



THE OLIVE BRANCH

MARCH 2024

OLIVE BRANCH CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)

Richard D. Cline, minister
Sara C. Scungio, administrative assistant
757-566-8077 (Church Office)

Web Address: www.ob-cc.org (with Facebook link)
Office Email Address: obcc1833@gmail.com
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Bill & Susan Simpson joined February 4, 2024
7680 Thacher Dr.
Toano, VA 23168-9055
H: (757) 566-4859
C: (757) 653-1262
simpsonw994@gmail.com

Mike Hebbard & Jody Brooks joined February 18, 2024
751 Colony Trail
Lanexa, VA 23089-6013
Jody Cell: (770) 851-0932
Mike Cell: (404) 861-9250
Jody Email: jodybbrooks@gmail.com
Mike Email: mhebbard@gmail.com

Welcome!

CHALLENGES FOR LENT

Lent is a 40-day period in the church marked by fasting and abstinence. During the Middle Ages, fasting during Lent required giving up meat and dairy. Our modern interpretation of fasting is to abstain from certain foods or beverages, such as chocolate or caffeine beverages, or any other food items that would create a hardship to do without. Instead of abstinence, one might fast, going from three full meals a day to two smaller meals.

Sometimes fasting has nothing to do with food, instead focusing upon certain behaviors, hobbies, or habits. Be it food or behavior, we give them up during Lent in

order to experience on a minor personal level the temptations Jesus endured during his 40 days in the wilderness. Yet whatever fasting or abstinence we do, Lent is a time of prayer and reflection upon the life of Jesus, and his struggles, suffering, and death, as we prepare for Easter.

This year the Worship Group presented us with a set of weekly challenges to accompany our fasting. On the five Sundays prior to Palm Sunday and Holy Week, a new challenge to reflect and act upon will be given. The first challenge is to Put God First, followed by Forgiveness, Prayer, Kindness, and finishing with Transformation.

Life and growing in Christ is not about maintaining the status quo. From time to time, we need to be pushed out of our comfort zones, and struggle a little, especially if we desire to be transformed into disciples of Christ. After all, who doesn't like a challenge? So start the Lenten journey: Put God First.

Blessings,
~Pastor Richard

MEETINGS & BUILDING USE

T.O.P.S.: Tuesdays; 9:30AM; Taylor Hall

Seekers Prayer Group: Tuesdays; 11:30 AM
Adult SS Room

Our Day Out: 2nd Wednesdays; 10AM-2PM;
Branch Hall

Comfort Ministry: 2nd Saturdays; 10 AM
Sandy's Restaurant

DWM Tuesday Bible Study: 3rd Tuesdays; 2 PM;
Taylor Hall

Girl Scouts Troop 1385 Meetings:
Alternate Wednesdays; September 6 until June 5,
2024
6:30-8:00 PM; Adult Sunday School Room

OBCC Men's Meeting: 2nd Thursdays; 9 AM; Branch
Hall with breakfast

4th Thursday Lunch Bunch: 4th Thursdays; 11 AM;
Sandy's Restaurant

Lifeline Screening: March 21; 8AM-5PM; Branch Hall



SERVICES & HOURS

Sunday Services:

8:30 AM Branch Hall 11:00 AM Sanctuary

Sunday School:

NFH Sunday School following the 8:30 service

Andy's Sunday School at 9:30

Nursery:

Open on Sundays: 8:15AM-12:15PM

Office Hours:

Mon-Fri 8:30AM-1:30PM



DWM Yard Sale: March 2, 8AM-1PM, Branch Hall

Maundy Thursday Worship: March 28; 7PM

Good Friday Worship: March 29; 7PM

Easter Sunrise Service: March 31; 6:30AM with
breakfast to follow

Easter Giving: March 24 & 31



DST STARTS ON MARCH 10

Don't forget to set your clocks an hour ahead for Daylight Saving Time either the night of March 9 or midnight on March 10.



