



# Olive Leaves



May 2024

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## From Our Pastor: How Often Should I Receive Communion?

*Pastor Walt Harper*

How often should I receive Communion? If I have it too often, will it become “less special”? When I was a kid, my church had Communion much less often; why do so many churches now offer weekly Communion?

These are worthwhile questions. How should we speak to them?

In the book of Acts, the Church is given a four-fold description, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42) That doesn’t mention frequency; but you certainly see that Communion (“the breaking of bread”) was highly esteemed.

Much later in the same book we read, “On the first day of the week we came together to break bread.” (Acts 20:7)

“The Didache,” early Christian teaching from the first or second century says the same thing: “On the Lord’s Day assemble and break bread and give thanks, having first confessed your sins...”

“The Apostolic Tradition,” from the third century speaks of weekly Communion, and even gives us this familiar interchange:

- P: The Lord be with you.
- C: And with your spirit.
- P: Lift up your hearts.
- C: We lift them up unto the Lord.
- P: Let us give thanks to the Lord.
- C: It is meet and right.



So if the book of Acts, and the writings of the Early Church demonstrate weekly Communion, when did it become less frequent?

One time someone asked Luther: How often must I commune? Luther usually hesitated to answer such questions (Who wants to establish a theological minimalism?!), but this time he did. I’m not exactly quoting, but he essentially said that if someone didn’t commune four times a year they could hardly be considered a Christian.

He was not trying to “establish a floor.” He meant to say: if you’ve been away from the body too long, you’re not really practicing the faith.



But some people misunderstood him to mean that we should have Communion only four times a year. Of course the problem with that is that if the Church only celebrates the Sacrament four times a year, and then you missed one of those Sundays...well, now you're "below the limit."

Nonetheless, some churches switched to four times a year on the basis of "Luther said so." Which of course he did not quite say.

Happily, in recent decades there's been a real effort in our parishes to recover the practice of the Early Church. I don't of course have a survey with a concrete number to report to you. But from chatting with brother pastors it's easily the majority of LCMS parishes that offer it every week.

Does that make receiving the Sacrament just a routine? I hope not! And of course it's not routine if we approach the altar every week mindful of what's taking place there.

Week to week to week, sinners gather around an altar, where the body and blood of Christ, with the bread and wine, are distributed and received. Sins are forgiven, and hearts are fed.

I'm glad that Mt. Olive had switched to weekly Communion well before I got here. It's the practice of the church across the centuries; it remains the practice here in our little "corner of the Kingdom."



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



Back to being busy with Church business! Please reach out to our Trustees' Chair James Sharp and the Trustees Team for their dedicated service in eyeing the future as they continue with plans to upgrade our alarm panels, resurface the parking lot, and tie-in with the city sewer system. Projects of this type require numerous phone calls and in-person meetings with vendors to ensure we are getting quality work at a reasonable price. These capital projects don't include the day-to-day responsibilities like elevator inspections, HVAC maintenance, and repairing or replacing broken appliances. Thank you, James, and Team, for your dedication and follow-through!

Let's get ready for summer!

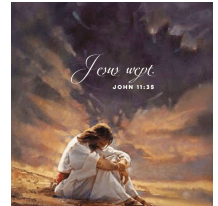
Safety Tip: Tax season is gone but unfortunately, not the scammers. Be careful of suspicious emails and robocalls attempting to gain access to your sensitive information. When in doubt, do not answer them.

## From Our Associate Pastor: The Shortest Verse in the Bible

*Pastor Colin Ford*

Grace, Peace, and Mercy to you through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen. The Bible is a big book. It includes two testaments, Old and New, 66 books, 929 chapters in the Old Testament, 260 chapters in the New Testament, and in the King James Bible 783,137 words. But all of it is dripping with meaning. I would like to illustrate this to you by bringing you to a moment in the Bible: the shortest verse in the Bible, John 11:35, "Jesus wept." On its own, the words seem meaningless at first glance. But let us look at the context of that verse: the Death of Lazarus.

