



# Olive Leaves



June-July 2024

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## From Our Pastor: "Can these bones live?"

*Pastor Walt Harper*

Ezekiel 37:1-3, "The hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' I said, 'O Sovereign LORD, You alone know.'"



Whenever this reading comes up in our worship life, several people suggest to me that the Hymn of the Day should've been "Dem Bones, Dem Bones." Strangely, that one wasn't included in our hymnal.

But setting that to the side, Ezekiel 37 is really one of the most important chapters of the Bible.

To be very disciplined in our thinking, we should bear in mind that its message most directly was to the people of the Babylonian Captivity. For them, it was a promise of God to restore the nation after all that they had been through. Sure enough, Babylon fell, and Israel was restored under the benign reign of the Persians. So historically, this word of the Lord is fulfilled!

But like many Old Testament passages, there's also "the principle of the thing." And that principle is that from time to time a nation which formerly followed God will drift away. When that happens there are predictable social costs. And then some people will begin to wonder: Can we be revived?



That Ezekiel was feeling pretty discouraged is seen in the way he answers the Lord's question. God asked him: Can these bones live? And Ezekiel doesn't have the strength to say, "Absolutely, yes they can!" Instead, he resignedly said, "Lord, You alone know."

So God instructed his deflated prophet to speak! This is always the beginning: to hear the Word of the Lord. Not my word, not your word, not any human's word. The Word of the Lord must be spoken.

So bone came to bone...and the people of God started to sing, "Dem bones."

The next moment in the text is key. Bones had come together, and tendons and muscles appeared on the bones. "But there was no breath in them." This shows us that it's never enough for a church to "seem alive." It must actually be led by the Spirit of God.

So God told Ezekiel to speak to the "breath" (and here there's an ambiguity in the text; is it "wind," or "breath," or "spirit," or even best: "Spirit"), and the breath entered the lives of the people of God.

Is that called "Revival," or "Renewal," or "Reformation"? Whichever word you prefer, we need it! I sort of like the word "Return." As in Malachi 3:7, "'Return to Me, and I will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty."

Polls say that most Americans think "something is wrong." That is, we are all seeing the dry bones on the floor of the valley. But can those bones live? And how would they?



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



I believe summer in the south is here! Bring on the heat....



Mt. Olive had a great Voters' meeting last month and we continue to work on several capital items. Those include the sewer system and repairing, resealing, and restriping of our parking lot. Great job to James and the Trustees! The Voters approved the Nominating Committee's slate of officers and board members. These folks, including Jason Dennis as your new Congregational President, will begin their service in September.

I strongly believe that every board, committee, and congregation need fresh sets of eyes to bring new ideas. I am blessed, as I was a part of bringing two phenomenal pastors to Mt. Olive and made it through those COVID times. I will not be far away as Pastor Walt has a few tasks for me in all my spare time. Thank you all for the wonderful work that everyone has done and is still doing for such a caring loving congregation.

Safety Tip: Please watch out for our children and furry friends. Car temperatures rise very quickly without AC and cracking a window does not allow enough ventilation.



**Pastoral Acts**

	<p><b>Donald Albert Mueller</b> July 14, 1942 – May 17, 2024 Funeral: June 1, 2024</p>	
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## June-July 2024 Lectionary

Date	Festival	Old Testament	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
June 2	Proper 4	Deut. 5:12-15	Psalm 81:1-10	2 Cor. 4:5-12	Mark 2:23-28
June 9	Proper 5	Gen. 3:8-15	Psalm 130	2 Cor. 4:13-5:1	Mark 3:20-35
June 16	Proper 6	Ezek. 17:22-24	Psalm 1	2 Cor. 5:1-10	Mark 4:26-34
June 23	Proper 7	Job 38:1-11	Psalm 124	2 Cor. 6:1-13	Mark 4:35-41
June 30	Proper 8	Lam. 3:22-33	Psalm 30	2 Cor. 8:1-9, 13-15	Mark 5:21-43
July 7	Proper 9	Ezek. 2:1-5	Psalm 123	2 Cor. 12:1-10	Mark 6:1-13
July 14	Proper 10	Amos 7:7-15	Psalm 85: 8-13	Eph. 1:3-14	Mark 6:14-29
July 21	Proper 11	Jer. 23:1-6	Psalm 23	Eph. 2:11-22	Mark 6:30-44
July 28	Proper 12	Gen. 9:8-17	Psalm 136:1-9	Eph. 3:14-21	Mark 6:45-56



