



# THE OLIVE BRANCH

## FEBRUARY 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](http://www.ob-cc.org) (with Facebook link)**  
**Office Email Address: [obcc1833@gmail.com](mailto:obcc1833@gmail.com)**  
**Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM**



### WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Mary Louise Rich joined December 31, 2023  
106 Tom Taylor Rd  
Toano, VA 23168-9117  
336-460-7399  
[mvrich515@gmail.com](mailto:mvrich515@gmail.com)

Welcome!

### GIVE, OR GIVE IT UP?

It happened in 1923 and 1934. It happened again in 1945. It will happen again this year in 2024, then in 2029, but that will be it for this century. What is this happening event? Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday taking place on the same day, February 14. This coinciding of events might place many of you in a dilemma. Should you give a box of chocolates, or give it up for Lent? Should you take the love of your life out to a wonderful dinner at the Aberdeen Barn Steak House on Richmond Road, or worship with your brothers and sisters in Christ at the Community Lenten Service at the Williamsburg Mennonite Church on Croaker Road?

Tough decision. Feed my stomach, or feed my soul? Be reminded by the imposition of ashes of my mortality, or just eat, drink, and be merry? Enter into the season of Lent and forty days of self-reflection, or just mark it down as one more day in a mostly ordinary life?

I know where I will be – and it is not just because I am preaching that night! I need to be reminded that the life God has given me is at once wild and precious. Wild not in the sense of crazy disobedience, but wild in being open, unbounded, and free to receive whatever comes to me. Precious in that each day is a gift, for life is short, uncertain, with no guarantees. That is what the imposition of ashes means to me. It is a reminder that as I was born, so shall I one day die.

Such a thought need not be morose and melancholic. Death does not wipe out the value and beauty of life. On the contrary, it makes life even more precious. Everything and everyone matter. Nothing and no one are to be taken for granted. Not a minute of time is to be wasted or wished away. And always, we are to give God the glory.

So join me this February 14th. Worship with your faith community at the Mennonite Church. Listen once more to the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Then give thanks to God for our one wild and precious life.

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—MEETING ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY  
IN FEB. DUE TO 2<sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAY BEING ASH  
WEDNESDAY

Comfort Ministry: 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays; 10 AM  
Sandy's Restaurant

DWM Tuesday Bible Study: 3<sup>rd</sup> 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: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays; 9 AM; Branch  
Hall with breakfast

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday Lunch Bunch: 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays; 11 AM;  
Sandy's Restaurant



## 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



Cemetery Cleaning: February 1-10

Rev. Robin Moscati's Installation: February 4; 2:30PM

Our Day Out: February 7; 10AM-2PM

Shrove Tuesday Dinner: February 13; 6PM; Branch  
Hall

Week of Compassion Giving: February 18 & 25



## PRAYER LIST

**Church Family:** Kay Ainsworth, JC Biggs, Linda Brown, Doug Dill, Janet Dombrowski, Phyllis Gardner, Curt Griffin, Nancy Griffith, Irma Gustafson, Clay Harrison, Elaine Henk & Family, Keeta Hodson, Anne Holland, Linda Hutton, Cheryl Johnson, Carole Kerr & Family, Jean Lawrence, Diana Love, Val Mason & Family, Keith McMurdo, Dallas Mitchell, Joann Mitchell, David Nunn, Bob Schmidt, Barbara Thiel, Jerry Van Cleave, Sarah Waid, Devon Watson, Ronnie Yeatts

**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), Family of Roberta Baker (Linda Garrett's aunt), 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), 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), Brenda Walker (Chuck Walker's mother), Darlene West (Liz Ripley's sister), Jason (Lorraine Beasley's son), Lola (Missy Harbour's friend's niece)



