



Olive Leaves



September 2024

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From Our Pastor: I Despise Spammers

Pastor Walt Harper

***"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves.
Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves."
Matthew 10:16 (NKJV)***



Alas, back in July another internet scam came to us. Many of our people (and curiously none of my contacts outside the state of SC) received a text claiming to be from me (it wasn't), asking you to buy gift cards and send the numbers to "me." It was supposedly to help people in need.



The text was not written in grammatically correct English.

It came from a number which is not my number.

But very importantly: I would never handle such a need in this way.

Of course scams and spams are immoral. Such people have no personal ethics, but are trying to enrich themselves off of the good-naturedness of God's people. To the extent they ever do make anything, they will have a wealthy present life; but they'll also have a much worse life to come.

One person asked me: If you wouldn't handle this in this way, then how would you handle it? First off, the Church Office can usually handle most requests for assistance. Secondly, we may refer some to Sharing God's Love, which does great work in our town, and which this congregation generously supports. But lastly, if I ever did need such a specific request, you'd hear directly from me.

It's sad that we live in a world where scams are the way some people have chosen to function. Most of us have learned a certain skepticism about what we read and hear. You know, it's probably not true that a billionaire prince somewhere around the world would like to send you half his wealth, since he has no kids; and all he needs is your bank account number and your mother's maiden name. Lately, they've switched to the gift card scam.

Funny enough, Jesus knows that the "real world" (a phrase I sometimes hate) is full of charlatans and hucksters and cheats. His injunction to be as "wise as serpents and as harmless as doves" is spot on. Harmless, in the sense that we do not manipulate others. But wise in the sense that we're not easily taken advantage of.

So we've been through this "part of life" again. I'd love to say that "It won't happen again." But I think we all know that that is very unlikely.

So, to sum up: If I need to make such a request, you'll hear from me directly and personally. Otherwise, put your "wise as serpents" hat on.



From our Associate Pastor: The Importance of Daily Prayer and Self-Study

Colin Ford, Pastor

You've likely heard the saying, "Stop and smell the roses." The idea is that, in the midst of our busy lives, we should take a moment to enjoy the small things. This is a valuable lesson, but it's also one we should apply to our spiritual well-being—specifically, to our prayer life and personal study of Scripture.

Life has a way of sweeping us along, and before we know it, our only act of worship for the week might be Sunday service and perhaps a quick prayer before a meal. While these practices are good and necessary, they are not enough on their own. Scripture calls us to a deeper commitment. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, we are urged to "pray without ceasing." Likewise, in Psalm 55:17, we read, "Evening, morning, and noon, I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice."





Do we sometimes become so absorbed in our daily routines that we neglect our prayer life and personal time with God? I know that in my own life, there have been times when work piled up, commitments multiplied, and I found myself shoving God to the bottom of the list. Yet, it's precisely in those moments that we need Him most.

We are reminded in Scripture that the Lord hears our prayers and responds to them. It's not just a duty to commune with God—it's a privilege and a joy. We should actively seek to make time for prayer and study, not because we have to, but because our souls crave that connection with our Creator.



Pastoral Acts

| | | |
|---|--|---|
|  | <p>Memorial Service Graveside Fort Jackson Pastor Walt Harper - Officiant Jimmy Cook August 5, 1940– August 6, 2024 Funeral: August 14, 2024</p> |  |
|---|--|---|

From our President

Jason Dennis, President

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

1 Peter 4:10-11

I take a few things from this verse and it's something I think about often. The gifts I have are from God, I belong to God and to Him I'll return, our gifts and our work can distract us from the true mission of service to others to glorify God and I need to be open to and unafraid of opportunities to serve Him.



My work calendar alone keeps me very, very busy and often distracted from more important things in life. On top of that I try and devote time to exercise, hobbies, friends, my children and most important my wife. Then there are opportunities to volunteer at church, in the community, to a neighbor and more. Notice, I said opportunities... These opportunities are reminders that we shouldn't dedicate ourselves to earthly gain but to put all our efforts into the glorification of God. These opportunities are not necessarily glamorous but since God is my King I try and hand my sword to Him, hilt first and ask where I am needed.

