

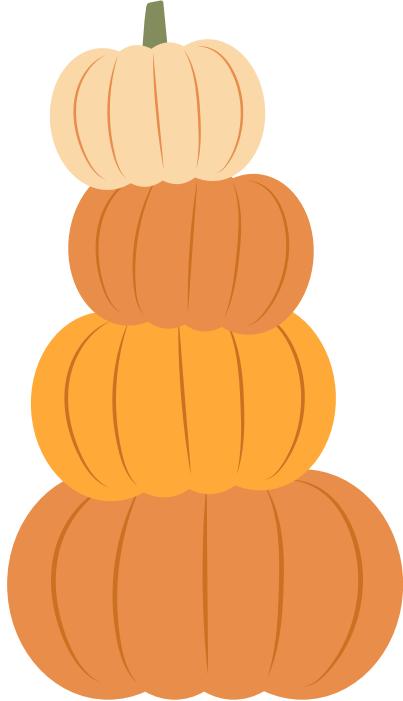
THE OLIVE PRESS

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Philip Melancthon

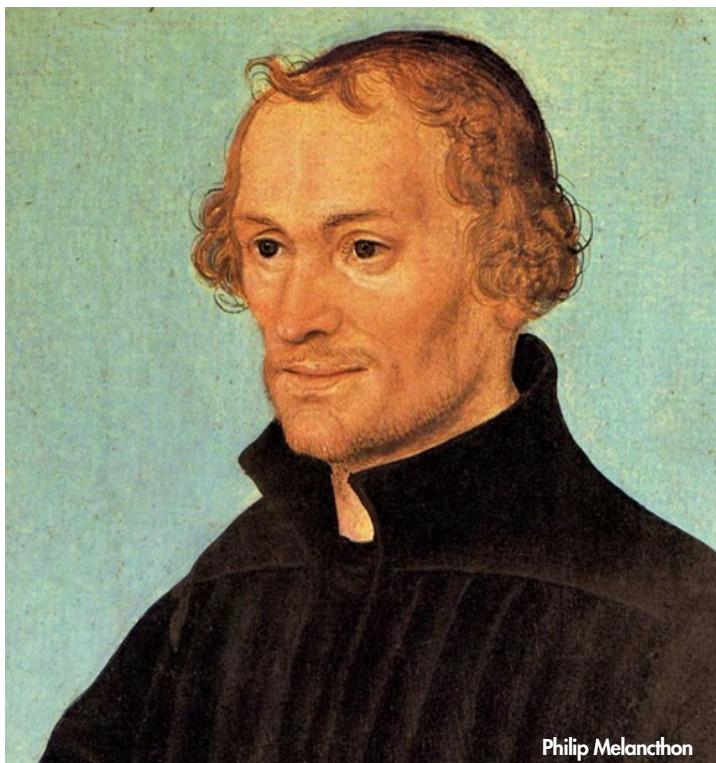
When we think of the reformation we immediately think of Martin Luther, but Luther's strongest supporter was Philip Melancthon. Luther needed Philip to help him translate the Bible from Greek to German. Melancthon was the greatest student of Greek in all of Germany. The Augsburg Confession was mainly the work of Melancthon.

Philip Melancthon was born as "Philip Schwartzerdt" in Bretten, Germany as the son of George and Barbara Schwartzerdt. His earliest education was supervised by his father and grandfather and, after their deaths in 1508, was directed by his grandmother's brother—famous jurist and Hebrew scholar Johann Reuchlin. Schwartzerdt means "black earth," and Reuchlin is said to have been so impressed with his grandnephew's scholarly talents that he insisted that Philip use the Greek form of "black earth," hence the name Melancthon.

The young Melancthon studied at Pforzheim and Heidelberg, receiving a bachelor of arts degree from the latter in 1511. He received his master's

degree at Tübingen in 1514 and began to lecture there on Latin and Greek literature. Like many young humanists, Melancthon had considerable doubts about a number of ecclesiastical practices, and he helped to edit the scathing satire against his grand uncle's ecclesiastical enemies, *The Letters of Obscure Men*, in 1514-1515.