### Board of Fellowship

*Jillian Brabham, Chairperson*

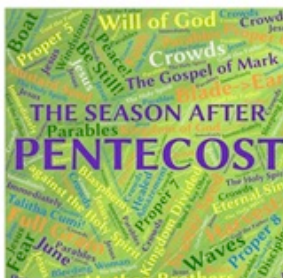
Happy summer! Please join us on Sunday, June 16th immediately following the second service for Donuts with Dad. We will be set up outside (weather permitting) as you leave the main entrance. Let's thank the Lord for the fathers and father-like figures in our lives!

We have an extra Sunday in June so we will be having a church wide potluck in the fellowship hall on June 26th after the second service. We are asking each family to bring their favorite entree, side, or dessert to share! Look for more details in the weekly bulletin.



### Signs at the Church Entrance

June begins the longest of the church seasons: The Season after Pentecost. Because of its length, the signs will change each month. The signs will focus on the Gospel readings for the propers. As you enter church, be sure to admire the beauty of our Japanese maple tree and take a few minutes to check out the sign of the month.



## Board of Stewardship

*Naven Olson, Chairperson*

**"Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil,"**

**Ephesians 5:15-16**



KFUO radio, the official voice of the LCMS, is the oldest continually operating Christian radio station in the world. It began broadcasting on December 14, 1924. You can go to <https://www.kfuo.org> in your browser to listen to KFUO on your computer.

Some weekday talk programs I sometimes listen to are "Law and Gospel" at 10:30 AM, "Daily Chapel from the LCMS International Center" at 11:00 AM, "Thy Strong Word" at 12:00 PM, and "Issues, Etc." at 4:00 PM. Some Saturday talk programs I sometimes listen to are "Liberty Action Alert from the Lutheran Center for Religious Freedom" at 10:30 AM, "Concord Matters" at 11:00 AM and "Cross Defense" at 12:00 PM. I also listen to some of the sacred music. About 2:00 PM on weekdays, there is a segment where the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer are recited. About 3:00 PM listeners are invited to confess the Apostles' Creed. Shortly before 4:00 PM listeners are invited to join in praying the Lord's Prayer.

When listening to KFUO does not interfere with work, I leave it on. When work responsibilities require, I turn it off. It enables me to be more grounded during the work day.

Since 2020, I have been contributing yearly to KFUO. You might want to consider doing so, provided that it would not require you to diminish your local church contribution.

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.



## The Board of Evangelism: The Messengers of Good News

*Aresa Boykin, Board Member*

Pause for a moment and reflect on your role as a bearer of the good news. Are you actively sharing the love of Christ with those around you? Are you seeking to be a living testimony of His grace?

You might read Paul's call to "preach" in Romans 10:14 and think this call is reserved for a pastor, priest, or teacher. But our homes, workplaces, and communities can serve as pulpits of influence when we live surrendered to Him. In these seemingly ordinary spaces, we can share the love of Christ through a listening ear that brings peace to a troubled mind, a helping hand that lifts burdens, or a word of encouragement that rekindles hope.

As a follower of Christ, you are qualified to share this hope and encourage others! What God desires is obedience and willingness to be a vessel of His Word. In the simplicity of everyday interactions, we become vessels of His Love and messengers of the gospel.



As believers, we have an integral role in sharing the gospel message of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit equips you. God chooses and empowers you. And the seeds you sow, even the tiniest ones, have the power to take root and spread the message of salvation. (Shared from YouVersion, Daily Refresh, May 14, 2024)

## The Board of Public Relations

*Sue Strouse, Chairperson*

**“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.” John 14: 15-17**

Many times after attending some of my Bible studies, I finally get a nugget of inspiration from God that I had never thought of before. I guess that is why we go to Bible studies! Recently, I thought of God in Heaven looking down on us, yet He has been with us from the beginning of time, never leaving us.



When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, God physically walked and talked with them each day. I imagine that God would come to Adam and Eve after they had taken care of all the plants and ask them how their day went!