PRAYER LIST

Church Family: Jimmy Biggs, JC Biggs, Linda Brown, Doug Dill, Janet Dombrowski, Phyllis Gardner, Nancy Griffith, Irma Gustafson, Clay Harrison, Keeta Hodson, Anne Holland, Linda Hutton, Cheryl Johnson, Jean Lawrence, Diana Love, Keith McMurdo, Dallas Mitchell, Joann Mitchell, David Nunn, Fred Rothermel, Bob Schmidt, Barbara Thiel, Jerry Van Cleave, Sarah Waid, Devon Watson

Friends: The professional and volunteer women and men who protect and defend us, Our Nation, Natasha Angel (Bob & Sharon Herndon's friend), Dave Archibald (Larry & Louise Smith's son's friend), Bill Caldwell (Liz Ripley's brother), Denny Dasher (Dennis & Anita Dasher's son), Evala (Norm Hall's daughter), Cody Ferguson (Amy Ferguson's nephew), Nancy Ferguson (Amy Ferguson's mother), Janet Gay (Emily Dill's friend), Sue Martin (Michelle Wright's sister-in-law), Lynette Mills (Joann Mitchell's sister), Julie Painter (Anita Dasher's aunt), Marolyn Pierce (Carolyn Hunt's sister), Zak Reynolds (Larry & Louise Smith's grandson), Logan Ripley (Liz Ripley's grandson), Joe Simmons (Pastor Richard & Ann's son), Andrew Smith (Mary Louise Rich's son-in-law), Howard & Sharon Thackson (Cheryl Johnson's niece), Brenda Walker (Chuck Walker's mother), Darlene West (Liz Ripley's sister), Jason (Lorraine Beasley's son), Lola (Missy Harbour's friend's niece)



13 Wally & Noreen Bowen
22 Rudy & Cecelia Ruskey
31 Curt & Rosa Griffin
31 Clay & Shirley Harrison



01 Patty Barker
04 Anthony Griffin
10 Linda Garrett
12 Marlies Brantley
16 Jane Hatcher
16 Carol Pitts
20 Mel Watson
22 Emily Dill
22 Tammy Rutherford
27 Lois Marshall
27 Lewis Williams
31 Richard Griffin



ELDERS & DEACONS & DEACONESSES

		THIS MONTH'S DEACONESS
		Teri Tench
03/03/2024	Will Hatcher Linda Williams	
	Judy Eley Jane Hatcher Joann Mitchell Joshua Fulgham	
03/10/2024	Teri Tench Ann Bradshaw	
	Amy Ferguson Karen Barrow Anita Dasher Danny Pitts	
03/17/2024	Abby Matschke Sheila Yeatts	
	Liz Ripley Jason Teagle Jim Holland Tyler Watson (Janet Neal)	
03/24/2024	Andrew Pfister Joyce Allen	
	Will Hatcher Chuck Walker Bob Herndon Sharon Herndon	
03/31/2024	Kim Riffle Don White	
	Haley Creech (Maralyn Carr) Tracy Creech Ann Bradshaw Jeremy Dill	



OUR DAY OUT-2ND WEDNESDAYS

Because of Lent being so early this year, we had Our Day Out on the first Wednesday of the month, but the change didn't matter as our gathering was full and everyone was in such a happy mood. The fellowship that we all enjoy before starting the program warms my heart as it gives us all a chance to greet and catch up and to welcome newcomers.

Anita and I had a blast decorating with a Mardi Gras theme and handing out beads to all our participants. Christy Jensen gave us a wonderful presentation explaining the Lenten season and traditions including Fat Tuesday which we celebrated later in February with a delicious pancake supper and great Bingo fun. We had a very interesting discussion followed with anecdotes about what and why we give up things during Lent. I was still amazed that you could eat or do what you gave up on Sundays as it's the free day during this season.

Chef Sheila and her great helpers Anita, Joann, and Jane delighted our taste buds with lasagna, salad, and garlic bread topping it off with delicious cupcakes and cookies. Crafty Jane decided we should doodle rather than draw frogs and the results ran from clever and cute to ?????? Keep doodling, everyone! You never know how it will turn out.

Bingo is always so much fun and our caller Tyler laughs as much as we do, especially with Barb and Joann giving him M&M's throughout.