Melancthon's academic reputation began to grow, and in 1518, at the age of 21, he was appointed professor of Greek at the University of Wittenberg, against the early objections of Martin Luther and Georg Spalatin, court chaplain to the elector Frederick the Wise. Melancthon's inaugural address on the ideal program of education for young people won over Luther completely, thus commencing a friendship which was to last until Luther's death.



Philip Melancthon

In 1518-1519, Melancthon drew closer to Luther's criticisms of scholastic theology and ecclesiastical abuses, supporting Luther at the Leipzig debates with Johann Eck in 1519. In the same year, he received his bachelor of theology degree. His thesis supported many of the critical points of Luther's reform: justification by faith, and opposition to papal authority. Luther characterized their relationship with the following accurate observation: "I am rough, boisterous, stormy, and altogether warlike. I must remove stumps and stones, cut away thistles and thorns, and clear the wild forests; but Master Philip comes along softly and gently sowing and watering with joy, according to the gifts which God has abundantly bestowed upon him."

During Luther's seclusion in Wartburg in 1521-1522, Melancthon defended his friend against the condemnations of the University of Paris and attempted to preserve Luther's moderate reforms in Wittenberg against the enthusiastic and radical take-over by Karlstadt.

In 1521, Melancthon began a new phase of his career as chief systematic theologian of the Reformation. He published in that year (and would spend the rest of his life revising) his *Loci communes*, a system of Christian doctrine based chiefly upon the writings of St. Paul. The work has remained to this day one of the foundations of Protestant thought. Melancthon was not merely a writer but a teacher and educational theorist as well. Like Luther, he lectured all his life at Wittenberg, for a time overworking himself by teaching theology in addition to his regularly assigned classical teaching.

In 1530 Melancthon took on the task of answering the growing Catholic criticism of the increasingly fragmented Protestant sects. Keeping before him the idea of eventually reconciling all Christians, Melancthon presented a statement of Protestant doctrine to the emperor Charles V at Augsburg in 1530 (hence the title the Augsburg Confession) in which he attempted to unite all Christians in a series of fundamental beliefs.

Melancthon was bitterly answered by Eck, and his later efforts to reconcile Catholics and Protestants were rendered futile by Protestant sectarianism and Catholic intransigence. In 1529, however, he mediated between Luther and Huldreich Zwingli at the Marburg Colloquy and, in 1536, between Luther and Martin Bucer in formulating the Wittenberg Concord.

"If I could purchase union by my own death," Melancthon said, "I would gladly sacrifice my life."

The death of Luther in 1546 and of Melancthon's daughter Anna in 1547 weakened the theologian, who now turned to composing prayers, some of them the most moving in all Christian liturgy. Melancthon died on April 19, 1560, his hopes for reconciliation of the Christian Churches not fulfilled to this day.

There have been preserved original portraits of Melanchthon by three famous painters of his time: Holbein in various versions, one of them in the Royal Gallery of Hanover, Albrecht Dürer (made in 1526, meant to convey a spiritual rather than physical likeness and said to be eminently successful in doing so), and Lucas Cranach.

Melanchthon was dwarfish, misshapen, and physically weak, although he is said to have had a bright and sparkling eye, which kept its color till the day of his death. He was never in perfectly sound health, and managed to perform as much work as he did only by reason of the extraordinary regularity of his habits and his great temperance. He set no great value on money and possessions; his liberality and hospitality were often misused in such a way that his old faithful Swabian servant had sometimes difficulty in managing the household.

His domestic life was happy. He called his home "a little church of God," always found peace there, and showed a tender solicitude for his wife and children. To his great astonishment a French scholar found him rocking the cradle with one hand and holding a book in the other.