As brothers and sisters in Christ, imperfect as we are, I ask you to consider your various talents and to think of ways to use them to glorify our God in service to our Church, one another and as examples to our community. I am excited about the opportunity to serve all of you in one way or another and to work together to share the glory of God.



| Mt. Olive Officers & Boards | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| September 2024 - August 2025 | | | |
| President | Jason Dennis ** | Council Secretary | Noel Nettles |
| Vice President | Joel Fancey** | Financial Secretary | |
| Church Treasurer | Bill Boykin | | |
| | | | |
| Elders | Education | Evangelism | Fellowship |
| Chris Bauer | Liezl Baden ** | Aresa Boykin** | Jill Brabham ** |
| Dennis Dixon** | Natalie Crosland* | Connie Kyte* | Debbie Meetze |
| Doug Lacey | Rebecca Curry | Ken Kyte* | Jill Scuderi |
| Eddie Magic | Laura Laprise | | Sandra Stoker |
| Hunter Robinson | Karen Meetze | Social Ministry | |
| Matt Williams* | | Tina Dixon | Stewardship |
| Daniel Zahn | Preschool | Mary Keller ** | Naven Olson |
| | Connie Cook** | Jan McCarthy | |
| Public Relations | Amanda Dalton | | Worship |
| Linda Gifford | Mike Knowles | Trustees | Randy Gifford* |
| Susan Strouse** | Abby Sharpe | Matthew Fletcher | Neva Meyerhoff |
| | Myran Trask | Joe Harper * | Liz Rosinski ** |
| | | Bruce Helming | David Setterlund |
| | | James Sharpe** | |

* Denotes newly elected ** Denotes chairperson

The Board of Public Relations: Free Will

Sue Strouse, Chairperson

The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he (Job) has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. Job 1:12

It's upsetting when people say that God made them sick or gave them financial problems or even takes a person's life. God has allowed these things, good and bad, because He created us with free will. We are not puppets where God pulls strings to make us do things. We were given free will so we would willingly go to God for our needs.

When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they set in motion the good and bad things of this world. We can choose to follow God and believe that Jesus is His Son who died for us, but this does not mean that everything in our lives will be all rainbows and unicorns. The evil of this world brought disease, hate, pain and many ugly things. But as Christians, we know that this life is just short-lived and there is a perfect, eternal heaven waiting for us.

Remember that God is in charge and Satan must ask for permission to do anything to us.



The Board of Evangelism: "The Mission of God" by Micah Christensen

Aresa Boykin, Chairperson

"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace." Acts 20:24

All of our lives are used for something. Most people spend their lives focused on growing a family, building their career, or amassing possessions. While none of those things are necessarily wrong, they can become distractions from our ultimate goal in life.

In the book of Acts, we see Paul's transformation in Christ. As a result of meeting Jesus and being changed by His grace, Paul spends the rest of his life preaching the good news of Jesus. For Paul, God's grace and salvation is so great that nothing on this earth is as important as God's work.

Paul says that nothing in His life matters as much as telling others about God's grace. His goal in life was to finish his own race well by faithfully accomplishing as much of the mission of God as possible.

The mission of God is not opposed to growing families or building careers. In fact, God desires for us to use those opportunities to faithfully accomplish the mission of God. We can raise families in the way of God, and we can tell our coworkers about God's grace. Any place we find ourselves in can be an opportunity to accomplish the mission of God.

Take a moment to consider your own life and where you spend your time. Are you using every opportunity you have to spread the good news of Jesus? Does your life, like Paul's, point toward God? Consider a few ways that you can begin to change your perspective and live your life on mission for God.

(Micah Christensen was the 2024 Olympic Men's Volleyball Captain and a member of *Athletes in Action*. From his YouVersion Devotion, July 28, 2024)



Board of Stewardship

Naven Olson, Board Member

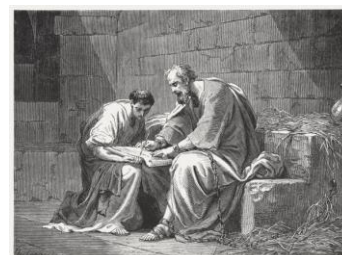
(All Scripture verses are from NASB)

"Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body."

