

THE OLIVE PRESS

August 2025
EDITION 39



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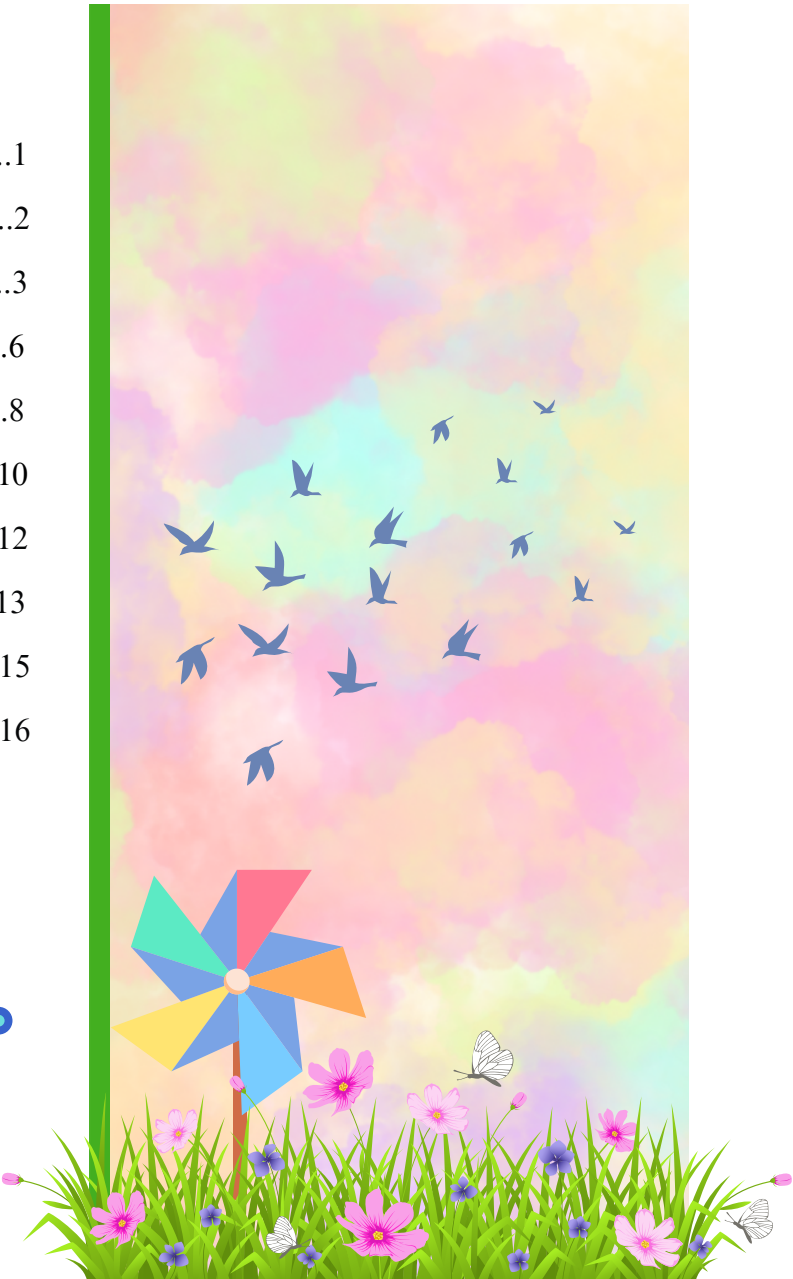
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Are You Living a Spiritually-Balanced Life?



Summer is a great time for self-reflection and spiritual assessment. The slower pace and longer days give us space to think more deeply about how we're growing in our faith. Not long ago, I took a discipleship course that introduced me to a simple but powerful tool called the Up, In & Out Triangle. It's a visual way to look at our spiritual lives and ask: Am I living with balance? I think you might find it helpful, too.