His noble soul showed itself also in his friendship for many of his contemporaries; He used to say:

"There is nothing sweeter nor lovelier than mutual intercourse with friends"

His most intimate friend was Camerarius, whom he called the half of his soul. His extensive correspondence was for him not only a duty, but a need and an enjoyment. His letters form a valuable commentary on his whole life, as he spoke out his mind in them more unreservedly than he was wont to do in public life. A peculiar example of his sacrificing friendship is furnished by the fact that he wrote speeches and scientific treatises for others, permitting them to use their own signature. But in the kindness of his heart he was said to be ready to serve and assist not only his friends, but everybody.

He was an enemy to jealousy, envy, slander, and sarcasm. His whole nature adapted him especially to the intercourse with scholars and men of higher rank, while it was more difficult for him to deal with the people of lower station. He never allowed himself or others to exceed the bounds of nobility, honesty, and decency. He was very sincere in the judgment of his own person, acknowledging his faults even to opponents like Flacius, and was open to the criticism even of anyone who stood far below him. In his public career he sought not honor or fame, but earnestly endeavored to serve the Church and the cause of truth.

His humility and modesty had their root in his personal piety. He laid great stress upon prayer, daily meditation on the Word, and attendance of public service. In Melanchthon we have found not a great, impressive personality, winning its way by massive strength of resolution and energy, but a noble character hard to study without loving and respecting.

Philip Melanchthon came to know Dr. Martin Luther at Wittenberg. Their relationship was to develop over the years into a deep, life-long friendship. Melanchthon was to say of Luther:

"I would rather die than be separated from this man."

This friendship lasted until Luther's death in 1546.

Chief Elder Bill Dahlgren



Christine Xie

Olive Press Editor and Chief May 2022- September 2024

In May 2022, **Christine Xie** revived our Church bulletin, the Olive Press. Since then, she has published 28 monthly editions with incredible contributions as a journalist, manager, and publisher. Her dedication, intelligence, and talent have truly shone through in every edition, and her work has had a profound impact on our Church community.

But that's not all:

Christine was a three-year Editor-in-Chief at Palos Verdes High School (PVHS) and repeatedly (2022, 2023, 2024 pending) received the Yearbook National Gold Award.

But that's not all: Out of 15,000 finalists, Christine won in May of 2024 a National Merit Scholarship and was awarded \$2,500 for her well-rounded success in school, strong combination of accomplishments, skills, leadership qualities and community activities.

But that's not all:

Called a “Beacon of Excellence,” Christine qualified for the American Invitational Math Competition Exam, representing the top 300 of 300,000 students.



Christine Xie

But that's not all: Christine recently was awarded the Rensselaer Medal, from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, for her exceptional math and science endeavors.

But that's not all: While in 11th grade, Christine was awarded a \$15,000 college scholarship in 2023 for her research in stroke therapy at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF, the world's largest pre-college STEM competition) and was among the top 10 finalists in 2024.

But that's not all: As recognized by the Peninsula Education Foundation: “From a young age, Christine’s curiosity and dedication has set her on a path of academic excellence and personal growth.” For example, Christine’s interned at Matthews Lab, Department of Neurology at Harbor-UCLA, researching in vitro engineered neuro stem cell transplants into brains to restore brain function in stroke patients.

But that's not all: As a high school junior (11th grade), Christine was the President of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Club. As one of the three Student Visionaries of The Year, she led the “Team for a brighter Future” and raised over \$260,000 in 7 weeks.

But that's not all: Christine was Founder/President of The Branch (a club of high school students whose objective was to brighten the lives of senior citizens), President of Mu Alpha Theta, President of Science Olympiad, and Vice President of the Science National Honors Society.

But that's not all: Christine served as Captain of the PVIT UAV team and Captain of the Girls' Varsity Tennis Team. She is an excellent tennis player and competed nationwide.

But that's not all: Christine is an excellent cook and bakes the best Christmas cookies in town.

