



THE OLIVE BRANCH

MARCH 2026

OLIVE BRANCH CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)

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CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

A LETTER FROM THE PAST

During the reorganization of the "history" room of Olive Branch Christian Church, a framed letter was found. It was written in cursive, and while I could read some of the sentences, many I could not make out at all. I asked our own Andy Bradshaw, who is well skilled in deciphering old documents and letters, to take a look. He joyfully undertook the challenge, not only providing a transcription, but a history of the individuals involved. I want to share a little of both with you, for the advice that Dr. Hubbard gave in 1867 seems very relevant for us in 2026. Here is Andy's historical background for the letter:

Among the historic documents of Olive Branch is a letter from Fannie R. Allen to "Peter" in which she sends to him a letter written to her in 1867 from C. M. Hubbard, the grandfather of "Peter".

C. M. Hubbard (Charles Minor Hubbard), who lived from 1808 to 1875, was a doctor by profession who owned the Oakland farm and gave 1 ½ acres of that farm to the trustees of Olive Branch Christian Church in 1845 on which was built the sanctuary. His widow, Mary Ann Hubbard, subsequently gave another 8 ½ acres to the church and established the adjacent Hubbard Family Cemetery, in which both are buried.

Fannie R. Allen, who lived from 1831 to 1911, was a single woman who resided with the family of Dr. Michael S. Warren and his wife, Elizabeth. This remarkable letter was sent by Dr. Hubbard to Ms. Allen upon her baptism. She, too, is buried at Olive Branch.

"Peter" seems to be Peter Tribble Cowles, Jr., the only grandson of C. M. Hubbard bearing the name Peter. He lived from 1874 to 1951. The occasion for forwarding this letter to him may have been when he joined the U. S. Army to serve in the Spanish-American War. Note her request that he give it to his mother to save for him.

Written in 1867, the handwritten letter illustrates the writing style of the days before there were generally accepted rules of spelling, capitalization, punctuation and grammar. Dashes are used where we might use commas or periods today. "t" might be crossed or not, and takes different forms depending upon whether it is the first letter of a word, or within the word, or at its end. Where there is a double "s" within a word, the first will appear more similar to an "f". The now obsolete spelling "shew" is used rather than the more modern spelling "show". In his concluding words of encouragement, he refers to her Christian corcer, an obsolete word meaning starting post. Dr. Hubbard generously quotes from scripture and includes a quotation from the Roman statesman, philosopher and orator, Cicero.

Here are the passages I want to share with you in this newsletter, as transcribed by Andy:

"God has given you his will in the Scriptures (wonderful mystery) never the less true – look here for counsel & wisdom & you shall not be disappointed – but in doing this is the guide for your footsteps – let me caution against religious bigotry – don't quarrel with others in account of their religion because they can't or don't

think & act like you. You shall take it for granted that they are as honest as yourself & have as much at stake as you. & therefore give them credit for honesty of purpose. The best & most efficient argument is that taught us by the persion (sic) when he said "This is the way, follow me – again, don't look too much (if at all at the actions of Professing Christians – tho: they may be preachers – for the best are but men & like yourself liable to err – to " err is mortal, to forgive divine" If you love not your brother whom you have seen, how dare you say that you love god whom you have not seen. Who are your brothers? in one sense – all God's creatures, for whom he died even to the animal creatures – but more especially does it refer to the children of God by obedience (sic). but my paper is nearly filled up. I must conclude. Success to you my young and interesting friend in your Christian carcer [obsolete word meaning starting post] may you so run as to win the prize – if this is the true meaning of that scripture. No one feels excepting perhaps your own dear brother more interest in you than I do. May your last days be your best days, and may your sun of life go down so calmly & serenely that you may never know when your sun of life loose itself in the night of the grave."

Good words of advice, be they in 1867 or 2026.