On March 30, 2022 Bishop Juhana Pohjola of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland (a small church body in fellowship with the LCMS) and Dr. Päivi Räsänen (a medical doctor, member of parliament, mother of 5 and grandmother of 10) were acquitted of criminal charges of "hate speech" for having expressed Biblical views on homosexuality.

The prosecutor (or persecutor) appealed the verdict to a higher court. The higher court found them not guilty in 2023 and the prosecutor appealed to the Supreme Court of Finland. This appeal is still pending. I learned about this while listening to the Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz of the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty on KFUE at 10:30 AM on Saturday, August 17th.

We need to remember people like these two who are being persecuted for speaking the truth. And we need to remember persecuted Christians in North Korea, China, India, many Muslim countries, and in many areas with significant Muslim minorities. We need to remember Christians in America and other western countries who face hostility in "woke" schools and colleges and in "woke" workplaces. And many of us need to be bolder in speaking the truth. (I know I often fall short and could perhaps be called a "paper tiger".)



Paul in prison spreading the word

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.



Mount Olive Preschool: Celebrating 18 Years

Anna Brent, Preschool Director

803-781-7180 - preschool@mtolivesc.org

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

This school year will mark the 18th year of the Preschool ministry at Mt. Olive! Teachers arrived back at the preschool on August 27th and the school year will kick off with Parent Meetings on September 3rd. We will have many new and returning students that will fill the classrooms and it is a blessing to serve the families that have chosen Mt. Olive Preschool.

We have 31 preschool children enrolled and we are excited for a new year to begin! Please be in prayer for our preschool students and families, staff, and preschool board. Pray that the Lord would provide a hedge of protection, flexible spirits, and most importantly, that the Gospel would be spread and that the Lord would be glorified.

This preschool ministry continues to stand as a testament to this church's commitment to children and young families. To God be the glory!



The Board of Christian Education

Liezl Baden, Board Member

Rally Day was held on Aug 25 to celebrate the 2024-2025 school year. A potluck and various games were set up in the Fellowship Hall. Fifteen children and youth participated and enjoyed the event.



Sunday school for the children and youth continues, as well. As for Circle of Friends, if you or someone you know is interested in being the Sunday School teacher, please let us know.

Fundraising for the 2025 National Youth Gathering is planned to kick off in October. If you want to join our high school youth in New Orleans, please inform BOE no later than September 28th as our budget must be finalized.



Join a Bible Class

| Autumn 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 Life of Jesus |
| Confirmation Class | Preschool Area | Pr. Colin Ford & Pr. Walt Harper alternate between units of study. | A two-year study of Luther’s Small Catechism and the Bible for 5th-6th Graders & Youth who haven’t been confirmed. |
| 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 Pr. Colin Ford | Sept. 1 – Modern Heresies Sept. 6 – Study of the Minor Prophets |
| Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator. | | | |



September 2024 Lectionary

| Date | Festival | Old Testament | Psalm | Epistle | Gospel |
|----------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Sept. 1 | Proper 17 | Deuteronomy. 4:1–2, 6– 9 | Psalm 119: 129–136 | Eph. 6:10–20 | Mark 7:14–23 |
| Sept. 8 | Proper 18 | Isaiah 35:4–7a | Psalm 146 | James 2:1–10, 14–18 | Mark 7: 31–37 |
| Sept. 15 | Proper 19 | Isaiah 50:4–10 | Psalm 116:1–9 | James 3:1–12 | Mark 9:14–29 |
| Sept. 22 | Proper 20 | Jeremiah 11:18–20 | Psalm 54 | James 3:13— 4:10 | Mark 9:30–37 |
| Sept. 29 | Proper 21 | Num. 11:4–6, 10–16, 24–29 | Psalm 104: 27–35 | James 5:13–20 | Mark 9:38–50 |

Board of Social Ministry: Sistercare

Mary Keller - Chairperson



Sistercare's Mission is to reduce the occurrence and impact of domestic violence, care for domestic violence survivors, and raise awareness of this significant issue in the Midlands. Their philosophy is to empower survivors of domestic violence and their children to live free of intimate partner violence by becoming educated about domestic violence. This enables the survivors to make informed decisions by taking responsibility for themselves and their children to achieve self-sufficiency. This philosophy is applied by offering survivors of domestic violence and their children a range of supportive, trauma-informed services. Educational training on intimate partner violence, dating violence, and stalking are offered to the community by an experienced Sistercare educator. In addition, their Speaker's Bureau of volunteers and survivors of domestic violence are available to provide community awareness presentations to civic, faith-based, and professional organizations and businesses, to raise awareness and understanding of Sistercare, their services, and the issues of domestic violence.