But that's not all: Christine graduated from PVHS in June '24 as Valedictorian which was recognized in the Daily Breeze Newspaper. She was accepted at MIT, but decided to attend Stanford University.



Christine just celebrated her 18th birthday. While her accomplishments are incredibly impressive, she is very humble, sweet, and has a hands-on attitude. Last month, Christine embarked on her first year at Stanford University. Stanford is incredibly fortunate to have someone as bright and talented as her joining its ranks, and we are blessed to have her as a member of our congregation. With her remarkable skills and unwavering determination, we have no doubt that she will excel and make the most of every opportunity that comes her way.

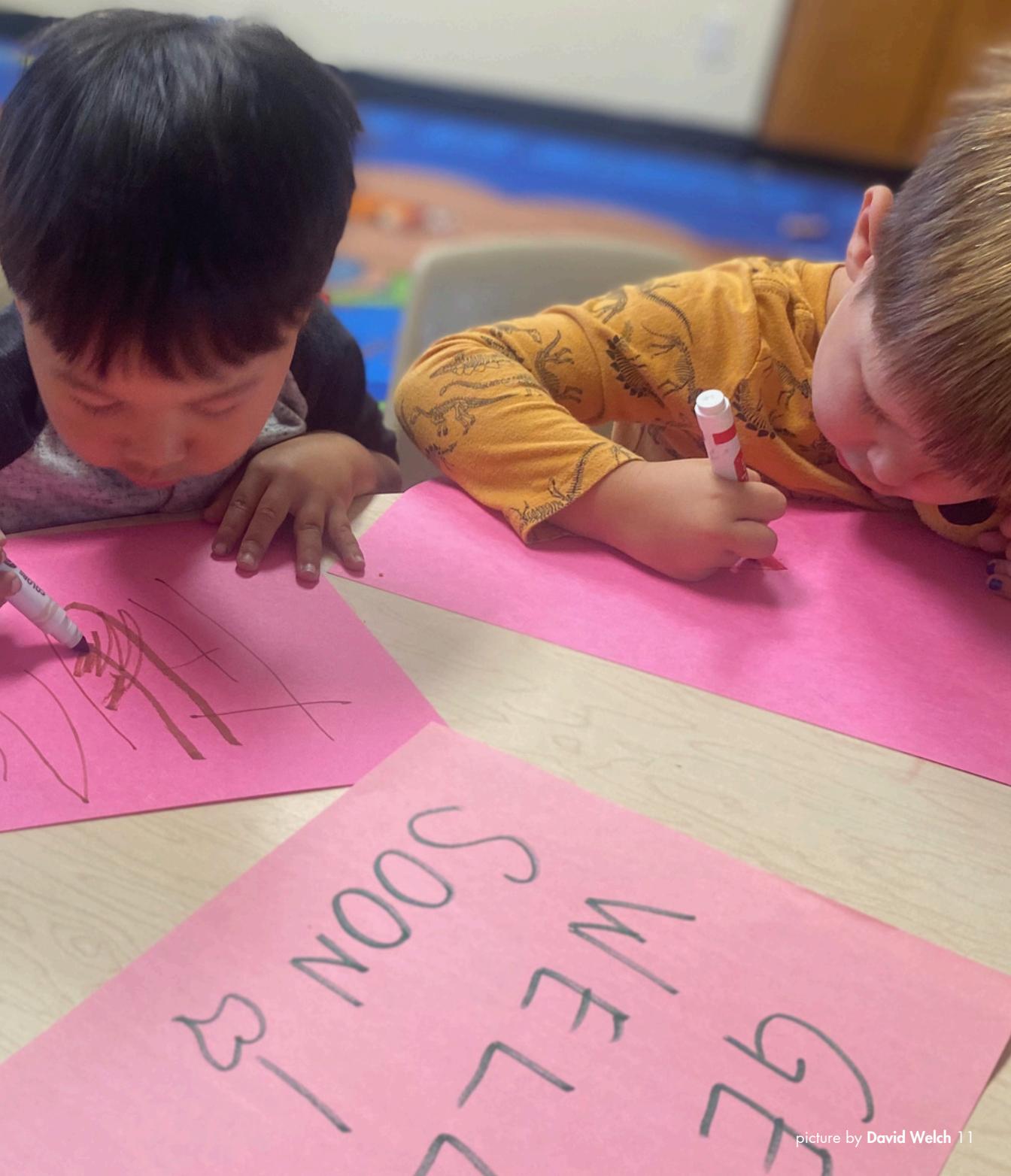
On behalf of the Mount Olive congregation, we congratulate Christine on her amazing achievements and thank her for her outstanding contributions to our Church.

