



# Olive Leaves



*May 2026*

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## From Our Pastor: "Noticing the Small Windows"

*Pastor Walt Harper*

This morning I had to briefly run into the sanctuary. We finally got some much-needed rain this morning, so it was fairly dark in the church. I didn't turn on any lights, since there was just enough natural light coming through our lovely stained-glass windows to make it possible to move around the space without running into anything.

As I returned to my office I looked up and noticed that someone had left on the light that illuminates the small stained glass up in the choir loft. In the darkened room it really stood out. I've always loved that glass because it's a depiction of the Sacrament of the Altar.



I'm told that before my time here the Sanctuary was oriented "the other way around." So that stained glass concerning Holy Communion once stood above the altar. That's a great place for it; sacred art to remind us of one of the central features of our worship life.

Funny enough, I sort of like it the way it is now, at the "back of the church." This way, you don't see it as you approach the altar; you see it as you leave the altar. This is great because you've just come to the altar to receive the body and blood of Christ, then you get up from the altar rail, walk back to your pew, look up, and see a visual reminder of what you've just received.

As you well know, our Lord Jesus Christ celebrated the Supper with His disciples on "the night when He was betrayed." He said, very simply, "This is My body" and "This is My blood." And then instructed those disciples to "do this."

And so we do. For just shy of 2,000 years the Christian Church has been receiving the body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, just as He instituted it.

It's a shame that so many churches have arguments about what this means. Why wouldn't we just go with the simple and direct meaning of what Jesus Himself said? We don't need to over-

explain it (as some theologies do), but we also don't need to strip away the meaning of what He said (as some other theologies do).

One of the great things about being Lutheran is that we start at the place of: "Here's what the Lord said," and then we receive it just so. His body and His blood? Yes, because this is the God-Man who said it, and it is for that reason something He's capable of doing.

Here at Mt. Olive, we are blessed with a beautiful worship space. The congregation has taken great care to adorn our worship space with a sense of beauty, and it has done so with the awareness that our sanctuary itself "teaches the faith." Over the years, additional adornments have been brought in that add to this important aspect of a Christian sanctuary.

This little window is a nice part of all that, both as it was, and now in its new role.

(P.S.: Upon leaving the sanctuary I turned the light back off, since we also want to "save on electricity.")



### **From Our President**

*James Sharpe*

Please mark your calendars for our next Voters' Meeting on Sunday, May 24th. The primary agenda item is the approval of the ballot for our new and returning officers and board members. Thank you to our nominating committee for the time invested in reaching out to new members. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who contributes their time and energy to support our church community, whether you are currently serving or starting a new role. We hope to see you there to help us finalize our leadership teams for the year.



Safety Reminder - As the heat and humidity increases this month, please remember to stay hydrated and take breaks in the shade during outdoor activities. With the sun getting stronger, I also encourage everyone to apply sunscreen to prevent sunburn.

### **Choir Director: Do you Have Musical Talent?**

*Renee Harper, Director*

*"Praise Him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise Him with the harp and lyre."  
Psalm 150:3*

As the end of our season approaches, I am looking for soloists (vocal or instrumental) to help with special music throughout the summer. Contact Renee Harper, 203-885-6733 or [waltandrenee@att.net](mailto:waltandrenee@att.net).

The handbells can use one more full-time player. We will also be having a small ensemble of bell players that will be accompanied by the piano during the summer months if you would like to learn how to play bells.



## Board of Worship

*Liz Rosinski, Chair*

*“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.” Ephesians 5:19*

Last month, Mt. Olive dedicated its new organ and celebrated with a concert, featuring guest organist Oyeniran Oydeji! Our very own Catherine Black also participated, playing duets on piano.

The music was inspiring, well-chosen and we are grateful for the time and talents our musicians shared with members and visitors that Sunday afternoon.

Following the concert, attendees enjoyed a wonderful spread of food, catered by Rodgers Creations Charcuterie & Catering.

If you were not able to attend, please pick up a program located on the wall shelf underneath the framed needlepoint in the Narthex and watch the concert on the church's YouTube channel. Click here to view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Eok9r968b0&t=648s>

## Board of Evangelism

*Aresa Boykin, Chairperson*

*“You are the salt of the earth.... Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”*

*Matthew 5:13a, 16*

As a follower of Jesus Christ, we are the salt of the earth. In other words, we make the earth a better place and taste good. Food without salt tastes blunt. Salt brings the needed flavor. It activates our taste buds and creates positive sensations in our taste area. We are also a light to the world. Whereas others walk in darkness, we can be light and show others the way. Even one single light has a big effect on an otherwise dark room or surrounding. Every single light can make a change.



