

Olivet Connections

NEWSLETTER

December 2024

MAKING THE GRACE OF GOD REAL FOR ALL PEOPLE

Words for the Beginning: Advent Reminders for New Seasons

Advent begins on Sunday, December 1st. We will be again utilizing resources from our friends at Sanctified Art as we paying special attention to this season that is both the end and the beginning of a new church year. Christ's birth invites us into new ways of loving and being—and yet the world as we know it continues on. And so, we will bless one another with the reminders we need to faithfully move through this threshold, telling one another the words we need to hear again and again as we embark upon a new season of living.

We hope that these words for the beginning will renew us and remind us of the ways we are called to live out our faith. We hope you will join us as we start this chapter, as always proclaiming our hope in a God who was and is making all things new. Throughout this newsletter you will find many of the ways you can engage this Advent season.

Hanging of the Greens- Saturday, November 30 10:00 AM

Help us deck the halls and prepare our spaces for Advent season! Many hands make light work!

Devotionals, Advent Calendars, and More!

Daily devotionals, Advent calendars, and children's bulletins are available in the Fellowship Hall!

This year, we will have printed devotional booklets available to guide us through the Advent season. A digital e-reader version is also available upon request.

We have Advent calendars for both children and adults! Each day in December, children can color in a new shape on the calendar containing a daily word to learn and use. The adult calendar contains a photo-a-day challenge. If you decide to share your photos online, feel welcome to tag Olivet @olivetchristianchurchcom.



NOTE: Deadline for the January Olivet Connections Newsletter will be **MONDAY, December 16** to allow publication before the holiday.

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Service of Hope and Release: A Post-Election At-Home Liturgy

This election season has been one of heightened emotions. Following Jesus' model of caring for the most vulnerable, we believe God calls us to stay attentive to the policies and leaders that impact our collective well-being. We believe God calls us to use our voices and our actions to work toward building God's beloved community on earth. And we believe that work does not end with an election. Therefore, we've compiled a simple liturgy for you to do at home on your own or in a small group. May it provide you with space for reflection, listening, and connection. Hard copies are available in the Fellowship Hall or upon request via email.

December Trivia Question:

What family donated the stained glass above the entry doors?

Quilts Wanted to Display for Advent series

Do you have a quilt with special meaning? Will you share it with us?

Quilts have been used since ancient times for physical protection, comfort, ceremonies, abolition, family heirlooms, advocacy, and more. Quilting is a medium that transcends cultures, regions, and time, but which has always been rooted in community and storytelling.

As we piece together the ancient scriptures and the reminders we need to hear again and again this Advent season, we would like to hear the stories of your favorite quilts. Throughout December, we will be displaying our quilts (one per person, please!) alongside a description of why they are meaningful to you. Please bring your quilt by November 30th.

Joy to the World, the Lord Has Come...

With music in our hearts, and the wonder of the season upon us, let us create together. Please plan to join us on Saturday, December 7th, 10am-12pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will gather for a morning of tradition, creativity, and fellowship. This event is the last of our 150th Year Celebrations and won't it be fun to end this momentous year with conversation, busy hands, and warmed hearts? This event is for all ages, abilities and interests. Crafty-come! Hot Chocolate Enthusiast-come! Olivet Friend-come! All supplies will be provided, as well as delicious treats.



Blue Christmas— December 18, 6:00 PM

Not everyone feels joyful around the holidays. The Blue Christmas Service is a safe and sacred space to share prayers and laments, to mourn the losses and griefs of our lives, to let the tears flow, to pray for justice and restoration, and to hope against hope that God is indeed making all things new. All are welcome to participate in this special service either in person in our sanctuary or online. We extend a special invitation to all who are carrying grief, anxiety, and fears during this season.



Christmas Program & Christmas Party— December 22, 10:30 AM

Our children and youth will lead us in worship and share the holy story of God coming to live among us anew this day! Following worship we will have a small Christmas party. Join the fun!

Christmas Eve Services— Tuesday, December 24th 4:00 & 8:00 PM

We offer two candlelight Christmas Eve services at 4:00 and 8:00 PM. Come sing hymns, hear again the story of God-with-us, and share the Light of Christ with the world.

Sunday Morning “Quilting”

Beginning December 1st, there will be a table set up in the Fellowship Hall intended to be a space to “quilt.”

Each week of Advent, there will be a different simple square pattern available, representing our theme. You will be invited to use coloring supplies or paper to decorate your quilt square. Or you can take your pattern home and work on it with whatever materials you have on hand (fabric, buttons, wrapping paper, etc.).

At the end of the season, we hope to have one large community-crafted “quilt” to display.

Choir to present program on December 15

Olivet’s choir will present selections from the cantata **God With Us** during morning worship on Sunday, December 15. The music will be woven throughout the service and will feature both original music and familiar carols.

We hope you’ll join us for singing, Advent candle-lighting, Scripture and prayer as we journey together through the Christmas story.