None



- 04 Allen Eberly
- 05 Norman Hall
- 08 Barbara Thiel
- 09 Andy Bell
- 11 Maddie Elam
- 12 Bev Walker
- 13 Kelsey Creech
- 16 Bob Schmidt
- 17 John Garrett, Jr.
- 18 Barbara Nicholson
- 21 Robin Moscati
- 22 Doug Haulsee
- 23 Barb Schmidt
- 24 Steve Ainsworth
- 24 Andrew Pfister
- 25 Tonya Meadows
- 25 Virginia Waltrip
- 26 Rosa Griffin
- 26 Gail Key
- 26 Kathleen Shuman
- 27 Steve Garrett
- 28 Grace Gardner
- 28 Tracey Hutton



## ELDERS & DEACONS & DEACONESSES

		THIS MONTH'S DEACONESS
		Linda Hutchens
02/04/2024	Abby Matschke Sheila Yeatts	
	Liz Ripley Jason Teagle	

	Jim Holland Tyler Watson (Janet Neal)	
02/11/2024	Andrew Pfister Joyce Allen	
	Ann Bradshaw Chuck Walker Bob Herndon Sharon Herndon	
02/18/2024	Kim Riffle Don White	
	Haley Creech (Maralyn Carr) Tracy Creech Will Hatcher Jeremy Dill	
02/25/2024	Richard Bradshaw Andy Bradshaw	
	Missy Harbour Dennis Cotner Ryan Matschke David Love	

contributions allowed Pastor Richard to take a rest to recover from sickness and a well-deserved vacation.



### DIRECTORY UPDATE

The OBCC Directory is now online! You can access your account at [members.instantchurchdirectory.com](https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com).

We will be supplying hard copies of the 2024 OBCC Directory beginning in February. The hard copies will be available at the office. If you are unable to stop by the office and would like a hard copy mailed to you, please contact the office and Sara will be happy to send you a copy.

We are still looking for pictures for our online directory. If you would like to have your picture taken, Sara will be happy to take your picture in the office and upload it to the directory for you. Alternatively, you can bring in a picture or request to use the picture from the old pictorial directory. If you have any questions regarding how to access your account or add a picture, please contact the office and Sara will be happy to help. Thank you!



The OBCC Family extends condolences to Carole Kerr and Family. Bruce Kerr passed away on January 4, 2024.



The OBCC Family extends condolences to Val Mason and Family. Val's sister, Jane Marshall, passed away on January 3, 2024.



### INSTALLATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Congratulations to Rev. Robin Moscati! She will be installed as pastor at Grafton Christian Church, 109 Brick Church Rd, Yorktown, VA 23692, on Sunday, February 4 at 2:30PM.



### WELCOME CHILD

Congratulations to Michael & Sarah Heslink on the birth of their daughter, Melanie Paige Heslink! Melanie was born Thursday, January 11 at 11:26AM, weighing 6 lbs, 9oz. We praise God that all are healthy and happy.



### GENEROSITY OF TIME APPRECIATED

Thanks to our guest preachers on January 7 (Fred Rothermel), January 14 (Landa Simmons), and January 21 (Joshua Fulgham). Their generous



### OUR DAY OUT-2<sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAYS

We welcomed the new year with a 2024 celebration complete with punch for toasting and hats, beads, and noise makers. It was fun to get everyone to tell us about a happy 2023 memory. Family get-togethers dominated the list which also included a visit to beautiful Colorado and Pike's Peak, Kelsey's Ordination, the live nativity, and the beautiful Christmas Eve service. Then we looked at wants, hopes, and expectations for 2024. Many said they don't make resolutions, others prayed for peace and good health, and all said a big thanks to Jesus for his love.

I mentioned that our family picks a word or phrase every year. Mine is "Do It". Like most people I think of things I should do, people I should call, or places I have been meaning to go, but I procrastinate or time flies by and I don't do it. Not this year. I am on it. How about you? Got a word or phrase to give your 2024 year a boost!

Barb Schmidt had a funny skit to complete the morning and I helped (sounds like a commercial).

Chef Sheila delighted us with a delicious lunch and crafty Jane challenged us with the neatest scratch pictures.