*You are  
THE  
salt  
OF THE  
Earth*

We are salt and light not by doing something special but by living according to the will of God. Jesus showed the way, and by following Him and living a life that pleases Him, we will be salt and light to the world. Jesus encourages us in these verses that we should not hide away, but to be out there among the people, so they can see how we glorify God through our lives.

How is your life? Are you salt and light to others? What are others saying about you? Or do you behave the same as everybody else? Do people say that there is something different about you? Is your life reflecting Jesus?

The early Christians lived a very different life from the general population. They would take care of the poor, the sick, the widows, and orphans. They followed the law, kept fellowship, and shared their belongings. They made the lives of people living around them better. People realized that the Christians were different in a positive way, and they wanted to find out why. New people came to know Jesus Christ daily because of the lifestyle of those first Christians. What about you? (From a YouVersion devotion)

## Thoughts, Prayers, Calls, & Cards

*“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous hand.” Isaiah 41:10*

May is here and with it comes warmer temperatures! For our members who are confined at home or at a facility, or cannot drive, they continue to remain isolated from their Christian community. Let’s continue our ministry to these lovely people by lifting them up to God in prayer. And please send cards, visit, and/or phone 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	David Buck	Anita Meetze	Margaret Meetze	Mandy Schultz
Chuck/Marilyn Bauer	Cleta Dunaway	Laura Meetze	Cyndi Nelson	Linda Schmidt
	Harold/Sarah Jones	Thelma Miller	Polly Roland	

### Board of Education

*Liezl Baden, Chairperson*

We are delighted that 7 teens from our Youth Group participated in Relay for Life this year. It was a good opportunity to give them awareness about how cancer affects lives. This is a new type of service event for this group, and it was notable that they signed up to support not completely knowing what to expect. With service, there is also fun! The annual Carowinds trip is scheduled for May 28th. All teenagers from Mt. Olive are welcome. Please call or text Liezl Baden at 803-397-0038 if interested.

Let’s celebrate the end of the 2025-2026 school year with an “End of School Pool Party!” It will be at Eric and Megan Weed’s house on May 31st at 1:00 pm. All our church families are invited! There will be hot dogs with all the fixings (chili, slaw, and more), along with drinks. Just come and enjoy the time together! If you’d like to bring chips, a side dish, or a dessert to share, it is welcome.



Volunteers needed!!! Ephesians 6:10-18 - **Putting on the Full Armor of God** is the summer VBS theme this year. It will be held July 13-17 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. A volunteer sign-up sheet is in the narthex. Please consider donating your time and talents and volunteer today!

## Mount Olive Preschool

*Jamie Burns, Preschool Director*

803-781-7180 - [preschool@mtolivesc.org](mailto:preschool@mtolivesc.org)

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

It is hard to believe that we are just weeks away from completing our 19<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 will also have our end of the year celebration with preschool families on Wednesday, May 20th 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 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!

### Join a Bible Class

Spring 2026 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	Dana Magic, Brandy Maye, Amanda Dalton, Connie Cook	The Life of Jesus
Confirmation Class	Preschool Area	Pr. Walt Harper	A two-year study of Luther's Small Catechism and the Bible
Middle & High School Youth	Wagner House	April Fancey, Jenn Weed, Jaime Stuck, & Eric Weed	Bible Study
Adults	Fellowship Hall	Sue Strouse & Sandy Osborne	Discovering God's Sovereignty and Grace in the OT
Downstairs Classrooms are accessible by stairs and elevator.			

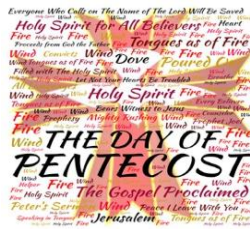
## Read the Bible in Three Years – May 2026

May 2026							
May 1	Genesis 37	May 9	Genesis 45	May 17	I Corinthians 3	May 25	I Corinthians 11
May 2	Genesis 38	May 10	Genesis 46	May 18	I Corinthians 4	May 26	I Corinthians 12
May 3	Genesis 39	May 11	Genesis 47	May 19	I Corinthians 5	May 27	I Corinthians 13
May 4	Genesis 40	May 12	Genesis 48	May 20	I Corinthians 6	May 28	I Corinthians 14
May 5	Genesis 41	May 13	Genesis 49	May 21	I Corinthians 7	May 29	I Corinthians 15
May 6	Genesis 42	May 14	Genesis 50	May 22	I Corinthians 8	May 30	I Corinthians 16
May 7	Genesis 43	May 15	I Corinthians 1	May 23	I Corinthians 9	May 31	Psalms 1
May 8	Genesis 44	May 16	I Corinthians 2	May 24	I Corinthians 10		

As May begins, we continue our journey with the founding fathers as told in the book of Genesis. Next, from May 15th-30th, we will return to the New Testament Book of I Corinthians. The Apostle Paul wrote this book from Ephesus to address and to correct severe dysfunction, division, and ethical problems within the church he founded in Corinth. His overarching goal was to restore unity, uphold moral standards, and re-center the community on the gospel. Finally, on May 31st, we begin our summer series of the first 50 Psalms.

