



Olive Leaves



April 2024

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From Our Pastor: All Those Prayers in the Hymnal

Pastor Walt Harper
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Did you know that our hymnal, "Lutheran Service Book," has written-out prayers in it? They begin on page 305, and run through page 318.

At our last Men's Prayers Breakfast we talked about this. And at our last Youth Lock-in we also talked about it. In both cases I think most present did not know those prayers were in there. This makes me think I should mention it to the wider congregation.

So here's a challenge: Most people prefer that a prayer be "from the heart." True enough, heart-felt prayer, offered in the moment, and really baring our concerns and our heart before the Lord, is wonderful. Every believer should be speaking to our God with unreserved openness and honesty, knowing that He hears us for Christ's sake. Naturally, there's a Latin phrase for this. It's "ex corde"; literally, "from the heart."

A perfect example of an "ex corde" prayer is that time that Peter started out walking on the water, but then began to sink when he took his eyes off of Jesus. He blurted out an urgent and necessary, "Lord, save me!" That's a great prayer. It's quick, and to the point. It was followed by Jesus actually reaching out and saving him.

So please hear me say that "ex corde" prayers are great and wonderful. But with this caveat: sometimes we esteem those prayers so highly we're afraid that a written-out prayer can't be as valuable.

But there are good things about a written-out prayer. They often have an excellence of language that surpasses our "in the moment" thoughts. They've often been written by someone with a spiritual insight I wouldn't have thought of. They always flow from the collected experiences of God's people. Given all of that, a written-out prayer turns out to be very useful, and even just as prayerful as the "more natural" "ex corde" prayer.

Take a peek at pages 305 to 318. The prayers are arranged by topic, and many topics are covered. You'll find: "For the Church," and "For Those Outside the Church," and "For Our Enemies," and even things like, "To Open a Committee Meeting." There are difficult topics like "For One Near Death," and necessary topics like "For the Nation."



So, both times that I pointed out these pages we first talked about prayer. And then we transitioned into using these prayers. Both the men and the teenagers were asked to find a prayer they liked, and then to pray it out loud in front of the group. Both the men and the teenagers offered a prayer, then another, and then another. I think we meant those prayers. I know that God heard them.

Are you ever sitting in Church with a few quiet minutes to pass? Check out pages 305 to 318. Let these prayers guide a prayer time with God.

Even better, consider purchasing a copy of the hymnal for use at home. And then find the many resources that a good hymnal gives us.



From Our Associate Pastor: The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci

Pastor Colin Ford

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And while they were eating, He said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me."

They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?"

Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely you don't mean me, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "You have said so." (Matthew 26:20-25)

As we enter into holy week, it is appropriate that we take a look at one of the most famous pieces of Christian art ever made. That is *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci. *The Last Supper* measures 180 inches by 350 inches and covers an end wall of the dining hall at the monastery of Santa Maria Delle Grazie in Milan, Italy. Here depicted is the Last Supper with Jesus with his disciples. It is iconic, and a master class in design. Every piece of the painting, from the disciples' eyes and hands, to the shape of the room, all focus the horizon line to the face of Jesus.

Jesus seems to be calm and ready to face whatever comes next, in contrast to the rest of the room, alight with activity. Jesus has just finished telling his disciples that one of them will betray him. The reaction of all but one is depicted in action or conversation.

As I mentioned all the focus at the table is on Jesus. The whole painting leads our eyes there. But if you scan the table, one person stands out. Do you see him? His face, full of shock and fear. His left hand outstretched to dip into the bowl, at the same time Jesus is about to do the same. His posture pulled back, trying to distance himself from Jesus. His right hand is clinging desperately to a bag full of silver coins.

Judas Iscariot, sticks out as soon as you start to look for him, and once you see him you can't unsee him and his reaction. Don't feel bad if you did not see him at a first glance, neither did the disciples. They are all surprised in their own way, and all the attention is on Christ. I encourage you to look on and see if you can find any other details that are hidden within the painting. (Note: For a larger copy, try Google Images on your electronic devices.)

