



THE OLIVE BRANCH

MAY 2024

OLIVE BRANCH CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)

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CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)



LEARNING FROM THE SLOTHS

"How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures... living things both large and small." (Psalm 104:24-25)

The above passage was one source that inspired Cecil Frances Humphreys, later known as Fanny Alexander, to write the words to one of the favorite hymns of animal lovers: "All Things Bright and Beautiful". This hymn begins with the refrain: "All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all."

Earlier this year I came face to face with one of the most amazing of God's creatures: the sloth. After years

of watching the sloth portrayed by members of Olive Branch in various skits, of my use of a plush toy sloth for my children's sermons, and of accusing others of resembling the sloth in their words and actions, I met my first real sloth.

My face-to-face encounter took place in January on the island of Roatan, Honduras. The picture captured that moment when I held him and learned from my little friend some lessons for life I would like to share.

Lesson one: sometimes, the fastest way to get to where you want to be is to go slowly. Sloths are not the quickest of animals. They are perfect examples of how "slow and steady wins the race." Sloths are descendants of the Giant Sloth that lived millions of years ago. They were nine feet long and weighed up to 550 pounds. The lesson here is that since sloths have been around for millions of years, it proves that we don't have to outrun life in order to survive it! What if we laid aside the mantra of "hurry up" or "how fast can we get this done" and let ourselves enjoy each God-given moment instead of rushing past it to the next? We just might laugh more, share more, smile more, at this wonderful life God has given.

Lesson two: learn what things to hang on to, and what things to let go of. There are two-toed and three-toed sloths, but both share long limbs with long curved shaped claws. These claws are strong because they are designed to grasp onto branches while bearing the animal's weight. They can cling to a tree or limb so tightly that predators can't pull them down. Their survival is dependent on locking their hands and feet and hanging on when they need to, but when the

danger has passed, they also need to let go and move on – slowly! They only move around 41 yards a day!

We need to learn from the sloth. We need to learn to hang on to the important things in life and let go of the unimportant. How many of us are still clinging, still holding on to things that we need to let go of? Why do we live so much of life in fear, worried about the “what if” and the “could be” scenarios played over and over in our thoughts? What would life be like, trusting in God, living by the promise that Christ would always be with us, until the end of time? What if we let go and moved – slowly – on?

Just a couple of lessons from one of God’s creatures. Lessons abound in this world – open your eyes and see! “All things wise and wonderful: the Lord God made them all.”

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

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



Celebration of Life Service for Betty Barber: Saturday,
May 4; 11:30AM; OBCC

Pentecost Giving Sundays: May 12 & 19

Virginia Regional Assembly: May 31-June 1; University
of Lynchburg



PRAYER LIST

Church Family: Jimmy Biggs, JC Biggs, Wally Bowen, Linda Brown, Haley Creech, Janet Dombrowski, Amy Ferguson, Phyllis Gardner, Nancy Griffith, Irma Gustafson, Norm Hall, Shirley Harrison & Family, Bob & Sharon Herndon, Keeta Hodson, Anne Holland, Jim Holland, Carolyn Hunt, Linda Hutton, Cheryl Johnson, Gene Johnson, Bob Lawrence & Family, David Love & Family, Keith McMurdo, Dallas Mitchell, Susan Rinehart, Fred Rothermel, Bob Schmidt, Barbara Thiel, Jerry Van Cleave, Sarah Waid

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), Denny Dasher (Dennis & Anita Dasher’s son), Joe Dasilva (Rosa Griffin’s brother), Evala (Norm Hall’s daughter), Cody Ferguson (Amy Ferguson’s nephew), Janet Gay (Emily Dill’s friend), Kourtney Haake (Heidi & Keith McMurdo’s daughter), Sue Martin (Michelle Wright’s sister-in-law), Julie Painter (Anita Dasher’s aunt), Zak Reynolds (Larry & Louise Smith’s grandson), Andrew Smith (Mary Louise Rich’s son-in-law), Howard & Sharon Thackson (Cheryl Johnson’s niece), Tevfik Vatansever (Cheryl & Gene Johnson’s grandson), Brenda Walker (Chuck Walker’s mother), Janice (Cheryl & Gene Johnson’s friend), Jason (Lorraine Beasley’s son), Lola (Missy Harbour’s friend’s niece)



- 01 Jim & Anne Holland
- 09 David & Colleen Wright
- 17 Dennis & Sharon Cotner



- 01 Sonny Watson
- 03 Connie Cason
- 04 Martha Garrett
- 05 Wally Bowen
- 08 David Nunn

- 08 Donna Haulsee
- 10 Mike Heslink
- 13 Sarah Allred
- 17 Vicki Anderson
- 23 Katie Jones
- 25 Kimberlee Bartley
- 30 Melody Lambert



HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSING

The office will be closed on Monday, May 27 for the Memorial Day holiday.