Bingo entrepreneur Tyler makes bingo a mixture of fun and laughter and delicious prizes were enjoyed by all.

As I have mentioned many times, I love sharing ODO with all who come and hope that the friendship, family,



food, and fun encourages all of us to take some time to just relax and enjoy the moment.

Next month we will be gathering a week earlier on the 7th and will do some Mardi Gras celebrations!

May God Bless You Always,  
*Marney Brickhouse, Coordinator*



#### **4TH THURSDAY LUNCH BUNCH**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday Lunch Bunch met in our new "home", Sandy's Pancakes and Waffles at 6495 Richmond Road on December 28<sup>th</sup>. Due to illnesses and unexpected company arrivals, we were down in number but still had 14 in attendance.

The separate room gave us much more privacy and freedom to speak than we had in our previous venue. The restroom is just out the door, which is very convenient, and the food choices were excellent and served in a timely manner.

We encourage anyone in our church family to come on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month, unless it's a holiday, and enjoy fellowship with us. It's a time to gather and get to know each other better than time at church with structured programs allows.



#### **WORLD OUTREACH NEWS**

Week of Compassion Sundays are February 18 & 25. Thank you in advance for giving as you can.

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

*~Sheila Yeatts, World Outreach Coordinator*



## ST. OLAF FOOD SHARING PROGRAM

Consider celebrating Valentine's Day by giving the precious gift of food to our neighbors who daily deal with food insecurity. The origins of Valentine's Day are connected to Saint Valentine, who provided support to the oppressed and needy. There are over 3000 neighbors in our community who will benefit from you being their valentine by making monetary contributions or food donations to our food sharing program during February. Your Valentine gifts will make a sweet difference in their lives.

You can place your Valentine Food donations in the box outside of our Pastor's Office or in the Basket in Branch Hall. You can make your check donations to Olive Branch Christian Church, designate in the check memo line, "Food sharing".

Grateful for you making our neighbors your Valentines and sharing your sweet blessings!  
Happy Valentine's!

*~Steve Perger, Jane & Will Hatcher,  
Andrew Pfister, Joyce Allen*



## MEN'S MINISTRY

The Men's group held their monthly breakfast meeting on January 11. Prior to the breakfast, a few good men helped Steve White and Dennis Dasher complete the storage of the roofing timbers from the Nativity Scene. Thanks to Steve, Dennis, Will Hatcher, and Bob Herndon.

Our meeting was a planning session for event and activity ideas for 2024. Some activities discussed are recurring such as support for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, the breakfast meal following the Easter Sunrise Service, the Thanksgiving Meal program for needy families designated by Williamsburg Faith in Action, and support for setup, disassembly and storage of the Nativity Scene.

New ideas include:

1. A Movie Night as one of the Wednesday family night series.
2. A Corn Hole competition for the members at the ice cream shop in Toano- a monthly event throughout the summer. (Coordination has been made with the ice cream shop so work on your corn hole tossing skills to be prepared).
3. As a follow-on to our fence painting project from last year, we will have a power washing and maintenance day in the spring.

4. Coordinate with the Disciple Women for a table at events open to the community (such as Yard Sales) that will provide information about Olive Branch and the Disciples of Christ.
5. Fundraising project to build small reindeer prior to the Advent season.
6. Prepare a horseshoe pitching area near the parking lot by Branch Hall.
7. Coordinate with Property and offer to review night lighting requirements particularly for the area on the Toano side of the church near the handicap parking spaces.



## SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you all for the cards, and most especially for your prayers and best wishes for Ronnie; they worked! He is doing very well, and we are very grateful. Our prayers were heard and answered. Thank you again for sending prayers along with us!