We are sending her blessings and best wishes for this new chapter of her journey!



PRESCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Children make cards encouraging a Mount Olive teacher.



PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

David Welch



Our new school year opened with over 60 families compared to approximately 50 last September.

Our village is thriving, and our families are thrilled with our services. Our monthly Christian curriculum consists of the stories that God Made the World and the Plants, God Made Animals and People, and God calls Abraham and Abraham is Blessed. Our Discovery Point says that God gives us nighttime to enjoy and rest because God has shown us how much he loves us in Jesus. We can also be sure of His love and care for us through the night.

Our first "Sing Sunday" on September 22 was a success!

The children sang during the service, followed by a barbecue with hot dogs, a bounce house, face painting, an obstacle course, arts and crafts, and community fellowship.



Harlow and Harrison share a story

MEET Diana Saucedo

I'm **Ms. Diana** and I'm excited to start my journey here at Mt. Olive Preschool! I have many years of being a preschool teacher and love every moment of it. I have two kids of my own. My son's name is Aleksander, and he is eight years old, and my daughter's name is Jordyn, and she will be two in December. I'm very family oriented and love to watch movies and be outdoors with my family.

I'm happy to meet all the new families as well as teach and watch your children grow!



Diana Saucedo



"We want to welcome Diana Saucedo to our fabulous team of teachers. She has two small children, and her youngest child will begin attending our fabulous school in December."

- Preschool Director David Welch



Montana



Wensen

October is Reformation Month

by Pastor Molitoris

For Lutheran Christians, the Festival of the Reformation on October 31st is a significant celebration each year. We remember this important day, not because we want to worship or praise the person of Martin Luther. In fact, he would be the first one to warn us against such misplaced devotion! Rather we celebrate the Reformation to highlight the centrality of the pure and unchanging Gospel of God – the message of salvation by grace through faith.

To be sure, Luther was a very bold and courageous reformer, willing to put himself in great danger to purify the church from its most blatant abuses. But he was always concerned about giving God the glory for the reforming measures that he as a servant of the Lord was able to help bring about.

One simple way to get a glimpse of the main tenets of the Reformation movement is to consider the three principles: Grace Alone, Faith Alone, and Scripture Alone.

“Grace Alone” highlights the fact that it is God’s undeserved mercy in Christ that serves as the very center of the Bible’s message. Our salvation starts with Grace, and it all depends on Grace.

So yes we also talk about being saved by “Faith Alone,” to emphasize that our salvation rests on faith and not on our good works. But even faith itself would not be very meaningful without having God’s Grace as the object that our faith trusts in and clings to. Similarly, our faith rests on Scripture Alone,” not Scripture along with other man-made church traditions. But without Grace at the center, the Bible would be just another rule book for us to try to obey and follow.

Praise God, our salvation starts and ends with God’s grace: His underserved love and mercy for us in Jesus Christ. May God bless you as you celebrate that amazing grace again this Reformation Day.



© Pastor Craig Molitoris

Serve at Trunk or Treat!

Youth Director Julie Kurtz

I am excited to announce our upcoming Trunk or Treat event!