God shares his love and blessings with us all the time and ODO gives all of us a chance to share our love and caring with others. Next month we will celebrate St Patrick's Day so wear green if you don't want to get pinched!

May God Bless You Always,
Marney Brickhouse, Coordinator



Worship & Wonder

WORSHIP & WONDER SCHEDULE

	Leader:	Greeter:
03/03/2024	Ann Bradshaw	
03/10/2024	Linda Williams	Bob Williams
03/17/2024	Landa Simmons	Cris Simmons
03/24/2024	Linda Williams	Bob Williams
03/31/2024	Landa Simmons	Cris Simmons



The OBCC Family extends condolences to the family of Betty Barber. Betty passed away on February 11, 2024. A Celebration of Life service for Betty will take place on Saturday, May 4th at 11:30AM at OBCC.





YARD SALE

DWM YARD SALE

DWM will hold a yard sale from 8 AM-1 PM on Saturday March 2 in Branch Hall. Items from your home and baked goods are needed. The DWM committee will take donations beginning after church on Sunday, February 25, and set up all week in Branch Hall.

~Sheila Yeatts, DWM Director



WORLD OUTREACH NEWS

Easter Giving Sundays are March 24 & 31. Thank you in advance for giving as you can.

We received a note from Rev. Courtney Richards, Communications and Development Manager with Week of Compassion, about our generous contributions. The note reads:

"Dear friends at Olive Branch Christian Church, We are giving thanks and celebrating you as one of our top 100 giving congregations for Week of Compassion in 2023. Your partnership in this ministry means help and hope in times of crisis, quake, flood and all the other storms of life. Thank you for the ways you care for God's beloved at home and throughout the world.

~Sheila Yeatts, World Outreach Coordinator



THE GREATEST JOURNEY BEGINS

There were more than 11 million Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts collected. Their journey: crossing oceans, mountains, and deserts to delight children in more than 100 countries around the world.

Over the past 30 years, more than 50 million children have received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Samaritan's Purse trains volunteers to teach these children, and they provide materials in 91 languages so the children can understand the Word they are being taught.

We thank God for the eternal impact of Operation Christmas Child. God has led each shoebox to break ground spiritually and prepare the way for the Gospel.

Please join us in praying that God will continue to use this journey to transform the lives of millions of children.

~Sheila Yeatts, World Outreach Coordinator



Worship & Wonder

WHY WORSHIP & WONDER: PART 2

When our children leave the sanctuary on Sunday morning, they move to another sacred space, our Worship and Wonder space. Before entering the room, the children remove their shoes, and the day's assistant introduces them one by one to the storyteller who greets them and invites them to join the circle where our story will be told. We tell stories, not only because "children derive life meaning from stories" (Robert Coles), but also because at such an early age (3 - 8 years), children have not yet gained the capacity to understand abstract concepts. Just as no one develops the capacity to learn algebra until around age 12 or beyond, children do not gain the ability to process theoretical ideas. We help them set the figurative stage of their lives by telling the stories of people who follow God. Then, our storyteller invites the children through a series of questions to wonder about the story. After story time the children have an opportunity to experience the story during a time of creative play. As we begin to conclude our time together, we see and hear of the presence of God's light with us, hear the story again from the Bible, and share a Feast.



SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you all for the incredible support and love you've shown me during this very difficult time. Your prayers and kind words have meant the world to me. Although I have faced ups and downs, knowing that I have the

unwavering support of my church family makes all the difference.

~Devon Watson



VA REGION MISSION TRIP 2024

The 2nd Annual Virginia Region Mission Trip will be Monday, 6/17/24- Saturday, 6/22/24 in Charleston, SC.

Cost per individual \$175 if you provide your own transportation.

\$225.00 if you ride in the regional van

\$125.00 if you secure your own lodging

Lodging and meals provided by James Island Presbyterian Church Mission house (beds and cots)

Work: Building homes with Habitat for Humanity and home repair. Work with James Island outreach including minor home repair and food bank, serving meals, and working in homeless shelters. Hurricane Ian recovery work will also be included.

Each team will have 8 people:

Team 1: 16 and older, work on habitat homes and other construction projects.