*~Sheila Yeatts*



Worship & Wonder

## WHY WORSHIP & WONDER: PART 1

Our early childhood Worship and Wonder program provides a developmentally appropriate learning environment for children ages 3-8. Each week, a storyteller shares a story about the Bible within the framework of the church year. After hearing the stories of Advent, and the birth of the Christ child, our children have learned about the visit of the Wise Men, the young boy Jesus' visit to the Temple in Jerusalem, and about his baptism by John the Baptist. We share stories because, as child psychiatrist Robert Coles\* said, "Children derive life meaning from stories". So strongly did Coles believe in the value of "the story" in the development of children, he wrote that to raise moral children, we should tell them stories. When asked, "What stories should we tell our children?", Coles replied, "The stories of the Bible."

\*Coles authored both *The Moral Life of Children*, *The Spiritual Life of Children*, and *The Moral Intelligence of Children*.

## WORSHIP & WONDER SCHEDULE:

February 4: "The Parable of the Great Pearl". Landa Simmons, Storyteller

February 11: "The Parable of the Sower". Linda Williams, Storyteller

February 18: "The Lenten Puzzle". Ann Bradshaw, Storyteller

February 25: "Jesus and the Children". Landa Simmons, Storyteller



March 3: "Jesus and Bartimaeus". Ann Bradshaw, Storyteller



### CEMETERY CLEAN UP

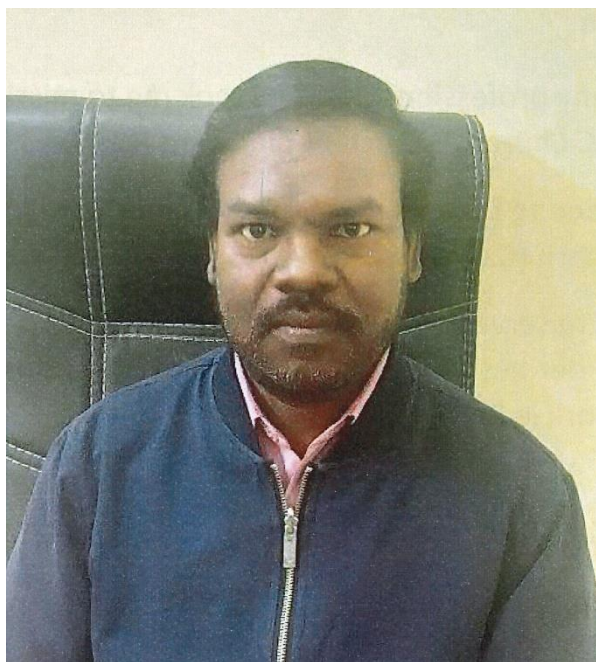
The semi-annual clean-up will occur between February 1 & 10, 2024. If you would like to save anything, please remove it before then. Non-perishable items left in place will be moved near the shed area next to the parking lot. Thanks for helping the committee to keep our cemetery one of the most beautiful in the county.

~Cemetery Committee



### CHM UPDATE

Our global mission partner, the Christian Hospital Mungeli, has welcomed a new Director, Dr. Vinod Kumar Ekka (pictured below). With specialties in both ophthalmology and surgery, Dr. Ekka brings a wealth of experience serving in mission hospitals and will lead CHM as it begins its 128<sup>th</sup> year of service to the rural poor of Chhattisgarh "without regard to caste, creed, or ability to pay." Thanks be to God for God's continuing providence and to the people of Olive Branch for their continued prayers and support.