In **Luke 6:12–19**, Jesus models this rhythm for us:

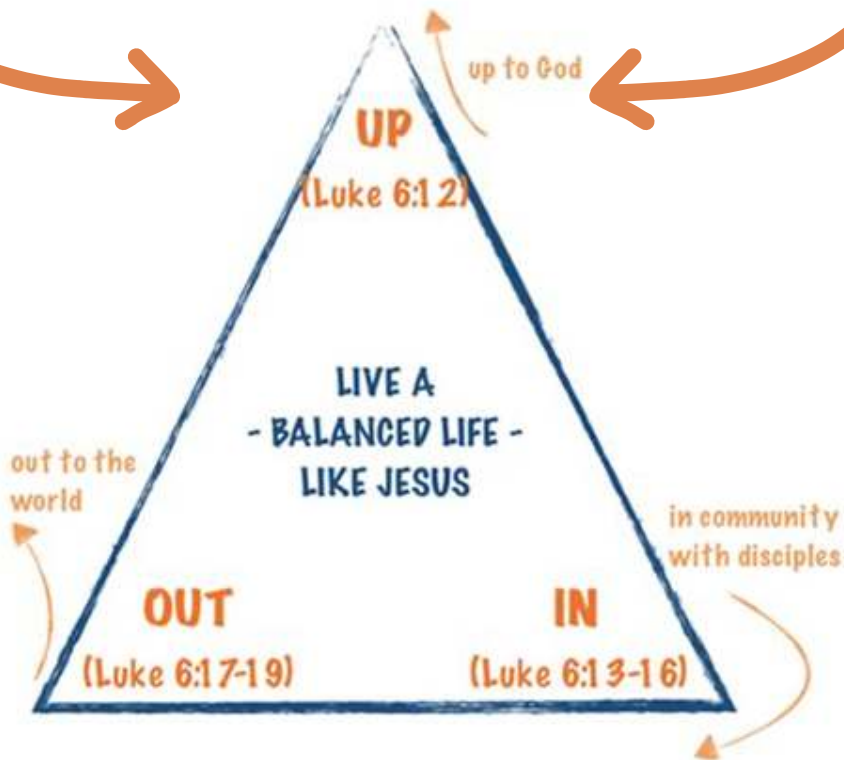
- He goes **Up** the mountain to pray — prioritizing time with His Father (v. 12).
- Then He comes **In** to community with His disciples (v. 17).
- Finally, He reaches **Out** to the crowds, offering healing and hope (vv. 18–19).



This triangle represents three vital relationships in a disciple's life:

UP – Our relationship with God
(John 15:1–8)

*Are you abiding in Christ —
spending regular, meaningful time
in prayer, Scripture, and worship?*



OUT – Our relationship with the world
(Matthew 28:19–20)

*Are you living on mission, sharing the
love and truth of Jesus with those outside
the church?*

IN – Our relationship with fellow believers
(Hebrews 10:25)

*Are you connected to a Christian community
where you're known, encouraged, and
challenged in your walk with God?*

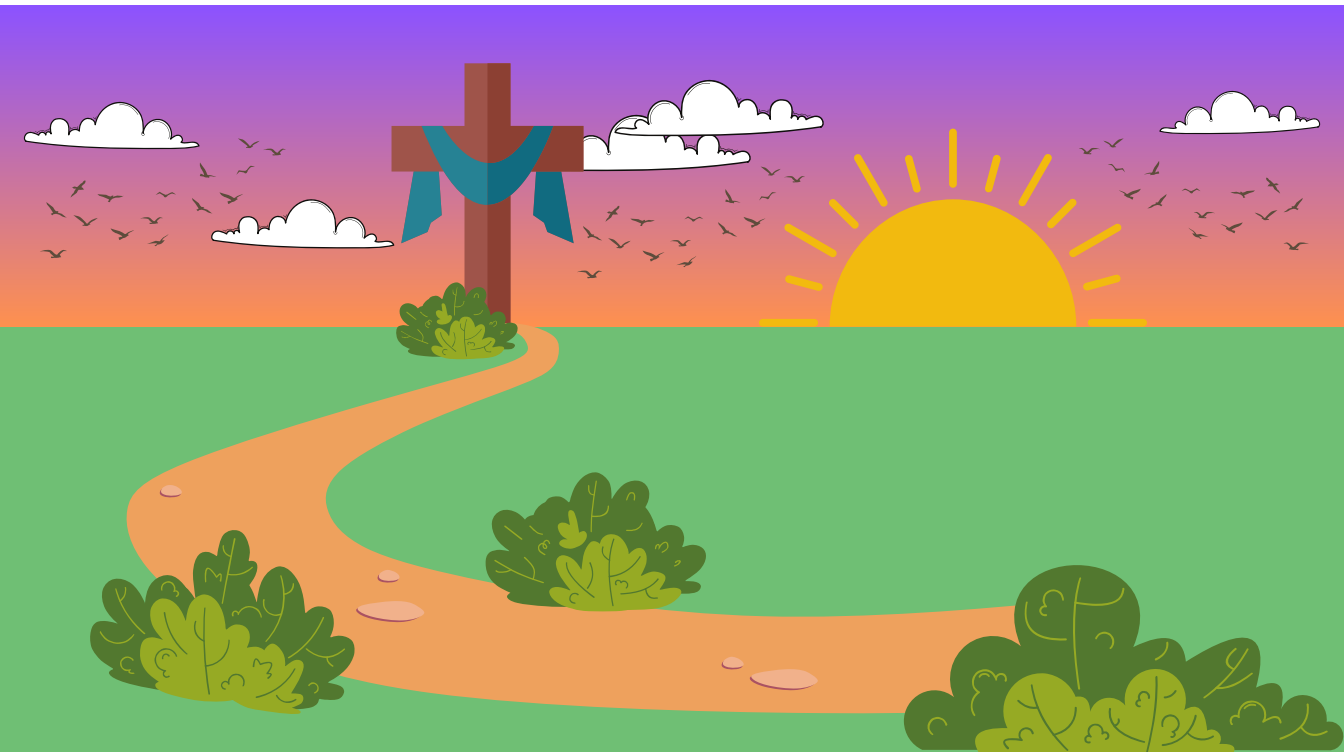
A spiritually-balanced life gives attention to all three. Many of us tend to focus more heavily on one or two areas while neglecting the others — which can leave us feeling stuck, isolated, or spiritually dry.