From our President

James Crosland, President



Happy Easter everyone! This is such joyous time of year, even with all the pollen. Going into spring this year is a little different for me than in the past. I spent much of this time self-reflecting on the abundant number of blessings, grace, and mercy that the Lord has given to us as a congregation and to my family. We had such a great time with "Lil' Jimmy" on his recent visit home and it was the first time we were all in church together as a family since 2020. Thank you for all the kind words during his visit!

We still have open positions on our boards and committees. Please feel free to reach out to Jason Dennis to offer your talents and time for a great purpose!

Safety Tip: On-line scams and phishing attempts are on the rise, especially during tax season. Watch what you click!



Board of Worship: Search Committee

Elizabeth Rosinski, Chairperson



Mt. Olive is seeking to fill the organist/pianist and choir director positions. The organist/pianist duties include the following: provide music for regular worship services (includes Sunday 8 and 10:30 am) as well as special liturgies such as Advent, Lent, Holy Week etc. Strong organ/piano skills, ability to play in different musical styles, accompany the choir. The choir director's duties include leading vocal and handbell choirs for one liturgical service per week September through May. Both positions include Sunday afternoon rehearsals. For a full job description for each position, please visit: <https://mtolivesc.org/music/>.

Interviews for the organist/pianist position will include questions and an audition. The playing portion will include two verses of a prepared hymn, sight reading another (of parish's choosing) as well as a favorite prelude or postlude piece. The church will also complete a background check as required



Interested candidates for either position may submit their resume to Liz Rosinski at lizrosinski@me.com. The deadline to submit is April 12, 2024. Any questions? Please call or text Liz at 803.413.3364.



Signs at the Church Entrance

This year, we celebrate the Season of Easter from March 31st, Easter Day, through Sunday, May 12th. Most of the Easter gospel scriptures will be from the book of John.

What a joyful time of year this will be as we watch the new growth of the beautiful flowers and shrubbery around our church reminding us of our new life in Christ as we celebrate His resurrection!



April 2024 Lectionary

Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
April 7	Easter 2	Acts 4:32-35	Psalm 148	1 John 1:1-2:2	John 20:19-31
April 14	Easter 3	Acts 3:11-21	Psalm 4	1 John 3:1-7	Luke 24:36-49
April 21	Easter 4	Acts 4:1-12	Psalm 23	1 John 3:16-24	John 10:11-18
April 28	Easter 5	Acts 8:26-40	Psalm 150	1 John 4:1-11	John 15:1-8



Board of Stewardship

Naven Olson, Chairperson

(All Scripture verses are from NASB)

"And when they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him, and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them!' And having said this, he fell asleep. And Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death." Acts 7:38-8:1

Stephen's prayer would bear fruit. Saul, the persecutor would become known as Paul, the foremost Christian missionary of the first century and the author of 13 of the 27 books of The New Testament.



There was a modern day "Paul", Richard Wurmbbrand (1909-2001), a Romanian Lutheran pastor, founder of "Voice of the Martyrs" and an outspoken advocate for persecuted Christians worldwide. Prior to his conversion, he was an atheist, a member of the Communist party and even an important Comintern agent, leader, and coordinator, who served prison time for his Communist activities. He and his wife were converted to Christianity in 1938.

He was imprisoned, just like Paul, in Romania for 15 years for his evangelistic work and opposition to government control of the church. He was severely tortured by the Romanian Communists.

So, a seemingly hardened and hopeless case is not always a truly hopeless case. Let us be grateful for a church that upholds the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. Let us be in church and Bible class weekly, and in prayer and Bible reading and study daily. Let us support this church with our time, efforts, and resources. Let us reach out to unbelieving and unchurched family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors.



Pastoral Acts

	<p>Memorial Service – Augusta, GA Pastor Walt - Officiant</p> <p>Sharron Fairbrother Sept. 22, 1944 – March 12, 2024 Funeral: March 16, 2024</p>	
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The Board of Evangelism: Sharing the Good News

Aresa Boykin, Board Member

Just before Jesus left earth and ascended to heaven, He gathered His disciples who had been with Him for the past three years. While they were sitting around a table sharing a meal, Jesus commissioned them to continue the work that He had begun.

Jesus had spent most of His ministry proclaiming the arrival of the Kingdom of God. The right response to this arrival was for people to turn from their old ways and believe in Jesus.