PENTECOST GIVING

This special giving opportunity is set for May 12 & 19. The Pentecost Offering supports Disciples new church development. Planning, nurturing, and sustaining new congregations is part of the Disciples' vision. This offering supports the specialized ministry of new church development through both regional and general programs. Gifts for this offering are divided equally between the region in which they're given and the New Church Ministry.



ELDERS & DEACONS & DEACONESSES

		THIS MONTH'S DEACONESS
		Linda Hutchens
05/05/2024	Andrew Pfister Joyce Allen	
	Ann Bradshaw Chuck Walker Bob Herndon Sharon Herndon	
05/12/2024	Kim Riffle Don White	
	Haley Creech (Maralyn Carr) Tracy Creech Will Hatcher Jeremy Dill	
05/19/2024	Richard Bradshaw Andy Bradshaw	
	Missy Harbour Dennis Cotner Ryan Matschke David Love	
05/26/2024	Ann Bradshaw Linda Williams	
	Judy Eley Jane Hatcher Joann Mitchell Joshua Fulgham	



OUR DAY OUT-2ND WEDNESDAYS

For ODO in April, we honored Jeanne Lawrence and supported Bob Lawrence as they both have been a part of the program for years. The beautiful day reminded us of God's blessings and the gorgeous azaleas in our cemetery brought smiles to all who attended. The Celebration of Life service touched our hearts, and the delicious lunch provided by the ladies of our church gave family and friends a chance to visit and share some special memories.

It was a lovely day and truly reinforced our theme of family, friends, fun, and food.

I look forward to seeing everyone in May and remember April showers bring May flowers.

May God Bless You Always,
Marney Brickhouse, Coordinator



SPECIAL THANKS

My daughters and I are grateful for the steadfast support from the congregation throughout Diana's extended struggle. Hardly a week ever went by without a card, or a call, or a visit. The Celebration of Life service was beautiful! Our sincere thanks to Pastor Richard, Steve Hall, and Andrew Pfister, and especially to the ladies who prepared and served at the comforting reception. Thank you, Olive Branch!

~David Love, Cari Guthrie, Shelley Siegert



WORSHIP & WONDER SCHEDULE

	Leader:	Greeter:
05/05/2024	Ann Bradshaw	Jeremy Dill
05/12/2024	Linda Williams	Bob Williams
05/19/2024	Ann Bradshaw	Jeremy Dill
05/26/2024	Landa Simmons	Cris Simmons



The OBCC Family extends condolences to the family of Jeanne Lawrence. Jeanne passed away on April 5, 2024. A service was held for Jeanne at OBCC on Wednesday, April 10, 2024.



WORLD OUTREACH NEWS

Moms make the world kinder. This Mother's Day blankets the world in love. Our Church family

supports the CWS Blankets program because these blankets bring hope to people who need a reminder that someone cares about them. Just \$5.00 brings hope. On May 5 look for blanket order slips in Sunday bulletins. These gifts help those in need around the world, given in honor of mothers everywhere. On May 12, a list of names the blankets were donated in honor of or in memory of will be inserted in Sunday bulletins.

~Sheila Yeatts, World Outreach Coordinator



REGIONAL SUMMER CAMP

OPPORTUNITIES

See below to read through all the many summer camp offerings provided by the Virginia Region Camping Ministry:

New Covenant Camp -June 23 - 27, 2024

Craig Springs, New Castle, VA

New Covenant Camp is catered for our younger campers. Open those who have completed 1st through 5th grade.

Camp Price - \$300.00

Triple Camp 1—July 7 - 12, 2024

Craig Springs, New Castle, VA

Triple Camp 1 offers the traditional church camp experience. Open to campers who have completed 3rd through 12th grade.

Camp Price - \$365.00

Triple Camp 2—July 14 - 19, 2024

Craig Springs, New Castle, VA

Triple Camp 2 offers the traditional church camp experience. Open to campers who have completed 3rd through 12th grade.

Camp Price - \$365.00

Family Retreat—July 19 - 21, 2024

Craig Springs, New Castle, VA

When was the last time your family spent quality time together without distractions? Do you want to relax in a rocking chair, play in a creek, and breathe the fresh mountain air? Family Retreat offers an economical way for the whole family to experience camp together for a fun-filled long weekend.

Adults - \$91.00

Ages 6 - 17 - \$68.00

5 and under - Free

For more information, or to sign up for any of these or other available camps, please visit

www.ccinva.org/virginiacampingministry



MEMORIAL DAY HISTORY

Honoring the men and women who have died while serving in the military, communities, individuals, and organizations have kept Memorial Day in various forms in the United States since the end of the Civil War. General John Logan first called for a nationwide day of remembrance on May 5, 1868. The observance was called Decoration Day, and it was observed on May 30th, 1868.

General James Garfield spoke at Arlington National Cemetery with Generals Grant, Howard, Logan, Pane, Wool, and Hancock in attendance. Volunteers also decorated the graves of 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers.