Jesus is out with His disciples when He learns that Lazarus is dead. He goes to him with His disciples, and Martha comes out to see Jesus, telling Him, quite distressed (John 11:21), "If You had been here, my brother would not have died." The death of her brother weighs deeply on her. Christ tells Martha Lazarus will live, and goes to the tomb to raise him from the dead. Just moments from bringing Lazarus back from the dead, "Jesus wept." This sticks out: Jesus is about to bring Lazarus back from the dead, and yet He is weeping. "See how He loved him," the people say.



The reality of death is defeated by Jesus, overcome in His resurrection from the dead. Still, in the moment, people grieve. I have seen people at funerals trying to be uplifting by saying such things as, "This is a celebration of life, don't cry." My friends, it is okay to be sad at a funeral; it's okay to cry and say you miss your loved ones. Even just moments away from the resurrection, "Jesus wept" because death is not how life is supposed to be. It is a curse placed upon us, and Jesus is not so stoic that He cannot feel. He weeps. Hebrews 4:15 says, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have One who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet He did not sin." Christ empathizes with us; He knows us. And He has saved us. Know that your God is not so distant that when you pray He does not know you or what you are going through.

And may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

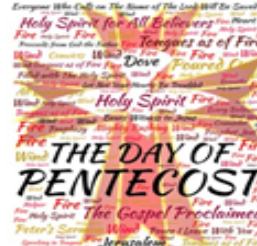
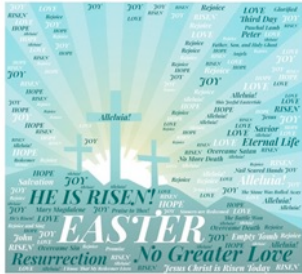


### May 2024 Lectionary

Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
May 5	Easter 6	Acts 10:34–48	Psalm 98	1 John 5:1–8	John 15:9–17
May 12	Ascension	Acts 1:1–11	Psalm 47	Ephesians 1:15–23	Luke 24:44–53
May 19	Pentecost	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Psalm 139:1-12	Acts 2:1-21	John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15
May 26	Holy Trinity	Isaiah 6:1–8	Psalm 29	Acts 2:14a, 22– 36	John 3:1–17

## Signs at the Church Entrance

The month of May will be an exciting month for the signs at the church entrance! A different sign will be on display every Sunday! The Sixth Sunday of Easter is May 5th so the Easter sign will be on display. Thursday, May 9th is Jesus' Ascension Day and we will celebrate this on Sunday, May 12th. The following Sunday, May 19th, is the Day of Pentecost, and the last Sunday, May 26th is Holy Trinity Sunday. As you enter church, be sure to peak through the leaves of our beautiful Japanese maple tree and take a few minutes to check out our meaningful signs.



### Board of Stewardship

*Naven Olson, Chairperson*

(All Scripture verses are from NASB)

*[Jesus said:] "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

*Matthew 28: 18b-20 NASB*

On May 24 we will celebrate, the Day of Pentecost, remembering the day seven weeks after the Resurrection of Christ when the church's worldwide outreach began in full earnest. It might be a time (if you have resources available) to consider giving to an LCMS mission, the Gideons, Sharing God's Love, or to the Mount Olive preschool.



Here are links to some LCMS international and national missions:

- <https://international.lcms.org/new-opportunities-in-indonesia-and-cambodia/>
- <https://engage.lcms.org/rome-spring-2024/>
- <https://engage.lcms.org/tanzania-spring-2024/>
- <https://engage.lcms.org/panama-spring-2024/>
- <https://engage.lcms.org/cambodia-winter-2024/>
- <https://engage.lcms.org/utah-winter-2024/>
- <https://engage.lcms.org/karen-pastor-winter-2024/>



And let us not forget this country where church attendance is declining and the message is not always clear. 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.

### Pastoral Acts

	<p><b>Memorial Service – Graveside @ MOLC</b>  <b>Pastor Walt Harper - Officiant</b></p> <p>Carroll J. Meetze</p> <p>March 2, 1949 – March 23, 2024          Funeral: April 5, 2024</p>	
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### **The Board of Evangelism: Pray for Others**

*Aresa Boykin, Board Member*

For evangelism to be successful, we must begin praying for others. God gives us neighbors, co-workers, family members, our kids' sports teams, baristas, and grocery store clerks. Each of them needs Jesus. Who might God want you to reach out to?