### Signs at the Church Entrance

The month of May will be an exciting month for the signs at the church entrance! The month begins with Easter sign on display. Thursday, May 14th is Jesus' Ascension Day and we will celebrate this on Sunday, May 17th. The following Sunday, May 24th, is the Day of Pentecost, and the last Sunday, May 31st 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 and look at each sign to help you prepare for Jesus's journey for our salvation.



## Board of Social Ministry

*Mary Keller, Chairperson*



**A Heartfelt Thank You to Mt. Olive Members:** We sincerely appreciate the wonderful baby items donated for the USC Student's Baby Shower supporting Birthright of Columbia. The students worked diligently to organize all the contributions from generous supporters, and so many moms joined in the joyful and spirited celebration held on Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup>! Your generosity

made it possible for us to provide pregnant mothers and their babies with hope, essential items, and a sense of community and friendship!

Our facility provides confidential, non-judgmental support for women facing unplanned pregnancies, focusing on "the right of every woman to give birth, and the right of every baby to be born." We offer free services to anyone facing an unplanned or problem pregnancy. If you're feeling alone and need to talk, Birthright extends to you our hands and our hearts. Our newly appointed director, Rebekah Shilling, brings over 15 years of experience working with families throughout South Carolina in maternal and child health, early development, and community support. Her background includes prenatal and postpartum case management, fatherhood engagement programs, and leadership roles in statewide initiatives. Rebekah has guided regional learning collaboratives to support Community Health Workers in the Southeast, contributed to the founding of the Men's National CHW Alliance, and helps train Community Based Doulas across South Carolina.

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.

### May 2026 Anniversaries

5/1	Rick & Liezl Baden	5/22	Randy & Kathie Voyles
5/12	Hunter & Stacey Robinson	5/24	Paul & Lisa Sizemore
5/19	Jason & Jill Brabham	5/26	James & Gwen Draffin
5/22	David & Angela Eustice	5/26	John & Mary Lou Tedder
		5/27	Chris & Kim Gepfert

### May 2026 Birthdays

5/2	Cindy Williams	5/11	Brandon Mason	5/22	Elizabeth Williams
5/4	Joe Harper	5/12	Bradley Carey	5/23	Hannah Duncan
5/5	Joy Fletcher	5/12	Sue Knowles	5/23	Christopher Waldrop
5/5	Myran Trask	5/13	Linda McGriff	5/24	James Duncan
5/6	Colter Greer	5/16	Stanley Bouknight	5/27	Lauren Marberry
5/6	Bruce Helming	5/16	Joseph Maye	5/27	Lynne Schultz
5/7	Marilyn Bauer	5/17	Dana Magic	5/29	Tiffany Meetze
5/8	Dennis Dixon	5/17	Olivia Stuck	5/30	Gloria Meetze
5/10	Henry Dosen	5/21	Nancy Thompson	5/30	Matt Williams

## May 2026 Lectionary

Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
May 3	Easter 5	Acts 6:1-9; 7:2a, 51-60	Psalm 146	1 Peter 2:2-10	John 14:1-14
May 10	Easter 6	Acts 17:16-31	Psalm 66:8-20	1 Peter 3:13-22	John 14:15-21
May 17	Ascension	Acts 1:1-11	Psalm 47	Eph. 1:15-23	Luke 24:44-53
May 24	Pentecost	Num. 11:24-30	Psalm 25:1-15	Acts 2:1-21	John 7:37-39
May 31	Holy Trinity	Gen. 1:1-2:4a	Psalm 8	Acts 2:14a, 22-36	Matt. 28:16-20

### Board of Public Relations

*Shanna Stuck, Chairperson*

It's time to compile the updated Mt. Olive Directory! We will be updating the online version as well as the printed version beginning soon. Once it is complete, we will be giving out updated packets to families that have already received a binder. Our new families will be receiving a new binder!



### Board of Fellowship

*Kelly Thrun, Co-Chairperson; Rebecca Selle, Co-Chairperson*

He is Risen Indeed! While Easter Sunday has passed, the hope we celebrated continues! As we enter this new month, let us stay centered on the truth that Christ is alive and actively working in our lives. The empty grave offers us a "new beginning" to live out each day, and seeing so many faces—both new and familiar—this past Easter reminded us that this message of hope is truly for everyone.



As we move forward, let's build on that momentum. We are called to "gather to worship" and maintain a daily fellowship dedicated to encouraging one another. Since May features five Sundays, it provides the perfect opportunity to share a meal; we will be hosting a Church Potluck on Sunday, May 31st. I hope to see you all there as we continue to grow together!