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

Girl Scouts Troop 1385 Meetings:
Alternate Wednesdays until June 3, 2026
6:30-8:00 PM; Adult Sunday School Room

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

3^d Thursday DWM Circle of Grace: 3rd Thursdays;
11:30AM; Taylor Hall

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
Kids Sunday School upstairs Education Building 9:30
Nursery:
Open on Sundays: 8:15AM-12:15PM
Office Hours:
Mon-Fri 8:30AM-1:30PM



DWM Dinner: March 9; 6PM; Branch Hall

DWM Yard Sale: March 21; 8AM-1PM; Branch Hall

Maundy Thursday Worship: April 2; 7PM

Good Friday Worship: April 3; 7PM

Easter Sunrise Service: April 5; 6:30AM with breakfast
to follow

Easter Giving: March 29 & April 5



DST STARTS ON MARCH 8

Don't forget to set your clocks an hour ahead for Daylight Saving Time either the night of March 7 or midnight on March 8.



PRAYER LIST

Church Family: Pat Allred, Michael Ayers, Mary Bates, Jeanne Bell, Phyllis Gardner, Nancy Griffith, Irma Gustafson, Norm Hall, Petra Hall, Keeta Hodson, Jim & Anne Holland, Linda Hutton, Cheryl Johnson, Dallas & Joann Mitchell, Barbara Nicholson, Elizabeth Panzer, Danny Pitts, Family of Carolyn Rodenberg, Family of Jim Romesburg, Fred Rothermel, Cecelia Ruskey, Bob Sharp, Larry Smith, Mike Smith, Betty Speegle, Ellen Waite, Brenda White

Friends: The professional and volunteer women and men who protect and defend us, Our Nation, Jim Allred (Pat Allred's son), Kevin Barker (Naomia & Charles Barker's son), Jane Crowder (Sharon Herndon's friend), Evala (Norm Hall's daughter), Cody Ferguson (Amy Ferguson's nephew), Clara Grace Goins (Patti Banks' granddaughter), Reilly Ruby Houchens (Connie Cason's great-granddaughter), Jim Jegel (Diane Wright Jegel's husband), Steven Laplante (Bob & Carol Sharp's son), David Leatherman (Jim & Anne Holland's grandson), Ben Manning (Cheryl & Gene Johnson's friend), Rae Meriaux (Jim & Carolyn Hunt's friend), John Morris (Naomia Barker's brother), Douglas Morris (Naomia Barker's brother), Lisa Pipkin (Sheila Yeatts' sister), Rose Pitts (friend of David & Carol Pitts), Mike Poland (Andy & Ann Bradshaw's son-in-law), Sheila Rinehart, Caden Thomas (John & Betty Speegle's grandson), John and Michelle Troy (friends of the Pergers), Gladys Watson (Mel Watson's mother), Jason (Lorraine Beasley's son), Mo (friend of Cheryl & Gene Johnson), Carolyn (friend of James & Pat Tabb), Amy & Marney (Marney Brickhouse's daughters)



- 13 Wally & Noreen Bowen
- 22 Rudy & Cecelia Ruskey
- 31 Curt & Rosa Griffin



- 01 Patty Barker
- 04 Anthony Griffin
- 05 Ethel King
- 10 Linda Garrett
- 12 Marlies Brantley
- 16 Jane Hatcher
- 16 Carol Pitts
- 16 Maralyn Carr
- 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
		Kaye Watson
03/01/2026	Kim Riffle Dianne Mongold	

	Ethel King Jan Smith Danny Kelley Betty Bennink	
03/08/2026	Linda Williams Abby Matschke	
	Mike Hebbard Jody Hebbard John Henderson Jerry Henderson	
03/15/2026	Hunter Creech Sheila Yeatts	
	Jane Hatcher Edie Larkin Judy Eley Bill Simpson	
03/22/2026	Teri Tench Harold Barker	
	Linda Garrett Steve Garrett Patty Barker Jeremy Dill	
03/29/2026	Missy Harbour Mel Watson	
	Maralyn Carr Dennis Cotner Patti Banks Danny Pitts	



WORSHIP & WONDER SCHEDULE

	Leader:	Greeter:
03/01/2026	Bob Eber	Trina Eber
03/08/2026	Ann Bradshaw	Dennis Cotner
03/15/2026	Liz Ripley	Patty Barker
03/22/2026	Linda Williams	Bob Williams
03/29/2026	Teri Tench	Jeremy Dill



OBCC sends condolences to Larry & Louise Smith and family on the passing of their son-in-law, Phil Reynolds. Phil passed away January 29, 2026.