To hear the voice of the Spirit and grow in confidence that God will guide you, begin by praying for a heart for the lost. Ask God to give you eyes to see the lost around you. When our hearts grow in compassion, we will have less fear and more love to reach out to others. If you knew someone was lost on the side of the road, you would open up your GPS and help them find their way. If you saw a child lost in a crowd, you would do all you could to help the child find his/her parent. Jesus said that we are to leave behind the 99 sheep and go after the one lost sheep. Who are the lost sheep around you? What are they feeling and experiencing in life right now? How can you grow in compassion for them?

Psalm 107 talks about four types of lost people. The wanderers have no community and are lonely. The prisoners are stuck in their afflictions, longing for freedom and a new beginning. The fools make decisions that lead to devastating consequences. The fearful live with anxiety, feeling stuck or out of control with the storms in their life.

Each of these lost people, though on a unique journey, got to a point where they cried out to the Lord in their trouble and God delivered them. **Psalm 107:20** says, **"He sent out His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction."** God sent Jesus, the Word, to bring healing and deliverance to every person you know who is lonely, a prisoner, a fool, or a person experiencing storms in their life.

Listen to the Lord and see whom He puts on your heart. Pray that they will cry out to the Lord. Pray for opportunities to begin a spiritual conversation with them. Pray you can show them this Psalm, ask them which person they most relate to, and then share how Jesus is the one who came to deliver them from their situation. Ask them if they want to hear how Jesus does that through His death on the cross.

(Devotion from *YouVersion*, "Journey to Sharing Jesus" by Holly Melton.)

## **The Board of Public Relations: Pentecost**

*Sue Strouse, Chairperson*

What did the Spirit accomplish on Pentecost? Through the apostles' preaching and Baptism, He called and gathered believers into the Church of Christ. He gave them the Christ-earned forgiveness of sins and salvation. He established Christ's kingdom, made manifest through the Gospel for all the world. As Luther proclaimed in his 1534 Pentecost sermon: "Thus Christianity begins with the poor fisherman, and with the despised work of God, which is called Christ, hanging on the cross".

(Taken from "The Gift of The Holy Spirit" article by Dr. Gerhard Bode)



## **Board of Social Ministry**

*Mary Keller - Chairperson*

We received the following note from Terry Hodaly, Executive Director, Birthright of Columbia:



**Dear Mt. Olive Members:** Thank you for the wonderful baby items that were donated for the USC Student's Baby Shower for Birthright of Columbia! The students were busily separating all the donations received from supporting contributors, and so many moms

joined in the joyful and spirited celebration held on Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup>! Your support helped us provide pregnant moms and their babies with hope, needed items, and friendship! With the continued support of surrounding churches and a community like yours we are celebrating 44 years (1980-1924).

Would you like to join Birthright's awesome team of Office Volunteers? An Office Volunteer is the very "Lifeline" of Birthright, offering one-on-one discussion and positive assistance to girls and women faced with an unplanned or problem pregnancy. Volunteers are scheduled to serve in the office three hours a week, with another volunteer, and are responsible for following up by phone or email with clients they assist. There is a three-part training session followed by on-the-job training to observe an experienced Office Volunteer interacting with a client. An Office Volunteer is a caring individual who listens with their heart to convey hope. For more information on the many ways you can get involved go to our webpage at: <https://birthrightofcolumbia.org>. There is a resource window at the top of the page where you find out ways to support our ministry and complete a volunteer interest form. You can also contact the office at: 803-765-0165 (office)

**Senior Retirees' Ministry: Thursday, May 9, from 10:00 am – 11:00 am and Tuesday, May 28, from 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm. All seniors welcome to attend!**

## Mount Olive Preschool

*Anna Brent, Preschool Director*

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

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

It is hard to believe that we are just weeks away from completing our 17<sup>th</sup> school year. The preschool is heading into a very busy season as we prepare for Mother's Day, complete end of the year evaluations and memory books, and get ready to hold preschool graduation. We also will have our end of the year celebration with preschool families on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> to celebrate the blessing of another wonderful year together!