Here's a helpful exercise: draw a triangle and label the points Up, In, and Out. Then reflect on your current habits and draw a shape that represents your current balance. Is it even? Where might God be inviting you to grow?

Ask yourself:

- *Am I giving intentional time to each of these three areas?*
- *What would my calendar say about my spiritual priorities?*
- *What's one small step I could take toward better balance?*

Let's follow Jesus' pattern and pursue a well-balanced, Christ-focused life.



The Importance of Commemorating Joanna, Mary, and Salome

Amongst the Christian community, August 3rd is a day set aside to commemorate the three women who witnessed the miracle of Jesus's resurrection while heading to His tomb to anoint Him with myrrh: Joanna, Mary, and Salome.

As noted in the Gospel records of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the three faithful women were followers of Jesus during his earthly ministry and remained with him throughout his arrest, crucifixion, and burial.

Other than biblical scripture identifying Joanna as the wife of Chuza, Mary as the mother of James, and Salome as the mother of the Sons of Zebedee, little is known about them besides their faithfulness and devotion to Christ.

This event occurring in the way it did proved to be of quite significance, for it was during a time in which the testimonies of women were often of less value.





Why is highlighting this occurrence important? Stories such as these documented in the Bible demonstrate God's power and authority over everything, especially over the laws and opinions of man. Other stories in Scripture where man's law is deemed irrelevant to God are also documented in the Bible. These include examples such as Jacob possessing the birthright over his older brother Esau in Genesis, Jesus revealing himself as the Messiah to a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well in the book of John, and Jesus choosing Paul to be an apostle in the book of Acts, among many others.

What does this mean for us in the world that we live in today? This means that despite whatever is going on in the world, we can all have peace in that God is the One who is in control.

He made everything work together in such a way that Jesus would reign victorious despite the criticism, persecution, and even betrayal that He experienced during His time on Earth, all while highlighting the "least of these" in society as being the ones being instrumental in making God's plan come to fruition.

Now if the All Mighty God can do this, you can with all confidence be rest assured that God has a wonderful plan for your life as well, no matter where or who you are!