OBCC sends condolences to Nicki Hood and family on the passing of her aunt, Karen Spangler. Karen passed away January 25, 2026. A graveside service will be held in the spring in West Virginia.



OBCC sends condolences to the family of Jim Romesburg. Jim passed away on February 16, 2026. A

Celebration of Life service will be held at OBCC on Saturday, March 7, 2026 beginning at 11AM.



OBCC sends condolences to the family of Carolyn Rodenberg. Carolyn passed away on February 20, 2026.



SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you for all the cards and prayers you have all sent for me throughout my surgery and recovery. They are all so appreciated!

~Joann Mitchell



OUR DAY OUT-2ND WEDNESDAYS

It was an overcast sky but warmer temperatures for ODO this month and some slushy areas but most of the ice had melted.

Our theme was Valentine's Day, and Anita and I really enjoyed giving Branch Hall a heart-to-heart attack. My special thanks to those who remembered to wear red or a heart accessory!

Everyone seemed to enjoy the first part of the morning, greeting old friends or meeting a new one, drinking coffee and snacks, checking out the prizes on the bingo table, and just socializing. Christy gave us some interesting information including poems and songs (i.e.) Roses are Red, Violets are Blue, Sugar is Sweet, and So Are You. Trivia questions about Valentine's Day proved to be challenging and fun. A small jar with heart candies (110) was won by Elaine.

Chef Sheila delighted our taste buds with spaghetti, salad, garlic bread and Anita's beautiful cupcakes. Crafty Jane helped us make cute little holders for candy and provided us with a bag of delicious treats.

Bingo is the nicest way to end our program with everyone winning prizes and laughing at each other about our "Lucky" card or our "Bad" one. Again, my thanks to all who contribute goodies to the Bingo Prize Table!

Next month we will celebrate St Patrick's Day and Sheila is fixing Irish Stew. Please join us!

As the season of Lent is now upon us, may we lift our hearts and remember God's special gift to all of us, His son, Jesus!

May God be with you and keep you safe always,
Marney Brickhouse, Coordinator





DWM DINNER

Disciples Women's Ministry is hosting a special dinner in Branch Hall that all friends of OBCC are invited to attend. We will have a special guest speaker from Meals on Wheels to lead a presentation for us on their important ministry to our community. Come join us for dinner beginning at 6PM on Monday, March 9.



DWM YARD SALE

DWM will hold a yard sale from 8 AM-1 PM on Saturday March 21 in Branch Hall. Items from your home and baked goods are needed. The DWM committee will take donations beginning after church on Sunday, March 15, but the main setup and drop-off day will be Friday, March 20 in Branch Hall.

We are in need of volunteers to help work the sale and provide baked goods. Interested in helping out? Contact Sheila Yeatts to see how you can get involved!



CEMETERY CLEAN UP THANKS

Thank you to all who came out to help with the Cemetery Cleanup in February! Thank you to Charles Barker for doing the Toano front side of the Cemetery cleanup, Dennis Dasher for the Toano rear side of the Cemetery cleanup, Will Hatcher and John Speegle for the main Cemetery cleanup, Donald White, John Speegle, Dennis Dasher, and Steve White for the Hubbard Cemetery cleanup. Your hard work is so appreciated!

~Cemetery Committee



DWM CIRCLE OF GRACE

It was a beautiful warm sunny day for our Circle of Grace meeting. Lunch is always a delicious array of salads, sandwiches, and desert goodies plus delightful conversation.

Jan introduced us to Leah, our lady from the Bible, and included her sister Rachael. It never ceases to amaze me how knowledgeable our sisters are and how interesting our discussions become. When Jan concluded her talk, she had several questions she posed to us.

The difference in interpretations was amazing and provided us with thoughtful insights to the lives of women in those times and how grateful we are to be allowed to speak and act independently of our male counterparts today.