Then, after God chose Abraham to start a new nation, He promised to stay with His new nation giving them the commandments, residing in the temple in the Holy of Holies, and forgiving sins as the people sacrificed to Him, pointing to Jesus, the ultimate sacrifice.

As His people drifted away from Him and started relying on their own devices, He sent prophets to preach His words, hoping that the people would repent and return to Him.

But no matter how hard the people tried, they always fell short. So God sent His Son to sacrifice His life in our place so that all who believe will live forever. Even though Jesus only walked on earth 33 years, His teachings and His example of how to live fulfilled God’s plan for us from the beginning of time.

Finally, before Jesus left this earth, God gave us the Holy Spirit, so we will continually keep our hearts and minds on the God who truly loves us. God never left us alone, He was and still is always with us!



## The Board of Christian Education

*Liezl Baden, Board Member*

Vacation Bible School is here! *SCUBA - Diving into friendship with God* is scheduled for June 12th to 14th. Registration is open via a link on the church website, or you can complete a hardcopy form. VBS volunteers are always welcome, please sign-up via website or at the display in the narthex.



The Cook Family graciously opened their home to our youth group in May for “Game Night”. All the children enjoyed an evening of fun and fellowship. Their service event for the summer will be to help with VBS. The 2025 National Youth Gathering will be in New Orleans. Expect fundraising events to begin in the fall.

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

Summer 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	Summer Break. Attend the Middle School Class.	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. Walt Harper	Beginning June 9th: TBA
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			



### Board of Social Ministry

*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**



Mt. Olive Lutheran hosts two blood drives every year as a way to support our community. The next drive will be this summer on July 15<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Thanks to the Mt. Olive members, community friends, and walk-ins who are vigilant about donating. All blood donations go to our local hospitals and they plan around the community’s donations. Look for details in the upcoming weeks on how to register to give blood.

A few facts about blood donations you may find interesting:

**Whole Blood Donation:** Whole blood is the most flexible type of donation. It can be transfused in its original form, or used to help multiple people when separated into its specific components of red cells, plasma, and platelets.

**Who it helps:** Whole blood is frequently given to trauma patients and people undergoing surgery. Donation frequency is every 56 days or up to 6 times per year.

**Power Red Donation:** During a Power Red donation, you give a concentrated dose of red cells, the part of your blood used every day for those needing transfusions. This type of donation uses an automated process that separates your red blood cells from the other blood components, and then safely and comfortably returns your plasma and platelets to you. With just a little extra time at your appointment, you can donate more red cells and increase your impact on patients in need.

**Who it helps:** Red cells from a Power Red donation are typically given to trauma patients, newborns and emergency transfusions during birth, people with sickle cell anemia, and anyone suffering blood loss. Donation frequency is every 112 days, up to 3 times per year.

## Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

***"Even to your old age and gray hairs, I am He,  
I am He who will sustain you. I have made you, and I will carry you;  
I will sustain you, and I will rescue you." Isaiah 46:4***

There are times when aging feels like a burden or a health scare seems daunting or even insurmountable. At those moments, Isaiah 46:4 offers words of comfort: "Even to your old age and gray hairs, I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you, and I will carry you; I will sustain you, and I will rescue you." It's a promise of unending support, made specifically to older adults.



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



### Read the Bible in Three Years – June-July 2024

June 2024							
Jun 1	Psalm 63	Jun 8	Psalm 70	Jun 16	Psalm 78	Jun 24	Psalm 86
Jun 2	Psalm 64	Jun 9	Psalm 71	Jun 17	Psalm 79	Jun 25	Psalm 87
Jun 3	Psalm 65	Jun 10	Psalm 72	Jun 18	Psalm 80	Jun 26	Psalm 88
Jun 4	Psalm 66	Jun 11	Psalm 73	Jun 19	Psalm 81	Jun 27	Psalm 89
Jun 5	Psalm 67	Jun 12	Psalm 74	Jun 20	Psalm 82	Jun 28	Psalm 90
Jun 6	Psalm 68	Jun 13	Psalm 75	Jun 21	Psalm 83	Jun 29	Psalm 91
Jun 7	Psalm 69	Jun 14	Psalm 76	Jun 22	Psalm 84	Jun 30	Psalm 92
		Jun 15	Psalm 77	Jun 23	Psalm 85		