### VA REGION MISSION TRIP 2024

The 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

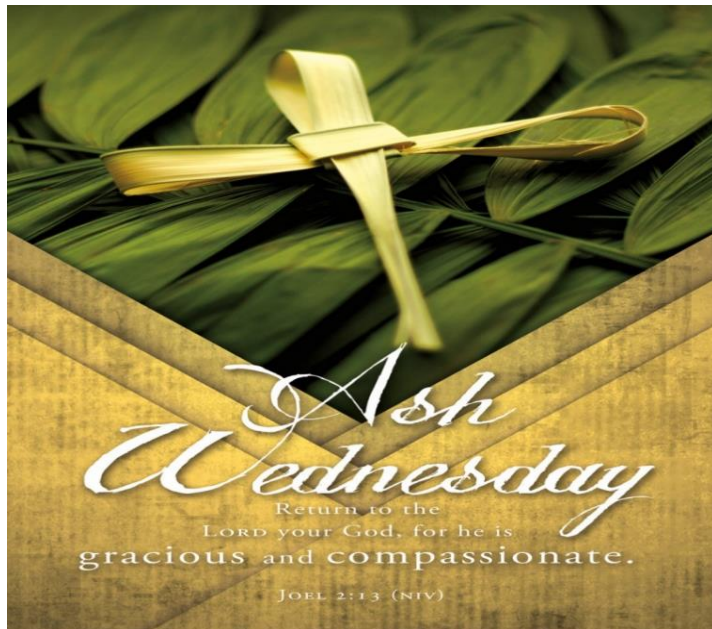
There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Education Building. We will have an informational meeting in the new year.

~Abby Matschke



### LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE

Below is the schedule for the Lenten services beginning Ash Wednesday, February 14. 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.





## **2024 COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES – 7 P.M.**

### **Hospitality Time – 6 P.M.**

February 14, 2024 – Ash Wednesday: Williamsburg Mennonite Church, 7800 Croaker Road, Williamsburg 757-566-3026. Rev. Zach Dey

Offering-Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center

Speaker – Rev. Richard Cline, Olive Branch Christian Church

February 21, 2024: Olive Branch Christian Church, 7643 Richmond Road, Williamsburg 757-566-8077 Rev. Richard Cline

Offering-Child Development Resources

Speaker – Rev. Alex Sheppard-Witt, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

February 28, 2024: New Zion Baptist Church, 3991 Longhill Road, Williamsburg 757-258-0491 Dr. Rob Whitehead, Sr.

Offering-Williamsburg Hospice House

Speaker – Rev. Mike Burcher, Stone House Presbyterian Church

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





LOVE CHANGES EVERYTHING

ALL THE AUTUMN LEAVES HAVE FALLEN  
ENSHRINED IN MEMORIES.

THE BARREN TREES IN SILENT SPLENDOR STAND  
WITH NO LEAVES ON THE TREES.

THE WINDS ARE BOLD AND DAYS ARE COLD  
FROM WINTER'S COLD EMBRACE,  
BUT LOVE CAN WEAVE A MASTERPIECE  
FROM SNOWY WEBS OF LACE.

WE HONOR THOSE WE HOLD MOST DEAR  
WITH VALENTINES AND SUCH  
GIVING GIFTS THAT SAY, "I LOVE YOU"  
BECAUSE YOU MEAN SO MUCH.

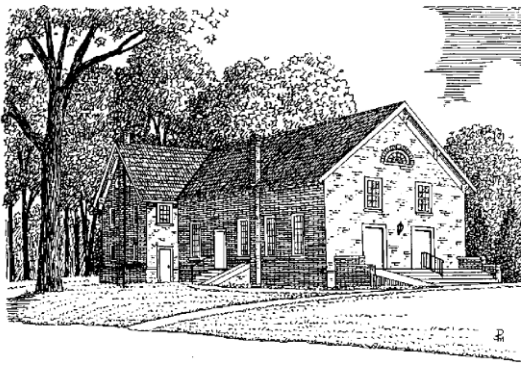
LOVE IS NATURE'S RAINBOW  
THAT FOLLOWS THE RAIN  
LIKE TENDER WORDS SPOKEN  
TO EASE SOMEONE'S PAIN.

LOVE'S THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE,  
A PEARL OF GREAT DELIGHT,  
THE WARM ARMS THAT ENFOLD YOU  
ON A COLD WINTER'S NIGHT.

THE RICH GIVE MORE EXPENSIVE GIFTS  
TO PROVE THEIR LOVE IS TRUE.  
THE POOR JUST SHARE A HUG OR KISS  
AND THAT'S A BLESSING TOO!

May Harrison





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## The Olive Branch

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



February