The very first words of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark are in verse 1:15, and they are an announcement of the arrival of God's Kingdom. And Jesus' last words to His disciples, starting in Mark 16:15, build upon His first announcement. The call Jesus left us with was to continue to tell others the good news of the Gospel. This good news is that Jesus has brought the arrival of the Kingdom of God to earth, and that through His death and resurrection, He has made a way for all people to have a new life in Him.

This task of evangelism was the first thing that Jesus asked His followers to do as He left earth. Telling others about what Jesus has done for them is one of the most important things that we can do with our time. We have been given the greatest gift of all—eternal life with God. But that free gift is freely available to the rest of the world as well.

So, take some time today to pray for those in your life who do not know the hope that Jesus gives. Pray for their salvation, but also pray for opportunities to share your own faith story with them, and pray that God will put other people in their paths to share their faith stories. When we tell others about the new life and new Kingdom

available to them, we are continuing the work that Jesus left us to do. (Adapted from a *You Version Daily Devotion* 3.11.24)



The Board of Public Relations: Season of Easter

Sue Strouse, Chairperson

Now that we celebrated the rising of our Savior on Easter Sunday, we are going to spend the 50 days of Easter celebrating the eternal life that Jesus has given us through His death. During our services, we can now sing our alleluias, reinforcing how lucky we are to have such a Savior!

God's plan for His creation is so perfect! This is the season that we celebrate His Son's resurrection. The new life we see in springtime including the new sprouts shooting up in beautiful blooms, green buds, and fresh air are reminders. But even more amazing and prominent on the loblolly pine are the yellowish vertical shoots called candles that form next to the buds. Then around Easter, the new growth forms into crosses. God's design is amazing!



This is the time of year to get out and enjoy what He has lovingly given us, and be sure to tell others!

Mount Olive Preschool

Anna Brent, Preschool Director

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

Spring has sprung down in the preschool. We are knee deep in spring and Easter crafts and enjoying getting to play outside. It is a wonderful time of year to explore God's beautiful creation!



As you walk around the church, please feel free to walk around and look at the preschool area. The students' artwork is always on display and you can see pictures of the sweet faces that represent over 32 families that come in and out of the church doors each week.

We still have a few spots available in our 2-year-old class for the 2024-2025 school 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 might be interested, please have them contact me:

As always, thank you for your continued support and prayers! Anna Brent



The Board of Christian Education

Liezl Baden, Board Member

Vacation Bible School planning is underway. SCUBA, "Diving into Friendship with God" is the VBS theme and it is planned for June 12 through 14 from 6-8 pm. Look for the VBS volunteer signup displayed in the narthex. We (and the children) would appreciate your time and talents. You can preregister your children or sign up to volunteer on the church website, mtolivesc.org.



As you know, the Youth Group participates in a service or fellowship activity alternating each month. In March, they had their service activity at Sharing God's Love. In April, their fellowship activity will be at Escapology on April 13th.

The BOE (Board of Education) had been looking into Camp Linn Haven as a possibility for the youth this summer. However, we have been unable to gather ample information on the camp and decided not to pursue it at this time.

There is still a need for a Sunday School teacher for the Circle of Friends. It is Sunday School intended for the Special Needs children of our congregation. If you would like to bring Jesus to the Special Needs Children or know of someone interested in filling this position, please let us know.

Join a Bible Class

Spring 2024 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. Please 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, & Amanda Dalton	The Birth of Jesus Learning Christmas Carols
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	Pr. Colin Ford	Starting April 7 th -Christianity in art: We will read a section of scripture, and reference the art piece that was scripture-inspired.
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			



April 2024 Birthdays

4/1	Margaret Meetze	4/8	Mariah Robinson	4/17	Bonnie Fancey
4/2	Randy Gifford	4/9	James Lewis, Jr.	4/17	Brianna Soto
4/3	Brian Laprise	4/11	Alonzo Nes’bit	4/20	April Fancey
4/3	Hayley Setterlund	4/11	Lincoln Weed	4/21	Adeline Fletcher
4/4	Jean Carter	4/13	Melissa Marberry	4/25	Mike Jones
4/5	Ann Dosen	4/14	Katie Greer	4/25	Mike Strouse
4/8	Emily Kearse	4/15	Berney Eargle	4/27	Barbara Chesley
4/8	Derrick Robinson	4/15	Tyler Laprise	4/28	Louise Meetze