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Jeremiah 29:11

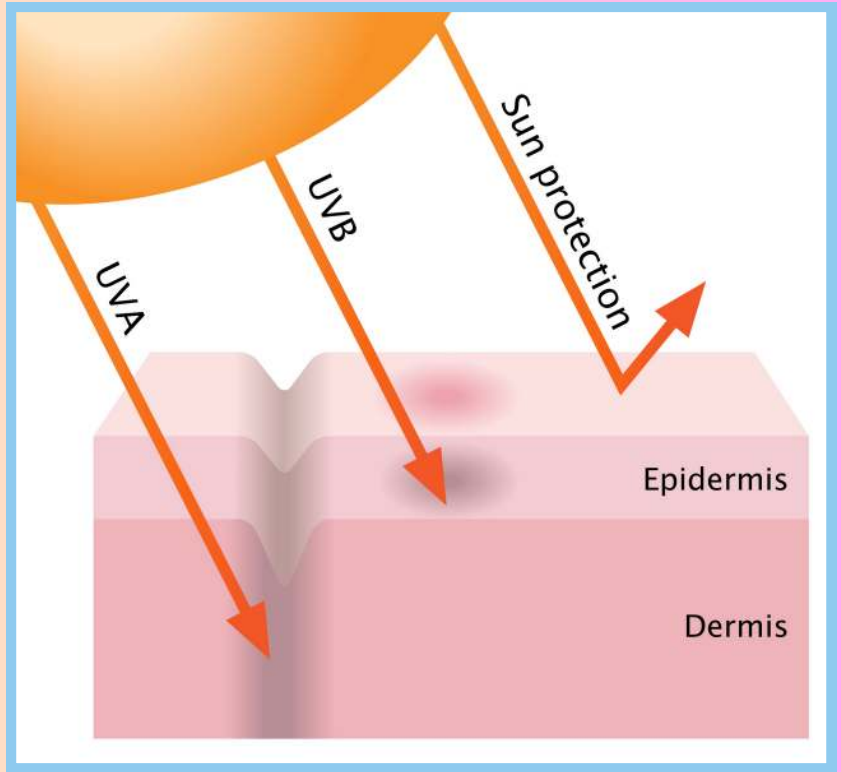


President Ulrike Ziegner Hokanson on

Sunburn - Prevention and Treatment

Sun protection is the most efficient way to prevent sunburn. The strength of sunscreen lotions is quantified by the Sunscreen Protection Factor (SPF). The higher the SPF number (15 to 100), the more protection it provides. "Broad Spectrum" sunscreen protects from both, UVB and UVA.

Sunscreen products should be reapplied every 2 hours and after swimming. Clothes do not protect well from UV exposure: for example, a white T-shirt allows for 20% of UV to pass through the fabric, and wet clothes reduce their protective effect even less.



Sunburn affects the two outer layers of the skin, the epidermis and the dermis. Sunburn is caused by exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV) from the sun rays. The UVA type of radiation has a longer wavelength than the UVB type and can reach the deeper skin layer, resulting in acute blistering, but also in long-term sun damage of the skin like wrinkling, aging, and even skin cancer. However, UVB rays will also cause sunburn.



Woman with a sunburn!

Treatment of sunburn is not a cure, but will mitigate its stinging and pain.

- ☀ Pain relievers, like Tylenol or Advil
- ☀ Cooling with wet towels
- ☀ Moisturizers like Aloe Vera
- ☀ Stay well hydrated
- ☀ Apply 1% hydrocortisone cream for a more severe sunburn
- ☀ Do NOT pop blisters or rip off dead skin!



If you experience dizziness, confusion, nausea/vomiting, fever, severe headache or a racing heart with sun exposure, you might have a heat stroke. Call 911 to get immediate medical attention!

Ulrike Ziegner, MD, PhD.



PRESCHOOL ACTIVITIES

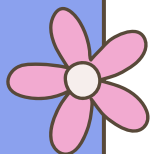


Sota giving a big smile for the camera!



photo by David Welch

PRESCHOOL NEWSLETTER



July was a fantastic month. We have several newly enrolled students, and many of our amazing families are staying with us for another year or two. We will start off in September with over 55 families in our program. Mount Olive is a well-known and popular preschool, and most of our new families come here because someone has told them how amazing we are. I would like to thank one of our fabulous teachers, Linda Westhead, for doing an amazing job teaching chapel every week while we wait for our new pastor.

Our monthly Christian curriculum consists of the stories The Wise & Foolish Builders, The Parable of the Talents, and The Story of the Good Samaritan. Our Discovery Point says that Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' – Mathew 22:37-39.



Ellie eating a delicious snack!

