

The Olive Branch

Loving Christ in Worship, Fellowship, Education and Service

October 2026

AUTUMN GRACE & GRATITUDE

As I write this October newsletter article, it's the first day of Fall (September 22nd) and it's three days before the beginning of the Hebrew festival of *Sukkot*. In our American life, Autumn is marked by harvest festivals, Halloween celebrations, and the initial rumblings of plans for Thanksgiving and Christmas. And for the Church of Jesus Christ, Autumn is a season that the Holy Bible itself associates with themes of stewardship, harvest, gratitude, and the giving of thanks.

Ancient Israel knew this well. After the grain had been threshed and the grapes pressed, God commanded a joyful Fall festival called *Sukkot* — the Feast of Tabernacles. Families left their solid houses and lived for a week in temporary tented shelters called booths (or tabernacles). They remembered that God did not abandon them after they had fled Egypt, but he dwelled with them by tabernacling (or tenting) with them in the desert wilderness. They also brought the fruit of the land and appeared before the Lord at the place he chose. Deuteronomy is very clear about the grateful intent of this...

"They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed; all shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you." – (Deuteronomy 16:16b–17)

Notice that the giving of offerings comes in response to God's blessing. Consequently, stewardship is not a tax levied on us by a distant God; rather, it's the grateful response of a people who have already received God's good gifts. In other words, the harvest is the Lord's before it's ours. We can only give back to God what he has first given to us. Therefore, we do not appear before the Lord empty-handed because he has not first appeared before us empty-handed.

Yet *Sukkot* was never only about the crop harvest. The temporary booths were a symbolic confession of faith. That is, we are merely pilgrims in this life. Our best houses are ultimately temporary. Our strongest barns will one day stand empty and derelict. Furthermore, this biblical feast did not only look backward to the desert

wilderness. It also looked forward to a day when God would not merely visit his people for a time but permanently dwell with them forever.

While most Christians do not observe the festival of *Sukkot*, the foreshadowing and prefiguring of *Sukkot* have met their fulfillment ultimately in Christ. By God's grace, the meaning of this Fall festival is completely fulfilled both already and not yet in Jesus Christ. Already the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. Already the crucified and risen Lord is present through his Word and Sacraments, gathering a harvest of souls from every nation. And yet the Church and all creation await the return of Christ. Then and only then, at his great Second Advent to come, the booths of this age will be dismantled and the New Jerusalem will descend from on high, and the voice from the heavenly throne will be heard in full...

"Behold, the dwelling place of God is with mankind. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God." – (Revelation 21:3)

The biblical Greek word translated "dwelling place" in Revelation 21:3 is the word for tabernacle. So, *Sukkot*'s eternal meaning is completed in *Yeshua* (Jesus) the Divine Messiah. Here in Revelation 21, the temporal world gives way to the eternal world, and the impermanent realm gives way to the unshakable City of God. The temporary pilgrims become the everlasting household of God. God himself will tabernacle with a redeemed humanity forever — not for seven days as is symbolically observed during *Sukkot*, but without end in a world where death, mourning, crying and pain have passed away.

This is the free gift (by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit) that we have received from the One Lord and Savior who first pitched his tent in our human flesh 2000+ years ago, who bore our sins on a cross, and has risen to make us his own. Christian faith and life flow from here! Moreover, Christian stewardship and gratitude do not flow from a fearfulness that we haven't given enough but from the confidence and blessed assurance that Christ our Savior is entirely enough

(infinitely more than enough!), and he has gone to prepare a feast for us that has no expiration date.

So, this October, as the leaves change and the Sunday morning offering plate is passed, our congregation will continue doing two things at once: [1] We will give thanks for the earthly harvest we can see, and [2] We will look to the heavenly harvest we cannot yet see — the day when all believers shall not stand before the Lord empty-handed, because Christ himself will have filled every hand by his infinite atonement and unlimited grace freely received through faith.

Together in Christ,
Pastor Tim

Pam's Pearls of Prayer

Scripture of the Month: Isaiah 40:31

*"but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint."*

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Thought for the Month

This verse reminds us that when we are at our lowest, God is always there to renew us. When our load seems too heavy to carry, we must look to God and He will ease our burden. And like the verse says, we'll soar like eagles.

