday, November 12th. Thank you for all you do! Sue Strouse.



### **Women's Book Club**

The Women's Book Club has a new book, *Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs. We will meet on Tuesday, November 7th and skip the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. ALL women of the congregation are welcome to join in this class taking place in the Fellowship Hall at 7 PM.

### **December/January Newsletter Deadline –November 27, 2023**

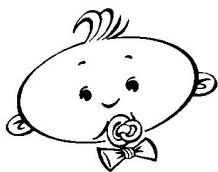
Your next deadline for submitting articles for the December 2023/January 2024 issue of the Olive Leaves is **November 27, 2023**. Remember it is a combined issue, and send your ½ page, nonpolitical articles to Sue Strouse at [slstrouse@gmail.com](mailto:slstrouse@gmail.com).



### **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](http://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

# Glad gatherings

The first Christians met together over a meal. Today church families still gather to break bread and thank God.

Follow the instructions below. Then write the remaining words in order from left to right and top to bottom to complete the verses.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	They	found	broke	bread	acts	in
2	houses	their	homes	beautiful	and	round
3	ate	world	beginning	together	follow	thought
4	with	numbers	glad	happiness	lesson	and
5	thanks	sincere	disciples	gathering	hearts	tradition
6	celebrate	good	praising	Christian	God	river

- Cross out all words in column E with double letters.*
- Cross out all words that are books of the Bible.*
- Cross out all words in column B that end in d.*
- Cross out all words in column A that have more than 4 letters.*
- Cross out all words in row 5 with 3 syllables.*
- Cross out all words in the table with 9 letters.*
- Cross out all words in column F with 2 or more vowels.*

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\_\_\_\_\_ . ACTS 2:46-47, NIV