# Kids Korner



## “Who Am I?”

Some Old Testament books are named after prophets. Discover the names of the prophets below. Use the clues to write the names on the lines. Arrange the circled letters on the bottom blanks to describe what a prophet is.

1. I was called to preach to the people of Ninevah, but I ran from God instead. *My book is number 32 in the Bible.*

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

2. I spoke God's message when the temple was being built. *My book is number 37.*

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

3. Israel's unfaithfulness to God is compared to my unfaithful wife. *My book is number 28.*

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

4. My book predicts punishment for wickedness and promises comfort. *It is book 23.*

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

5. I had dreams and visions. *My book is 27.*

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

6. I was often in danger because of my predictions. I angered officials. *My book is 24.*

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

7. I was a shepherd from Judah who called people to turn to God and leave their selfish lives. *My book is 30.*

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

8. *My book is 26* and contains descriptions of strange visions.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ ○ \_\_\_\_\_ .

Prophets are \_\_\_\_\_ .

Answers: Jonah; Haggai; Hosea; Isaiah; Daniel; Jeremiah; Amos; Ezekiel. Messengers.

## National Day of Prayer – May 7, 2026

*"Tell of His glory among the nations,  
His wonderful deeds among all the peoples." 1 Chronicles 16:24 NASB*

On May 7th, Americans observe the National Day of Prayer. Waiting on God is an important component of prayer. It's hard to understand why God delays when we cry out for help. Why does he allow us to suffer, when he could just say the word and make it all better? Why must we wait?

Consider a child whose parents always give her whatever she asks, as soon as she asks for it. That child has little opportunity to learn patience or gratitude. Because she doesn't know what it's like to not have, she cannot appreciate the true value of something.

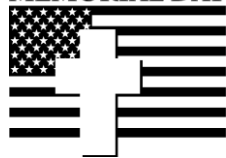
God may have some of these things in mind when our prayers go unanswered for a time. As the psalmist exhorts, "Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!" (Psalm 27:14, NRSV).

(From The NEWSLETTER Newsletter, May 2011)



## Memorial Day – May 25, 2026

### MEMORIAL DAY



Over the years, Memorial Day has become a big holiday weekend. It's now the unofficial start of summer, rather than a day of tribute to the departed it was originally meant to be.

Even if we plan fun events for Memorial Day weekend, it's important to stop long enough to bow our heads and pay respect to our departed loved ones — especially those who fell in battle while helping preserve America's liberties.

Let us take time to make the pilgrimage to various cemeteries and pause long enough to say, "Thank you, Father, for these special lives, for sacrifices made and for friendships we have shared."

(From The NEWSLETTER Newsletter, May 2009)



## Announcements

### Women's Book Club

The ladies meet the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:00pm in the fellowship hall. You do not have to read the book to join us. All ladies are welcome to join! We are currently reading *God's Provision in a Wilderness World*, by Lindsay Hausch. There are 2 extra copies, or you can order the book from CPH.org, Amazon, or Christianbook.com. Please contact Renee Harper for more information at 203-885-6733.



### Wednesday Midweek Bible Study Class

From April 29th through June 3rd, join Pr. Walt at 1:30 pm or 7:00 pm in studying "How the Old Testament Points to Jesus." Everyone is invited to join in as we focus on studying God's Word and share in faith and fellowship together.

### Secure E Giving

E Giving is becoming a more popular way to give. If you would like to set up a new account, the link is on the home page of our church website, [mtolivesc.org](http://mtolivesc.org), or scan the QR code. You may give through your checking account or by credit card.



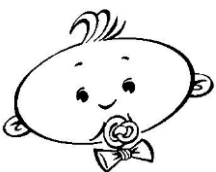
Once you set up your account and log in, you should see pictures of Mt. Olive above the giving labels. Choose one and follow the prompts. Our e-giving is powered by VANCO, a secure company that follows strict guidelines and policies that we must adhere to. Even though the e-giving page looks like our website, Mt. Olive will have no record of your card/bank account number or your personal information. If you need help setting up your account, contact Aresa Boykin.

### Young Adults

There is a GroupMe website for the Young Adults attending Mt. Olive. It is a way to find all the news and activities that are being planned. To get connected to this group, contact Joe Harper at cell: 203-885-8346 or email: [joseph.m.harper@outlook.com](mailto:joseph.m.harper@outlook.com)

**Upcoming Events: May 31st**, Pool Party, 2:00 Megan Weed's house, 590 Sugar Berry Road, Chapin, SC. All are invited. Kid-friendly!

### Nursery "Cry Room" Reminder



Mt. Olive's nursery 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.