Team 2: 11-15 year-olds and chaperones work on home repair and other outdoor projects.

Team 3: Inside projects including food banks, feeding lunch to homeless, etc.

Cost included in full registration: transportation, lodging, most meals, t-shirt, miscellaneous.

Additional cost: lunch on your way, additional snacks/drinks, supper Thursday evening if you want to eat out, lunch on your way home.

Jonathan Webster's goal is to have 27 participants.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Education Building. We will have an informational meeting in the new year.

~Abby Matschke



OLIVE BRANCH
Lenten Services

LENT & EASTER SERVICE SCHEDULE

Below is the schedule for the remainder of the Lenten services. The schedule is also posted on the bulletin boards in the Sanctuary and the Education Building. Please check emails and bulletin announcements for any schedule changes that may take place throughout the Lenten season.

OBCC will be hosting its own Maundy Thursday worship on March 28 at 7PM in the Sanctuary, and again on Good Friday, March 29 at 7PM.

Easter Sunday worship will be March 31 at regular Sunday worship times, 8:30AM in Branch Hall and

11AM in the Sanctuary. There will also be a Sunrise service at 6:30AM with breakfast to follow.



THE MEANING OF LENT

Psalms 46:10 insists that hard circumstances are precisely the time to be still. It is a call to contemplation: "Know that I am God."

God does not pledge to keep suffering, tragedy, and turmoil away from us. Instead, in this passage, He promises never to leave us alone in their midst and to carry us through them in his strength. We rest secure in that knowledge, there is no need to struggle on our own.

Lent does not deny our reality. It does ask us to cease our struggling—not because we are giving up, but because we are choosing to bear witness to God's promise to his children.

~Rev. Fred Rothermel

MARCH SPRING IS COMING

We didn't have roses for Valentine's Day, but we did have daffodils blooming in our Nature Trail!



ST. PATRICK'S DAY FUN FACTS

Happy St. Patrick's Day! Unless you've been living under the Blarney Stone you already know that March 17 is St. Patrick's Day. But did you know about how a religious feast day commemorating the famed Irish patron saint who brought Christianity to Ireland ended up being a day celebrated almost globally?

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in more countries around the world than any other single-day national festival, largely due to America's enthusiasm for what many consider a holiday.

Parades are the heartbeat of St. Patrick Day festivities in America. The first parade held in St. Patrick's honor took place in America, not Ireland, in 1601 in what is now St. Augustine, Florida. And the first actual St. Patrick's Day parade also took place in America, in 1737, although it was pretty much just a stroll down the middle of a street in Boston by a few Irish Protestants to honor the patron saint of their motherland. The first St. Patrick's Day parade in New York City was held in 1762, 14 years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and was organized by Irish troops serving in British colonies. Today the world's biggest St. Patrick's Day celebration is the annual parade in New York City, where more than two million spectators line the parade route, all claiming to be Irish, at least for the day.

The day continued to be and still is observed as a feast day by the Church of Ireland, the Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Lutheran Church. However, when the Irish government became aware of a growing interest in St. Patrick's Day by American tourists in the mid-1990s, they launched a national campaign to convert America's fascination with St. Patrick's Day and Irish culture into tourist dollars.