Scheduled for Friday, October 25 this year, Trunk or Treat is a wonderful opportunity for our church to connect with the community, families from our preschool, and participants in our youth program. This festive event will be a fun and engaging way to bring people together, but we need your help to make it a success!

Volunteering for Trunk or Treat is more than just handing out candy; it's a chance to share the love of Jesus with our neighbors. By decorating a trunk, greeting guests, serving refreshments, leading a game, doing crafts, or helping with setup and clean up, you'll play a vital role in creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Imagine the smiles on children's faces as they experience the joy and creativity of this event, knowing it's all done in a spirit of love and community.

We encourage everyone to get involved, whether by decorating your trunk with a fun theme, donating candy, or helping in any other way. **Let's come together as a church family to make this Trunk or Treat an unforgettable experience that shines a light on God's love.** Sign up today and be part of this fantastic opportunity to serve and welcome others into our church community!

**Contact Julie if
you are
interested in
serving at
310-489-1969**





Pack a Shoebox!

**Boxes will be passed out on
October 7th after Sunday Service**

Operation Christmas Child delivers great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children in need around the world through gift-filled shoeboxes.

Each box packed full of quality toys, school supplies, and personal care items becomes a tangible expression of God's immense love for the child. For many, it is their first gift ever! Delivered by our local church partners, shoebox gifts provide an opportunity to present the Gospel to boys and girls in a clear, child-friendly way.

**Boxes will be collected at Mount Olive
November 3-November 17**



Editor's Message

Hello Mount Olive! I am so excited to publish my first solo edition of The Olive Press. As many of you know, I have taken over the press from **Christine Xie**, who you can read more about on pages nine and ten. Christine has retired the press and moved to Northern California to attend Stanford University. I am so excited for Christine's new season of life, and she has left an impressive legacy to succeed. I am so grateful for her contributions to Mount Olive and the press so far, and I look forward to continuing her work.



On that note...

I want to encourage everyone to consider contributing to a ministry that is very dear to my heart. Operation Christmas Child (OCC) accepts donations in the form of a shoebox, filled with basic necessities and fun gifts to bring joy to a child somewhere in the world.

My K-8th grade school participated in OCC, and I have had the opportunity to donate a box every year. It was just another Christmas tradition for me until I went on my first mission trip to Poland, where I worked with Ukrainian refugee children. It was during this trip that I first saw children receive OCC shoeboxes. The joy on the children's faces made me realize how impactful just one shoebox can have on a child.

I would encourage you to consider sending a child a shoebox this Christmas--one box can change a family's life.

Emma Carter

CALENDAR



OCTOBER 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	30 9:30am ESL Class	1	2 2 pm Zoom Bible Class 7:30pm 祷告会	3 9:30am Chapel	4 6:30pm Awana 7pm Chinese Bible Study	5
6 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	7 9:30am ESL Class	8	9 2 pm Zoom Bible Class 7:30pm 祷告会	10 9:30am Chapel 6pm Movie Night	11 7pm Chinese Bible Study	12 7pm Youth Group
13 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	14 Columbus Day 9:30am ESL Class	15	16 2 pm Zoom Bible Class 7:30pm 祷告会	17 10am Preschool Board 7pm Elders	18 9:15 am Parents Chapel 6:30pm Awana 7pm Chinese Bible Study	19
20 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	21 9:30am ESL Class	22	23 2 pm Zoom Bible Class 7:30pm 祷告会	24 9:30am Chapel 7pm Council	25 6:30pm Trunk or Treat 7pm Chinese Bible Study	26 7pm Youth Group
27 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	28 9:30am ESL Class	29	30 2 pm Zoom Bible Class 7:30pm 祷告会	31 Halloween 9:30am Chapel	1 6:30pm Awana 7pm Chinese Bible Study	2 Homemade GIFTS MADE EASY

Holidays and Observances: 14: Columbus Day, 31: Halloween

*For further calendar updates, please visit
www.mtoliverpv.com

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