



Our Time
Ezra 2:68-3:13

AD 2023

We mark time by the relationship between the earth, moon and sun. A day – a single revolution of the earth. A month about the time it takes the moon to pass through all its phases. A year – one trip of the earth around the sun. It's The Year of Our Lord (AD) 2023 about 2023 years since Jesus' birth. It's the 144th anniversary of Olive Branch's founding. In my personal life, it's my 56th birthday, the 33rd anniversary of my marriage, the 30th anniversary of vocational ministry, the 27th anniversary of parenthood and the 10th anniversary of ministry at Olive Branch. No matter what anniversary you celebrate in 2023, this year is the present and therefore, it is our time to live, obey God, and make a difference in our world for God's glory. Although we remember the past, and honor it, we can't change it. Although we dream of the future and plan for it, we can't know it. Thus, we only have NOW and it's time to do something great for God at OBBC.

535 BC

After decades of captivity in Babylon, the Persian King Cyrus gave a decree that the Jews could return home. Led by Zerubbabel the governor, and Jeshua the priest God's people returned to Jerusalem. They quickly built an altar to offer sacrifices (Ezra 3:1-7) and collected offerings from the people to build a temple (Ezra 2:68-70) – 61,000 gold coins, 6,250 pounds of silver, and 100 priestly garments. They laid the foundation of the temple to great fanfare. They sang with praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, "For he is good, his faithful love to Israel endures forever." (Ezra 3:11). It was their time and they responded with generous giving, obedience, and praise.

Our Commitment

There is one measurement of time that isn't marked by the celestial – a week. A week is seven days because God gave us this pattern when He created the universe and us. Thus, we are reminded weekly we have a Creator, and we should have a day of rest. So, first, I want you to remember our lives must be fully committed to our Creator and Savior, Jesus Christ. If we don't do that first, whatever else we commit our lives to will not have true meaning. Second, I want you to consider where OBBC is at this time in its history. We have an opportunity to continue the work our fellow Olive Branch members who went before us started. When they committed to starting a church – it was all about Jesus. Worshiping Him, following Him, learning about Him, and telling others about Him. We do the same today. They eventually committed to building a place to worship, then others later a fellowship hall, then a new sanctuary, an education wing, and then the CLC. It's our time to continue their legacy of uplifting Christ and having facilities that help us fulfil our God given mission.