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Prayer for the Month

Dear Lord, we need to remind ourselves that You are always with us, no matter what. When we are happy, we praise You, but when we're sad, we must remember to look to You for strength. Guide us on the right path to Your eternal glory. We pray this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mt. Olive Preschool Update

Good Afternoon!

Its hard to believe we are already into our second month of school. The kids are settling into their routines and we have been having so much fun getting to know our new students. This month we kicked off learning about Science. We did all kinds of science using colors, gravity, pushing and pulling, and at the end of the week we used science to make SLIME! After Science we jumped into transportation week. We learned all the ways we can get from one place to another, some examples were; bikes, cars, buses, airplanes, boats, trains and Hot air balloons! This was also the week we had Back to School Night. It was fun to show our parents all the things we have worked on so far this year and to

show them what we are going to be learning in the year to come. After Transportation week we took our rocket ships and we blasted off to space. We learned about the sun and the moon, the stars in the sky, and made some fun planets! The last week of September we learned about the Farmers Market and focused on produce like Apples. We learned about the parts of an apple and did apple printing. It has been a really fun month and we can't wait to continue the fun in October!

Blessings

Mrs. Ashley, Mrs. Amanda, Mrs. Robyn, Mrs. Emily

Ruth Thresher Memorial



The above picture is of a young Ruth Thresher that was used at her memorial service last month. We will miss you, Ruth, but we'll see you again in the world to come. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Community Luncheons



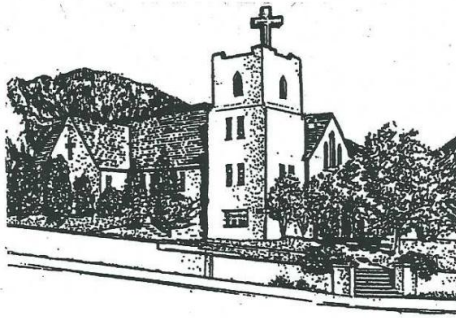
It's that time of year again! Our first luncheon of the season is on November 11th. Great food will be provided by Louanna Kurtz, inspiring devotional by Pastor Tim, and nostalgic music provided by *db Duo*. Please come and join us!!

Martin Luther on the Reformation

"In short, I will preach it, teach it, write it, but I will constrain no one by force, for faith must come freely without compulsion. Take myself as an example. I opposed indulgences and all the papists, but never with force. I simply taught, preached and wrote God's Word; otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept, or drank Wittenberg beer with my friends Philipp and Amsdorf, the Word ... did everything."

FROM: MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH
3561 FOOTHILL BLVD.
LA CRESCENTA, CA 91214

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



TO:

DATED MATERIAL – DO NOT HOLD

BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH

1 – Kitty Chambers	14 – Elliot Ness
2 – Justin Singleton	23 – Momoka Tagawa
3 – Tom Cody	23 – Devin Aluzri
4 – Hilary Singleton	25 – Yuki Tagawa
8 – Andy Turner	29 – Ryan Tagawa
14 – Cheryl Turner	

ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH

15 – Alec & Teresa Aluzri	No. 9
23 – Justin & Kyoko Tagawa	No. 11
25 – Derek & Angela Zelaya	No. 18

MEETINGS & EVENTS FOR THE MONTH

6 – Church Council	7:00 pm
10 – Breakfast Bible Study at Panera	8:30 am
12 – Threads of Hope	9:00 am
18 – Food Donation Sunday & Hoving Home	9:30 am
24 – Trunk or Treat	12:00 pm
25 – Reformation Sunday	9:30 am

Trunk or Treat



Halloween is just around the corner and Mt. Olive will host “Trunk or Treat”! The date is Saturday, October 24th, from noon until 2:00 pm. Come and join the fun! Invite your friends and neighbors. There will be games and goodies for all!



Pastor Tim will be attending his annual continuing education event called “Here We Still Stand” conference, October 15th to 17th. It’s a conference in San Diego each year that is grounded in Lutheran theology. It includes clergy and laity from various branches of the Church of Jesus Christ, but the majority of attendees are Lutheran pastors from the following Lutheran denominations: AALC, ELCA, LCMC, LCMS, and NALC. Pastor Ed will be attending this year as well. The above picture is of Pastor Ed and Pastor Tim at last year’s confernece.

**What Gives Us
Assurance and Confidence**