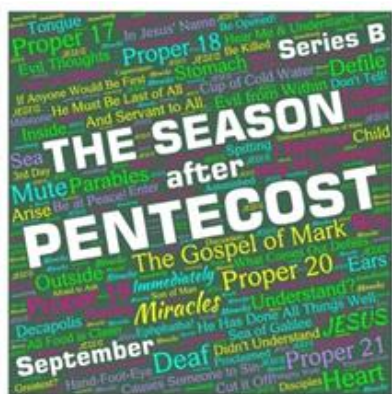
Emergency Shelters provide survivors and their children with a timeframe (typically 25 days) to regain their physical and emotional strength for independence. Emergency shelters offer secure, confidential space where survivors of domestic violence can escape violence and plan for their future. Individual and group counseling, supportive services, children's counseling room, food, laundry, clothing, transportation, and more are provided free of charge.

Sistercare offers innumerable services. The staff provides crisis intervention, shelter screening, referrals, and information 24-hours a day. If you know of someone who is experiencing violence their 24-Hour Crisis Line is 803-765-9428. For more information on their many services and/or to get involved please visit Sistercare.org.



Signs at the Church Entrance

The Season after Pentecost Sign of the Month



It's September and the church is half way into its longest season, The Season after Pentecost. Watch for the Year B September sign at the entrance to the church. During year B of the church calendar, the Gospel scriptures generally come from Mark and in September, they will be from chapters 7 and 9. The first two weeks recount Jesus healing a deaf and mute man and a boy with an impure spirit. The third week, Jesus again predicts His death a second time. The fourth week, Jesus warns the disciples about being careful to not cause other believers to stumble.

Here is the preview of the September sign. As you come into the church why not take the ramp and pause a few moments by the sign to pick out the key words from each week's Gospel. Here is a little hint to help you out: the words on the signs are color coded by week! If you follow Mt. Olive on social media (mtolivesc) you will have seen posts of the weekly lectionary readings, so you can always use your smart phone to help you in your search.

Read the Bible in Three Years - September 2024

| September 2024 | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|-----------------|
| Sep 1 | Jeremiah 41-42 | Sep 8 | Lamentations 2 | Sep 16 | Ephesians 5 | Sep 24 | Ecclesiastes 4 |
| Sep 2 | Jeremiah 43-44 | Sep 9 | Lamentations 3 | Sep 17 | Ephesians 6 | Sep 25 | Ecclesiastes 5 |
| Sep 3 | Jeremiah 45-46 | Sep 10 | Lamentations 4 | Sep 18 | Joel 1 | Sep 26 | Ecclesiastes 6 |
| Sep 4 | Jeremiah 47-48 | Sep 11 | Lamentations 5 | Sep 19 | Joel 2 | Sep 27 | Ecclesiastes 7 |
| Sep 5 | Jeremiah 49-50 | Sep 12 | Ephesians 1 | Sep 20 | Joel 3 | Sep 28 | Ecclesiastes 8 |
| Sep 6 | Jeremiah 51-52 | Sep 13 | Ephesians 2 | Sep 21 | Ecclesiastes 1 | Sep 29 | Ecclesiastes 9 |
| Sep 7 | Lamentations 1 | Sep 14 | Ephesians 3 | Sep 22 | Ecclesiastes 2 | Sep 30 | Ecclesiastes 10 |
| | | Sep 15 | Ephesians 4 | Sep 23 | Ecclesiastes 3 | | |

During the month of September, we will be continuing with the writings of the Prophet Jeremiah through September 11th. The following week, our attention turns to the letter of Paul to the church in Ephesus. The book of Ephesians deals with topics at the very core of what it means to be a Christian. Paul reminds the church that Christianity is for all believers only by grace, through faith in Christ, and that this is God's free gift. Paul also gives practical insight into how believers must live in an unbelieving world. We will finish out the month with the Old Testament books of Joel and Ecclesiastes.