April 2024 Anniversaries

4/5	Chris & Denise McKinney	4/27	Alonzo & Marlene Nes’bit
4/17	Michael & Ann Dosen	4/29	Joseph and Brandy Maye
4/22	Scott & Hallie Randall		

Read the Bible in Three Years – April 2024

April 2024							
Apr 1	Exodus 5	Apr 8	Exodus 12	Apr 16	Exodus 20	Apr 24	Exodus 28
Apr 2	Exodus 6	Apr 9	Exodus 13	Apr 17	Exodus 21	Apr 25	Exodus 29
Apr 3	Exodus 7	Apr 10	Exodus 14	Apr 18	Exodus 22	Apr 26	Exodus 30
Apr 4	Exodus 8	Apr 11	Exodus 15	Apr 19	Exodus 23	Apr 27	Exodus 31
Apr 5	Exodus 9	Apr 12	Exodus 16	Apr 20	Exodus 24	Apr 28	Exodus 32
Apr 6	Exodus 10	Apr 13	Exodus 17	Apr 21	Exodus 25	Apr 29	Exodus 33
Apr 7	Exodus 11	Apr 14	Exodus 18	Apr 22	Exodus 26	Apr 30	Exodus 34
		Apr 15	Exodus 19	Apr 23	Exodus 27		

On March 28th, we began our journey with Moses and the Israelites from slavery in Egypt to wandering through the desert, and eventually reaching the promised land. As you read through this familiar account, pray that you will see how God is at work in each chapter.

You might try a Bible devotion on one of the apps like You Version or Bible Gateway. Both of these have many free devotions for you to choose from. You can download a free app that goes through the Bible chapter by chapter such as Through the Word or Spoken Gospel. On these apps, you can select any book of the Bible and listen to commentary on one chapter each day. Why not try something new?



Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

***"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.
Come and see the place where he lay." Matthew 28:6***

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

The Easter Season is here, and with it comes spring! Temperatures are warmer. Days are longer. Flowers are sprouting and the daffodils have bloomed! Azaleas are bursting open, revealing their many colors! What a joyous time of year it is as we celebrate Jesus' resurrection and our gift of eternal life! We pray that our homebound members will be able to get out and enjoy this beautiful time of year. And as always, church family, please keep these precious saints in your prayers, phone them, and/or send them cards to remind them that they are a part of our church family!



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

Board of Social Ministry: Birthright of Columbia Baby Shower & Baby Bottle Campaign

Mary Keller - Chairperson



We are currently sponsoring a Baby Shower to support Birthright of Columbia. The agency is collaborating with USC Nursing Students who opted 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 support. **The collection receptacle is in the narthex through Sunday, April 7th.** A comprehensive list of needs is on the table in by the church office.

Another way we plan to support the Birthright of Columbia ministry is by partnering with them on their annual fundraiser, 'The Baby Bottle Campaign.' More than 2,500 baby bottles are distributed to over 31 churches in the Columbia, Camden, Newberry, and the Lexington areas. The money collected in the bottles helps support more than 1,200 women facing an unplanned pregnancy. 'The Baby Bottle Campaign' begins on Mother's Day and ends on Father's Day. More details will be published in the weeks ahead. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)

➤ Birthright Provides 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.

➤ Birthright Provides 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.

Senior Retirees Ministry meets on Thursday, April 11th from 10:00 – 11:00 am and again on Tuesday, April 23rd from 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall for prayer, devotions, light refreshments, and spend time enjoying each other's company.



Announcements

Women's Book Club



The Women's Book Club is reading, *Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs. We meet on the first and third Tuesdays each month at 7 PM in the Fellowship Hall. We will not meet on April 2nd, but we will meet on April 16th to discuss chapter 10. ALL women of the congregation are welcome to join in the class. In May, the group will choose its fall book.

May Newsletter Deadline – April 23, 2024

Your next deadline for submitting articles for the May 2024 issue of the Olive Leaves is **April 23, 2024**. Please send your ½ page, nonpolitical articles to Sue Strouse at slstrouse@gmail.com.