July 2024							
Jul 1	Psalm 93	Jul 9	Deuteronomy 1	Jul 17	Deuteronomy 9	Jul 25	Deuteronomy 17
Jul 2	Psalm 94	Jul 10	Deuteronomy 2	Jul 18	Deuteronomy 10	Jul 26	Deuteronomy 18
Jul 3	Psalm 95	Jul 11	Deuteronomy 3	Jul 19	Deuteronomy 11	Jul 27	Deuteronomy 19
Jul 4	Psalm 96	Jul 12	Deuteronomy 4	Jul 20	Deuteronomy 12	Jul 28	Deuteronomy 20
Jul 5	Psalm 97	Jul 13	Deuteronomy 5	Jul 21	Deuteronomy 13	Jul 29	Deuteronomy 21
Jul 6	Psalm 98	Jul 14	Deuteronomy 6	Jul 22	Deuteronomy 14	Jul 30	Deuteronomy 22
Jul 7	Psalm 99	Jul 15	Deuteronomy 7	Jul 23	Deuteronomy 15	Jul 31	Deuteronomy 23
Jul 8	Psalm 100	Jul 16	Deuteronomy 8	Jul 24	Deuteronomy 16		

Readers will continue reading through the middle fifty psalms through July 8th. Then the focus will turn to the book of Deuteronomy. It begins with a recap of the Israelites, led by Moses, escaping slavery in Egypt and continues with their journey to Mount Sinai.

## June-July 2024 Birthdays

6/1	Kara Meetze	6/24	Duck Kinard	7/12	Odell Stuck
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
6/12	Matthew Fletcher	6/30	Kelly Thrun	7/21	Haley Weed
6/12	David Stepanovic	7/1	Patricia Eiserman	7/22	George Walker
6/16	Carroll Barrett	7/1	David Eustice	7/24	Todd Selke
6/16	Birdie Brabham	7/1	Betty Hunter	7/25	Al Holladay
6/17	Richard Chesley	7/1	Melvin Jones	7/25	Sue O'Dell
6/18	Jill Scuderi	7/2	Joe Ann Barrett	7/28	Amy Carey
6/19	Walt Brabham	7/2	Kinsley Kearse	7/29	Joseph Perkins
6/21	Gannon Coutant	7/4	Harold Jones	7/29	James Sharpe
6/23	Hank Weed	7/9	Michael Dosen	7/30	Brandy Maye
6/23	Adam Randall	7/9	Tim Stuck	7/31	Gabriel Sharpe

## June-July 2024 Anniversaries

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



## Announcements

### Women's Book Club



The Women's Book Club will be studying the *Ten Commandments: Love Rules* by Christina Hergenrader starting in September. The ladies meet on the first and third Tuesdays each month at 7:00 PM in the fellowship hall. ALL women of the congregation are welcome to join in the class.

### August Newsletter Deadline –July 26, 2024

Your next deadline for submitting articles for the August 2024 issue of the Olive Leaves is July 26, 2024. Please send your ½ page, nonpolitical articles to Sue Strouse.

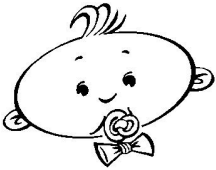




## **Secure E Giving:**

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**

# **THE WONDER OF STARS**

The heavens display evidence of God's great power.  
What else does the Bible say about the sky?

*Directions: Use the clues and Bible references (all NIV) to complete the crossword.*

### **DOWN**

1. The sun, moon and stars do this to God. (Psalm 148:3)
2. God made these as numerous as the stars. (Genesis 26:4)
3. Don't do this to the stars and sky. (Deuteronomy 4:19)
5. What do the heavens declare? (Psalm 19:1)
6. The moon and the stars do this at night. (Psalm 136:9)
7. When we're pure, we do this like the stars. (Philippians 2:15)

### **ACROSS**

4. The heavens are the work of these. (Psalm 8:3)
8. On what day did God create the stars? (Genesis 1:14-19)
9. God calls each star by this. (Isaiah 40:26)
10. A star announced the arrival of him. (Matthew 2:2)