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. '**Love your neighbor as yourself.**'

Matthew 22:37-39

**Written by Preschool
Director David Welch**



KNOW YOUR ELDER: AUGUST



ELDER JOHN GRAGG

John Gragg, CFP® has been a financial advisor at Advanced Planning Solutions for over a decade, where he helps individuals and families find clarity and confidence in their financial lives. A Finance graduate from San Diego State University, John began his career at several major firms before focusing on comprehensive planning and investment management.

At Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, John serves as an elder and feels blessed to be part of such a faith-filled and supportive community. He and his wife, Michelle, stay busy at home in Palos Verdes with their three kids—Carter, Reagan, and William—along with two dogs, Leo and DJ, and three lively chickens.

John enjoys family adventures, beach days, hiking, surfing, and his latest obsession: Pickleball.



John Gragg with his family

GETTING TO KNOW THE EDITOR: A MORE FORMAL INTRODUCTION

Greetings, Mount Olive Lutheran Church! I'm Julja Hokanson, Interim Administrative Business Manager and Editor for this month's Olive Press. I thought I would take the time to give you, the reader, a more formal introduction.

I am the daughter to church members Jon Hokanson and Ulrike Ziegner Hokanson (who currently serves as the MOLC President) and twin sister to church member Katja Hokanson, who recently moved to Southeast Michigan to pursue other professional opportunities. My family and I found this church thanks to the Dahlgren family, and have been attending MOLC for the last 4 to 5 years.

Although a native to Palos Verdes, I have for the last 4 years been living in San Diego in order to pursue undergraduate studies and work opportunities in biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. I graduated from UC San Diego in June of 2023 with a Bachelor's of Science in Biochemistry, and worked for a little over a year as a Microbiologist at Pacira BioSciences, a pharmaceutical company that manufactures and develops non-opioid pain therapies.

I have as of recently, however, relocated to Claremont (a suburban area of LA County located in the San Gabriel Valley) where I will be embarking on a 2-year Master's of Engineering program at the Keck Graduate Institute in the fall.

I am very grateful to be a part of the Mount Olive Lutheran Church community, and feel very blessed to be able to serve this church as the Interim Administrative Business Manager during my transition from San Diego to Claremont. Despite my short time as Interim ABM I have learned a great deal, and would like to thank everyone (including you!) who has supported me while working at MOLC. I have very much enjoyed my time here, and would love to continue to serve this congregation in any way I can.



Julja Hokanson (right) with twin sister Katja Hokanson (left)

Editor's Message

THANK YOU

Greetings, Mount Olive!

Blessings to you, MOLC congregation! Thank you for taking the time to read the 39th Edition of the Mount Olive Press.

I hope you enjoyed reading this newsletter. For anyone who would like to contribute to next month's newsletter, don't hesitate to send an email to office@mtoliverpv.com. Additionally, if you are perhaps new to the congregation, or have not had the chance to introduce yourself, don't be shy! We would love to hear from you.

Thank you for all of those who contributed to this newsletter: Elder John Gragg, Preschool Director David Welch, President Ulrike Ziegner Hokanson, and Youth Director Julie Kurtz. It is always nice to get a newsletter and learn something new each time. God Bless!

Julia Hokanson



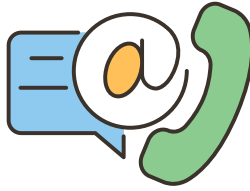
CALENDAR



AUGUST 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	28	29	30 5:30PM WOMO Fellowship	31 9:30am Preschool Chapel	1 9:15am Parents Chapel	2
3 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	4	5	6 5:30PM WOMO Fellowship	7 9:30am Preschool Chapel	8 9:15am Parents Chapel	9 7pm Youth Group
10 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	11	12	13 5:30PM WOMO Fellowship	14 9:30am Preschool Chapel	15 9:15am Parents Chapel	16
17 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	18	19	20 5:30PM WOMO Fellowship	21 9:30am Preschool Chapel 10AM Preschool Board 7pm Elders Meeting	22 9:15am Parents Chapel	23 7pm Youth Group
24 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	25	26	27 5:30PM WOMO Fellowship	28 7pm Council 9:30am Preschool Chapel	29 9:15am Parents Chapel	30
31 9am Confirmation 9am Bible Class 10am Worship	1	2	3 5:30PM WOMO Fellowship	4 9:30am Preschool Chapel	5 9:15am Parents Chapel	6 <i>Homemade</i> GIFTS MADE EASY

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



MOLC WEBSITE

SCAN ME



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