Next month Sheila will be our leader, and she has a most interesting character to share with us. Please

plan to join us and bring a little something delicious to share. May this Lenten season give you comfort, peace, and a better understanding of God's love!



CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL MUNGELI NEWS

The hospital recently celebrated Founders' Day. The faculty, staff, and students remember and give thanks for the missionaries who were so instrumental in founding and sustaining the institution. Featured on the banner are Dr. Anna Gordon who founded the hospital in 1896 and Dr. Victor Rambo whose groundbreaking approach to cataract surgery brought sight to the curable blind all across the region through his eye camps in the early to mid-20th century as a Disciples of Christ missionary. Standing in front of the banner is Sipora Rani Kumar, Principal of the School of Nursing, and Sweta Titus, Superintendent. What a beautiful assembly in the hospital!

~Landa Simmons



LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE

Below is the schedule for the Lenten services on Wednesday evenings. 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.



**2026 COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES – 7 P.M.
HOSPITALITY TIME - 6 P.M.**

With Livestream Links

March 4, 2026: New Zion Baptist Church, 3991 Longhill Road, Williamsburg
757-258-0491 Rev. Brenda Christian

Livestream Link: <https://www.newzionwilliamsburg.org/live>

Speaker – Rev. Richard Cline, Olive Branch Christian Church

March 11, 2026: Olive Branch Christian Church, 7643 Richmond Road, Williamsburg
757-566-8077 Rev. Richard Cline

Livestream Link: <https://www.facebook.com/obccwilliamsburg>

Speaker – Rev. Kristen Reinhold, Stone House Presbyterian Church

March 18, 2026: Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 7479 Richmond Road, Williamsburg
757-564-3745 pending assignment

Livestream Link: <https://www.youtube.com/@OSLCNorge>

Speaker – Rev. Dennis Morgan, Mt. Vernon U.M.C.

March 25, 2026: Williamsburg Mennonite Church, 7800 Croaker Road, Williamsburg
757-566-3026 Rev. Zach Dey

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/97175861664?pwd=NFhDOG11T0RQbHBMRWIXdjRRL3dYUT09>

Speaker – Rev. Dennis Morgan, Mt. Vernon U.M.C.

April 1, 2026: Hickory Neck Episcopal Church, 8300 Richmond Road, Toano
757-566-0276 Rev. Jennifer Andrews-Weckerly

Livestream Link: <https://www.youtube.com/@hncwebminister540>

Speaker – Rev. Brenda Christian, New Zion Baptist Church

Dear God, I need You! You are my everything and as long as I'm alive I need You. I can't face this world on my own. I pray that You constantly surround me with Your love so I can feel Your presence in every high and low of my life. Without You I can't find my way, without You I feel lost and alone. You are the reason I'm still here. Without You I am nothing.

Amer

ZECHARIAH 9:9

"REJOICE GREATLY... YOUR KING COMES TO YOU,
RIGHTEOUS AND VICTORIOUS, LOWLY RIDING ON A
DONKEY."

THE FINAL WEEK OF JESUS' MINISTRY,
BEGINS WITH CELEBRATION,
MARKING THE END,
OF A THREE-YEAR DURATION.

PALM BRANCHES WERE WAVED,
THEIR CLOAKS WERE LAID DOWN,
HAILING JESUS KING,
"HOSANNAS" DID ABOUND.

YET HE WAS TRIED AND CONVICTED,
FOR A CRIME HE DID NOT DO,
HE ONLY CLAIMED TO BE THE KING,
OF GLORY FOR ME AND YOU.

HIS SENTENCE WAS HANDED DOWN,
IT WOULD BE A LOWLY CROSS,
THE ONLY WINNERS IN THIS TRIAL,
ARE THE SOULS WHO WERE LOST.

FORGIVE US HEAVENLY FATHER,
WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WE HAD DONE,
ALL OUR YEARS OF SINFUL LIVING,
PUT TO DEATH YOUR LOVING SON.