Across the country, humble tributes occurred on that first Decoration Day. Just outside Fort Stevens near Washington, D.C., there was a small cemetery where 40 soldiers were buried, one of whom belonged to a widow from Northern Vermont. He was one of three sons she lost to the war. On Decoration Day, she went to the cemetery carrying 40 wreaths for 40 graves. Someone placed a laurel wreath upon the head of a Lincoln statue at City Hall, Washington, D.C.

In Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton Railroads transported passengers to the Spring Grove Cemetery. As a tribute, communities displayed flags at half-mast along the routes. More volunteers placed floral wreaths on the soldiers' graves, and speeches were made. Many of the first Decoration Days recognized only the Union soldiers. However, other events included the Confederate soldiers as well. Over time, the day grew to include all those soldiers lost during the conflict.

Decoration Day gradually became known as Memorial Day and now honors all U.S. service members who have died during a military conflict. Memorial Day continued to be observed on May 30th for many years. Then, in 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act of 1968. Since 1971, Memorial Day has been observed on the last Monday of May.

Now on Memorial Day, the flag of the United States of America is raised briskly to the top of the staff then solemnly lowered to the half-staff position where it remains until noon. At noon, it is then raised to full-staff for the remainder of the day.

When the flag is at half-staff, the position is in remembrance of the more than one million men and women who gave their lives for their country. Raising the flag at noon signifies that the nation lives, that the country is resolved not to let their sacrifice be in vain but to rise up in their honor and continue to fight for liberty and justice for all.

*175th Regional Assembly for the Christian
Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia* 

We Are Stronger



Acts 2: 46-47

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.

May 31 - June 1, 2024

Friday Pre-Assembly

Saturday 10 - 3

The University of Lynchburg

Total Cost \$10 and includes box lunch

We are a MOVEMENT for WHOLENESS in a FRAGMENTED World

Psalm 139:13

*"For when You created my inmost being:
You knit me together in my mother's womb."*

*When God was planning your life, He needed a provider
To grow your special body, He placed you there inside her.*

*He chose a special woman who loved you from the start.
As you were tucked so carefully underneath her heart.*

*When the time was just right, she did give you birth.
Your life's journey had begun as you explored the earth.*

*Her roles were multi-faceted as she helped you grow,
There were many lessons to be taught, so much you'd need to know.*

*Her love for you was selfless; she gave her all for you.
Her plans were abundant; things she hoped you'd do.*

*When her work was finished, she lovingly cut the cord.
She gave you back to Jesus, your Savior and your Lord.*

*God knew what He was doing, He didn't choose another.
Only the very best would do to be your loving mother.*

To all Moms, with love!

~ Louise Smith

A FALLEN WARRIOR

MANY A YOUNG SOUL WENT OFF TO FIGHT WITH FEAR AND TREPIDATION,
OFTEN TIMES IT WAS WITHOUT NEEDED SUPPLIES AND PREPARATION.

BUT FIGHT THEY DID WITH VALOR STRONG,
GOD AT THEIR SIDE TO PROTECT FROM HARM.

AND SOME WOULD ANSWER THE MASTER'S CALL,
THEY GAVE THEIR BEST; IT REQUIRED THEIR ALL.

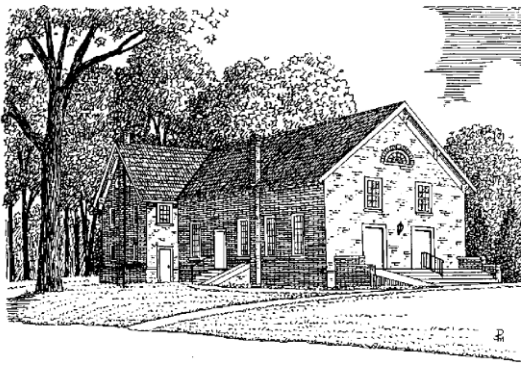
A YOUNG WIDOW STOOD BESIDE THE GRAVE WITH CHILDREN BY HER SIDE.
WITH FRESH WOUNDS OF GRIEF, SHE CRIED OUT FOR GOD TO PROVIDE.

A MOTHER SAT THERE WEEPING, TEARS OF HEARTACHE FLOODED HER EYES.
A SORROWFUL FATHER NEXT TO HER, A STIFF UPPER LIP, A HEART FULL OF PRIDE.

REST NOW, O BRAVE SOLDIER, YOUR BATTLE WAS FOUGHT, YOU'VE WON.
YOU'RE SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS, OUR REDEEMER, GOD'S OWN SON.

SLEEP WELL 'TIL WE SEE YOU IN GLORY; KNOW WE REMEMBER YOU, TOO.
YOUR LIFE YOU GAVE FOR OUR FREEDOM SO WE CAN PROUDLY WAVE THE RED, THE WHITE, THE BLUE.

*Thank you
~ Louise Smith*



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