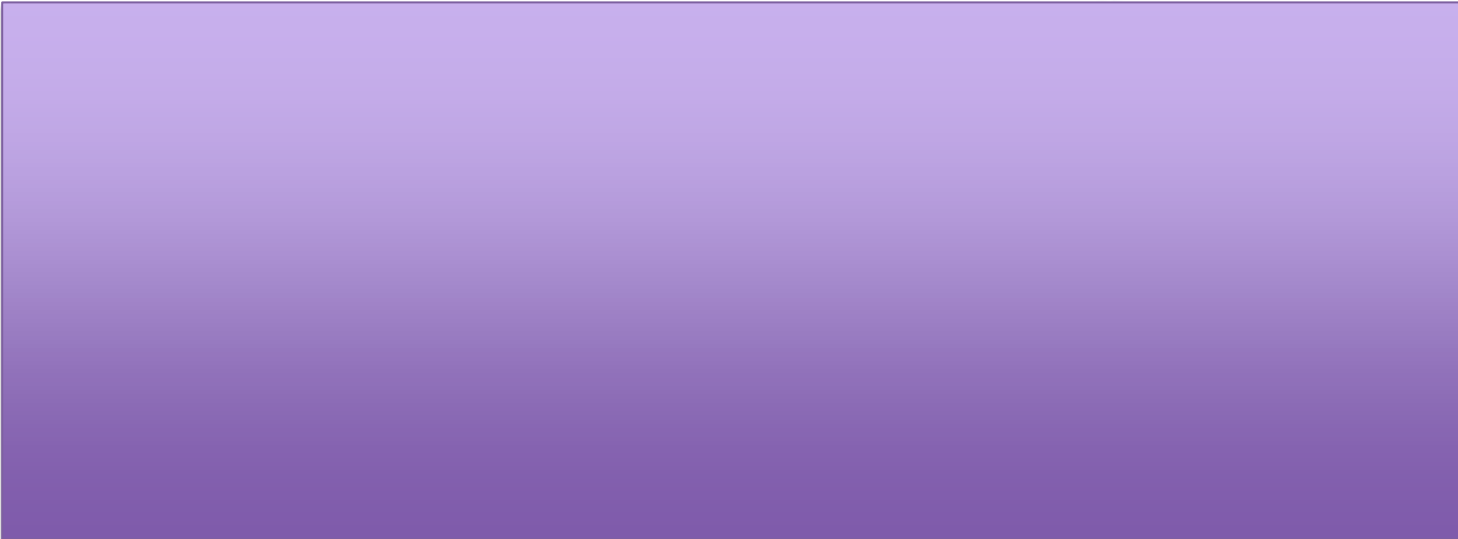
Meanwhile, in America, more than one million Irish men, women, and children were immigrating through Ellis Island in the 1800s. As their numbers grew, the Irish discovered strength in unity and rallied together to celebrate their beloved patron saint with a parade every March 17. The practice of St. Patrick's Day parades and festivals followed Irish immigrants as they made their way across America's heartland and into the deep south, seeking cheap farmland and job opportunities.

Today, 30% of Americans celebrate by cooking an Irish meal, usually containing corned beef and cabbage. But perhaps one of the most famous traditions that continues is pouring 40-60 pounds of green dye into the Chicago River.



2024 COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES – 7 P.M.

Hospitality Time – 6 P.M.



March 6, 2024: Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 7479 Richmond Road, Williamsburg
757-564-3745 Rev. Alex Sheppard-Witt

Offering-Avalon Center

Speaker – Rev. Jennifer Andrews-Weckerly, Hickory Neck Episcopal Church

March 13, 2024: Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church, 7801 Church Lane, Toano
757-566-0162 Rev. Candee Martin

Offering - From His Hands

Speaker – Rev. Zach Dey, Williamsburg Mennonite Church

March 20, 2024: Stone House Presbyterian Church, 9401 Fieldstone Parkway, Toano
757-565-1130 Rev. Mike Burcher

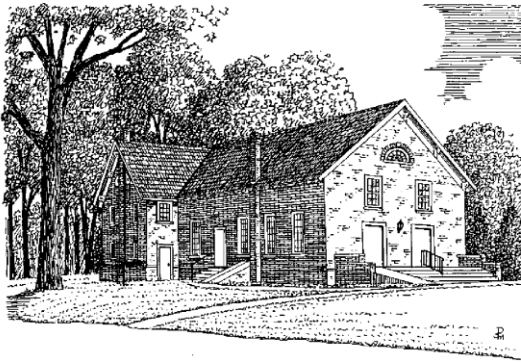
Offering-Proclaiming Grace Outreach

Speaker – Dr. Rob Whitehead Sr., New Zion Baptist Church

March 27, 2024: Hickory Neck Episcopal Church, 8300 Richmond Road, Toano
757-566-0276 Rev. Jennifer Andrews-Weckerly

Offering-Habitat for Humanity

Speaker – Rev. Candee Martin, Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church



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*Note: No longer wish to receive our
newsletter? Address changed?
Please contact the church office.*

