



The Olive Branch

Loving Christ in Worship, Fellowship, Education and Service

January 2025

2025 JUBILEE

The biblical observance of a Jubilee Year is a special Divinely-sanctioned year of universal forgiveness of debts and pardon for sins. In the Old Testament the Jubilee Year is mentioned to occur every 50th year, during which financial indebtedness would be forgiven, prisoners would be pardoned, and slaves would be freed. In Leviticus 25, the Lord God Almighty commands that the Jubilee Year shall be a holy year, stating, *“Thou shalt proclaim remission to all the inhabitants of thy land: for it is the year of jubilee”* (25:10).

Regulating property rights was also included in the Jubilee observance found in the Book of Leviticus, and everyone was supposed to return to their family property in the Year of Jubilee. Moreover, the Jubilee Year was to be a time of reconciliation between adversaries and of personal conversion to faith in God.

As I write this newsletter article, it’s still the Season of Advent and it’s five days before Christmas Day. We have just finished our “Mary, Did You Know?” series for our midweek Advent services, and my mind is already turning to the New Year ahead. After contemplating the biblical answer to the question “Mary, did you know?” over the past several weeks of Advent, my mind is starting to shift to the themes of the various liturgical seasons of the Church calendar in 2025. And my prayer is that 2025 will be a year of personal, spiritual, national, and global Jubilee for all of us.

I pray that 2025 will be a year of Jubilee in our hearts, Jubilee in our homes, Jubilee among our friends and family, Jubilee for our city and state, Jubilee for our nation, and Jubilee for our whole world.

Just as Mary could not have known early in Jesus’ life that he would be the One and Only to give himself as the perfect offering of atonement for all humanity; and just as Mary (the woman uniquely graced by God to

bear the Son of God) once held the infant Jesus in her arms while not knowing that she would one day hold his lifeless body in her arms at the foot of Jesus’ cross, as he thereby completed the once-and-for-all-time sacrificial offering for our infinite atonement and eternal life; and just as Mary could not have known that, after all the terror and death of Jesus’ crucifixion, she and many others would find his tomb to be empty on the morning of the third day, and they would encounter the risen Lord Jesus many times before his Heavenly Ascension, which brought ultimate victory over sin, death and the devil; and just as Mary and the Apostles could not have had detailed foreknowledge of the universal Jubilee of God’s salvation through Jesus’ death and resurrection, we too do not know all of what God has in store for us in this Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-five, and in the years to come beyond it.

For as the Word of God declares within the Holy Scriptures, “Things no eye has seen and no ear has heard, that have not entered the heart of humankind — these things God has prepared for those who love him” (First Corinthians 2:9). Amen! And thanks be to God!

Happy New Year & Jubilee Blessings!!!

Pastor Tim



Pam's Pearls of Prayer

Scripture of the Month: Proverbs 19:21

²¹ *The human mind may devise many plans, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will be established.*

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Thought for the Month

“Life is what happens when you’re busy making other plans.” This seemed an appropriate quote to go along with the scripture for this month. We, as humans, always have ideas about what we should be doing. But God might not agree with what we are planning. He is the Master Planner and we need to take our lead from Him. As we look forward to the New Year, let us lean on Him to guide our plans. Happy New Year!

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Prayer for the Month

Lord, we always seem ready to jump right in with plans for our future. Help us to stop, take a breath, and then be guided by your plans. We ask this in the name of Your Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mt. Olive Preschool Update

Merry Christmas!

It is hard to believe that we are in the last month of 2024! It has been such an amazing year with so many wonderful memories. This month we celebrated Christmas all month long. We first learned about Winter, and snow, and made all kinds of things you find in a winter wonderland. Next we headed into our Christmas season making gifts for our parents, learning about fun Christmas traditions, like Santa, and Elves and stockings. But our favorite thing we learned was that Christmas is a Celebration of Baby Jesus birthday! We had pajama days, made gingerbread houses, and decorated cookies. Our Christmas Party will be so much fun! We get to make ornaments and open our gifts from our teachers and then the next day we will have our Christmas performance where we get to sing and dance for our Mommies and Daddies! We love this season and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! See you in 2025!

Blessings

Mrs Ashley, Mrs. Amanda, Mrs. Robyn, Ms. Hannah, and Mrs. Emily



Community Luncheons

We welcomed the Verdugo Hills Women's Chorus as the entertainment for our December Community Luncheon. Community luncheons are continuing this month on Wednesday, January 8th. We look forward to fine fellowship, food and fun! Come join us!



Operation Christmas Child

This year's Operation Christmas Child was a big success. We filled 32 boxes to bring joy to the children of the world in need. **Our boxes went to the island nation of Vanuatu.** Thanks to everyone for your participation!



Cookie Exchange & Brunch

We celebrated the Christmas season with our annual cookie exchange. We had a wide variety of cookies to sample. We also brought in toys to be donated to the local fire station to bring Christmas joy to local children.



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



TO:

DATED MATERIAL – DO NOT HOLD

BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY

4 – Don Meeker 18 – William Turner
10 – Berni Hovland 22 – Kristen Puttler
17 – Diane Vogelsang

MEETINGS & EVENTS FOR JANUARY

4 – Memorial Service for Isaiah Fragosa 11:00 am
8 – Community Luncheon 12:00 pm
11 – Greece Tour Meeting at LCIF 10:30 am
13 – Threads of Hope 9:00 am
14 – Church Council 7:00 pm
18 – Breakfast Bible Study at Panera 8:30 am
19 – Bailey Center Food Donation Sunday 9:30 am
26 – Potluck & Annual Meeting 10:45 am

Fellowship Planning

It's the New Year already and we are making plans for fellowship events for 2025. We need your help! If anyone has suggestions for upcoming events, please let Angela Zelaya or Yuki Tagawa know. Here are a few suggestions of our own: museum visit, restaurant dinner, progressive dinner, coffee sip & paint. Please let us know if you have ideas for the upcoming year.

A FRIENDLY REMINDER FOR 2025

Please refrain from holding conversations during worship, especially during the reading of the Scriptures and the Sermon and the Sacrament of Holy Communion. If you need to have a conversation during worship, then please do so outside. Children making noise during worship is to be expected, but adults holding conversations during worship are not honoring the worship setting. Thank you!

**Some Thoughts to Ponder
for the New Year**

Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Psalms 100:4

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.”

Lamentations 3:22-24

“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, ‘The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.’”

Ephesians 4:22-24

“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Philippians 4:6

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

G. K. Chesterton

“The object of a new year is not that we should have a new year, but rather that we should have a new soul.”

Greg Laurie

As you get older, however, you become more seasoned and experienced, more careful and cautious. You're less willing to take risks. That can be good, because you've learned from experience. But that can also be bad, because you're not willing to let the Lord do something fresh and new in your life.”