Do you know any families with young children who would benefit from our preschool? Our amazing staff creates a warm and loving environment in which they provide high quality learning experiences. The students learn about God's love for them and His desire for them to be their best while they learn about and explore His world. Encourage them to call, email, check out the website or Facebook page, or come visit! Registration is ongoing and we still have a few openings in our classes.

Thank you for your prayers and support. Please continue to pray for the preschool ministry and the children and families that the Lord has and will place in our care next year!



## The Board of Christian Education

*Liezl Baden, Board Member*

On Easter Sunday, around 20 children participated in our Egg Hunt. Even though 1,000 stuffed eggs were hidden, it was over in minutes. Thank you to everyone involved in making this annual tradition a great success.

VBS "SCUBA- Diving into friendship with God" is scheduled for 6/12 to 6/14. Registration is open via a link on the church website, or you can complete a hardcopy form. Children registered by May 1st will receive a VBS T-Shirt, so sign up soon! VBS volunteers are always welcome, please sign-up via our website or at the display located in the narthex.



Our youth group continues to gather and enjoy fellowship every month. In April, 13 of our teens enjoyed a premium escape game experience at Escapology in downtown Columbia. In May there will be a "Game Night" planned for our youth. We hope that more of the teens will be able to make it to this fun event!

There is still a need for a Sunday School teacher for the Circle of Friends. It is a 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	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.			



## May 2024 Birthdays

5/2	Cindy Williams	5/8	Carolyn McCartha	5/21	Nancy Thompson
5/4	Joe Harper	5/9	Jessica Clendenin	5/22	Elizabeth Williams
5/5	Jessica Dennis	5/10	Henry Dosen	5/23	Hannah Duncan
5/5	Joy Fletcher	5/12	Bradley Carey	5/23	Christopher Waldrop
5/5	Myran Trask	5/12	Sue Knowles	5/24	James Duncan
5/6	Colter Greer	5/13	Nadia M. BouFawaz	5/24	Joy Mann
5/6	Bruce Helming	5/13	Linda McGriff	5/27	Lauren Marberry
5/6	Stephanie Jones	5/16	Stanley Bouknight	5/27	Lynne Schultz
5/7	Marilyn Bauer	5/16	Joseph Maye	5/29	Tiffany Meetze
5/7	Pastor Ford	5/16	T.J. Selke Jr.	5/30	Gloria Meetze
5/8	Dennis Dixon	5/17	Dana Magic	5/30	Matt Williams
		5/17	Olivia Stuck		

## May 2024 Anniversaries

5/1	Rick & Liezl Baden	5/22	Randy & Kathie Voyles
5/4	Mike & Stephanie Jones	5/25	Wes & Michele Hammond
5/12	Seth & Johnna Duncan	5/26	John & Mary Lou Tedder
5/12	Hunter & Stacey Robinson	5/27	Chris & Kim Gepfert
5/19	Jason & Jill Brabham	5/29	Matt & Jessica Christensen



## Read the Bible in Three Years – May 2024

May 2024							
May 1	Exodus 35	May 9	II Corinthians 3	May 17	II Corinthians 11	May 25	Psalm 56
May 2	Exodus 36	May 10	II Corinthians 4	May 18	II Corinthians 12	May 26	Psalm 57
May 3	Exodus 37	May 11	II Corinthians 5	May 19	II Corinthians 13	May 27	Psalm 58
May 4	Exodus 38	May 12	II Corinthians 6	May 20	Psalm 51	May 28	Psalm 59
May 5	Exodus 39	May 13	II Corinthians 7	May 21	Psalm 52	May 29	Psalm 60
May 6	Exodus 40	May 14	II Corinthians 8	May 22	Psalm 53	May 30	Psalm 61
May 7	II Corinthians 1	May 15	II Corinthians 9	May 23	Psalm 54	May 31	Psalm 62
May 8	II Corinthians 2	May 16	II Corinthians 10	May 24	Psalm 55		

Readers will begin the month of May by reading the ending chapters of Exodus which details the construction of the tabernacle, the place where God will dwell with the Israelites.

Next comes the New Testament epistle of II Corinthians. The Apostle Paul is responding to a serious breakdown in the relationship between members of the church and himself, a lot of which was motivated by outsiders who discredited Paul while promoting themselves. So, he writes II Corinthians to restore or reconcile the relationship.