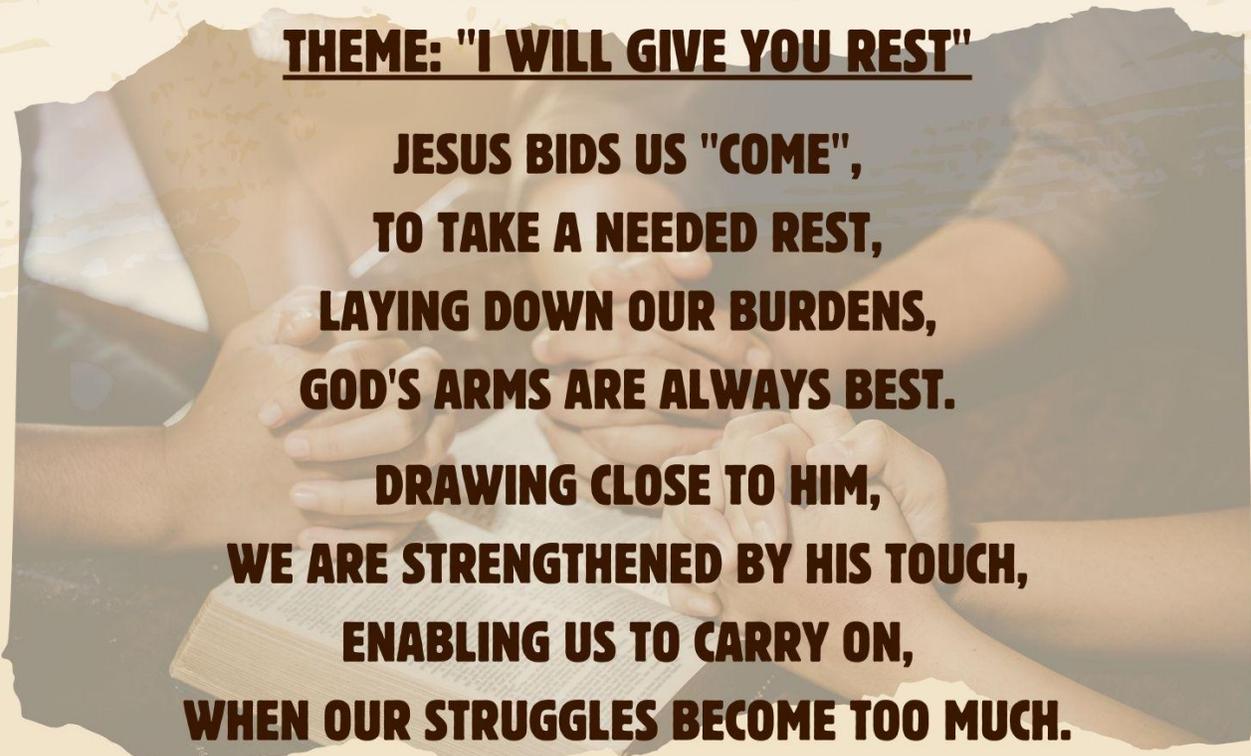
~Louise Gatling Smith



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

MARCH 6, 2026

THEME: "I WILL GIVE YOU REST"



**JESUS BIDS US "COME",
TO TAKE A NEEDED REST,
LAYING DOWN OUR BURDENS,
GOD'S ARMS ARE ALWAYS BEST.**

**DRAWING CLOSE TO HIM,
WE ARE STRENGTHENED BY HIS TOUCH,
ENABLING US TO CARRY ON,
WHEN OUR STRUGGLES BECOME TOO MUCH.**

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER,
CALLS US TO UNITE AND PRAY,
RECOGNIZING WE ALL NEED,
DIVINE PEACE TO COME OUR WAY.**

**WE CAN RISE REFRESHED,
FILLED WITH GOD'S INFINITE LOVE,
HOW WOULD WE EVER SURVIVE,
WITHOUT HEAVEN'S HOLY DOVE.**

**THANK YOU OMNIPOTENT FATHER,
THIS WORLD BELONGS TO YOU,
YOU ARE EVER FAITHFUL,
DOING WHAT YOU SAY YOU'LL DO.**



~Louise Gatling Smith





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