September 2024 Birthdays

| | | | | | |
|------|------------------|------|-------------------|------|------------------|
| 9/2 | Joyce Lauterbach | 9/12 | Doug Lacey | 9/18 | Scott Barrett |
| 9/3 | Kathy Arnold | 9/13 | Frank Osborne | 9/18 | Scott Randall |
| 9/3 | Rick Baden | 9/14 | Kim Gepfert | 9/18 | Robert Lewis |
| 9/3 | Aiden Coutant | 9/14 | Don Meetze | 9/20 | Will Marberry |
| 9/5 | Veronica Kapalka | 9/15 | Nadia R. BouFawaz | 9/21 | Chris Gepfert |
| 9/7 | Laura Meetze | 9/15 | Gary Meetze | 9/21 | Eva Jones |
| 9/9 | Merle Weed Jr. | 9/15 | Neva Meyerhoff | 9/23 | Daniel Powell |
| 9/10 | Jason Dennis | 9/16 | Marge Carter | 9/24 | Annette Holladay |
| 9/10 | David Setterlund | 9/17 | Millie Waldrop | 9/24 | Thelma Miller |
| 9/11 | Ivan Harper | 9/18 | Johnny Barrett | 9/25 | David Cook |

September 2024 Anniversaries

| | | | |
|------|------------------------|------|---------------------|
| 9/2 | Bradley & Amy Carey | 9/19 | Robert & Carol Fong |
| 9/7 | Rich & Sue O'Dell | 9/24 | Hal & Suzie Hoffman |
| 9/9 | Richard & Laura Shealy | 9/26 | Pete & Rita Witt |
| 9/16 | Jeff & Kelly Thrun | 9/29 | David & Connie Cook |

Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."
Philippians 4:6

As Christians, we are thankful that God knows our thoughts and prayers even when we don't have words to express them. Often, God uses His family to express His encouragement to those who need it most. Let's continue to minister to those in our congregation by lifting them up to God in prayer. And please send cards, phone, and visit them, too.

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!

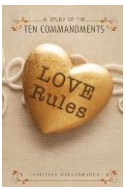


| | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Don Angen | Cleta Dunaway | Anita Meetze | Thelma Miller | Mandy Schultz |
| Nadia R. BouFawaz | Betty Hunter | Laura Meetze | Eva Mae Monts | Linda Schmidt |
| Phil Carter | Harold/Sarah Jones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



Announcements

Women's Book Club



The Women's Book Club is studying the *Ten Commandments: Love Rules* by Christina Hergenrader, a book that you can order from Amazon. The ladies meet on September 3rd and 17th, the first and third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM in the Fellowship hall. ALL women of the congregation are welcome to join in the class.

October Newsletter Deadline –September 25, 2024

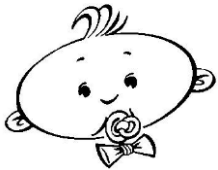
Your next deadline for submitting articles for the October 2024 issue of the Olive Leaves is September 25, 2024. Please send your ½ page, nonpolitical articles to Sue Strouse.



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

FOLLOWING OUR FATHER'S WILL

Jesus always did his Father's will. What does our heavenly Father desire of us?

*Directions: Using the coordinates, circle the corresponding words
Then add those to the blanks below to complete John 6:40, NIV.*

Coordinates

T3, R1, F6, E2, T1, H5, A6, R4, F5, T5, H3, F2, A4, E6

| | F | A | T | H | E | R |
|---|--------|---------|----------|---------|-------|----------|
| 1 | Father | them | the | believe | that | who |
| 2 | have | will | if | heart | to | live |
| 3 | perish | whoever | everyone | shall | shall | give |
| 4 | God | eternal | send | into | Him | believes |
| 5 | in | come | him | Son | rest | with |
| 6 | looks | and | forever | Where | life | hope |

"For my Father's will is that

 and I will raise them up at 1
 the last day." *John 6:40, NIV*