Readers will end the month of May by starting the middle third of the Book of Psalms, chapters 51-100. These poems, addressed to God, vary widely in content and tone. Included are cries of lament, shouts of praise, and other liturgies and meditations on Israel's life before God. This year, we will be reading the psalms through July 8th.

If you have not begun to read through the Bible, please join in at any time. Before you know it, you will have developed a daily habit and in three years, you will have completed the entire Bible!



### Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

***"Do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day." 2 Corinthians 4:16***

As we age, we become more aware of the swift passing of years. We can either let the fear of death put a mental stranglehold on us or look to the future with hope. The best is yet to come! Jesus Christ, the risen and ascended Lord is the ground of our hope and the promise of our deliverance. The hope of the resurrection lies at the heart of aging Christians.



We serve a faithful God who will never forget us! We are strangers and pilgrims on earth—the older we become, the nearer we are to our eternal home. This truth encourages even the oldest individual to cherish each moment of life while preparing to relinquish it. Each day is a gift from God. We look to Him for our daily bread while making sure that we seek first the kingdom of God rather than squandering our time and energy on secondary concerns.

Please keep our homebound members in your prayers, and why not make a few phone calls or send uplifting cards to them as reminders of our love and appreciation.

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

## Announcements

### Women's Book Club



The Women's Book Club is discussing our next book that we will study in September. We meet on the first and third Tuesdays each month at 7 PM in the Fellowship Hall. We will not meet during the summer months of June, July or August. ALL women of the congregation are welcome to join in the class.

### May Newsletter Deadline – May 28, 2024

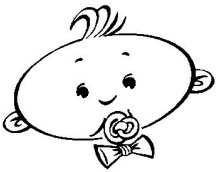
Your next deadline for submitting articles for the combined June-July 2024 of the Olive Leaves is **May 28, 2024**. Please send your ½ page, nonpolitical articles to Sue Strouse.



### Secure E Giving:

For those of you who are contributing by e giving, you will notice that the site has a new look. According to VANCO, your account, password, and recurring payments remained the same. You should see pictures of Mt. Olive above the giving labels. If you would like to set up a new account, the link is on the home page of our church website, mtolivesc.org. You may give through your checking account or by credit card. Our e giving is powered by VANCO, a secure company that follows strict guidelines and policies. Even though the e giving page looks like our website, Mt. Olive will have no record of your account, your card/bank account number, or your personal information. If you need help setting up your account, contact Aresa Boykin.

### Nursery "Cry Room" Reminder

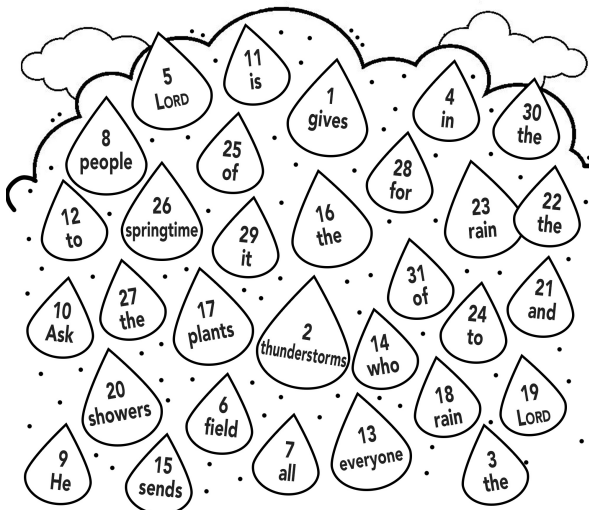


Mt. Olive has a renovated nursery that is located downstairs, just behind the sanctuary. Parents are welcome to stay with their children during any worship service. There is a speaker so you will be able to hear the worship service. Parents, as you are leaving, please tidy up and sanitize the toys with which your child has played.



## Kids Korner

Complete a Bible verse about spring by writing the word from each raindrop on the correct numbered line below.



10	16	5	28	18
_____ ;				
4	22	26		
29	11	3	19	14
_____ .				
27		2		
9	1	20	31	23
12	7	8	21	17
_____ .				
30	6	24	13	