December Food Pantry

December’s Food Pantry collection will go to Fifth Street CC Emergency Food Pantry, one of our partnering organizations in our sister church.

Foods suggested for December are canned fruits, jams & jellies, dry cereals & instant oatmeal, bread mixes, pancake mixes & syrup, and granola bars. Your generosity makes a difference!

CROP WALK Updates ... JOYFUL NEWS TO SHARE! TOGETHER WE RAISED \$26,787.67

This amount exceeded our WALK goal of \$26,000 and topped our 2023 record amount of \$25,028.25.

- OLIVET members and friends contributed a record \$4,609.95, exceeding our goal of \$4,500. Special thanks for the very generous \$1,000 anonymous matching gift that put us over the top.
- OLIVET walkers posted 433 miles, including miles walked in the week just prior to WALK Day. Overall, our community posted 1,197.7 miles, exceeding our goal of 800 miles.
- OLIVET fielded a 20-person WALK Team; 131 registered walkers exceeded our goal of 120.
- Our WALK's first-ever 'Construction' event brought in 542 cans of food for our local partners, more than twice our goal of 250 cans.
- Our contributions are put to work here at home with four local food programs and throughout the US and around the world through Church World Service.
- Save the Date: Sunday, September 21, 2025 to celebrate our 30th Columbia CROP Hunger Walk

Together we are BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES – creating a world built upon shared humanity and radical generosity. THANK YOU!



Climate Smart Agriculture - A Gift for Planet Earth

When adding native plants to our home, church and community gardens, we often include butterfly weed, rose milkweed, purple cone-flower and black-eyed Susan to benefit butterflies and bees. But native plants can have a much larger impact.

See the two articles from the Fall/Winter 2024 edition of Missouri Prairie Journal currently posted on the south bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Researchers at Iowa State University have found that pollinator strips added to row crop fields provide measurable ecosystem benefits that dramatically reduce soil and nutrient run-off while providing increases in pollinator and bird species and abundance. Incentive payments are available. Pollinator strips are being put into practice by landowners such as Doug and Barbara Doughty on their 1,200-acre farm in Livingston County, MO.

The 5-year Horizon II pilot project spearheaded by Roeslein Alternative Energy (RAE) is funded by a USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Program grant of \$80 million to demonstrate a “Climate-Smart Future for Corn, Soybean, Livestock, and Renewable Natural Gas Production.” The University of Missouri is one of several Horizon II partners. Key parts of this program include producing winter-hardy cover crops and establishing prairie plantings of native grasses and forbs to provide multiple benefits to farmers, farm communities, wildlife habitat, soil health, flood control, and climate. Once established, prairie plantings sequester carbon very effectively, can be grazed

by livestock, and prairie bio-mass can be harvested for use in the production of renewable natural gas.

NOTES OF THANKS

Dear Members of Olivet,

What a beautiful celebration of 150 years! The dedication of the planning committee was obvious, as every detail was tended to. The joyful voices of the choir, the lively music, the heartfelt shared messages of your pastors, the great video and the delicious meal prepared by so many loving hands....it was all perfect.

We loved seeing so many old friends and we appreciated the warm welcome from a full house of new faces.

We experienced God's love and caring through the people of Olivet as members from 1977 to 1984. We felt it anew on Sunday.

Thank you all for a fun and joyful day! We drove home with full hearts.

With love and gratitude,
John & Barb Hoelscher
Alton, IL

Special Christmas Offering for Regional Ministries

On December 15 & 22, Olivet will present the opportunity for the 2024 Christmas Offering to benefit Mid-America Regional Ministries.

The regional ministry works to connect congregations, foster faith development and assist churches in calling new ministers, among other ministries. You can read more at <https://disciplesmissionfund.org/special-offerings/christmas/>



OLIVET CHRISTIAN CHURCH BOARD MEETING

OCTOBER 21, 2024 @ 7:00PM

Present: Karen Broz, Chris Valleroy, Sarah Frost, David Mast, Jim Spain, Gabby Comstock, Julia Jackson, John Cuning, Carolyn Henry, Nancy Foss, Rita Reeder

Staff members present: Reverend Hannah Ryan, Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell

Treasurer Diane Bartley, and Ken Bartley were present.

The October 21, 2024, Olivet Church Board Meeting was called to order by President Karen Broz at 7:00 pm. Reverend Hannah opened the meeting with a prayer.

Chris made a motion to move One Home, One Future to be presented after the financial reports. David seconded the motion and it passed.

The minutes for September 2024 were reviewed and approved.

Financial Reports

The Financial Reports for September 2024 were presented by Diane Bartley. The Balance Sheet, Cash on Hand Reports, and the Budget vs Actual for September were reviewed. Chris made a motion to approve the financial report. Carolyn seconded the motion and it passed.

Finance Chairperson, Kenneth Bartley reported the year-to-year total income up 7%, the ministry funds gifts up 8%. The year-to-year expenses were up 9%. Next month we will realize the dividends and interest along with the fall BBQ fundraiser.

Minister Reports

Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell reported focusing on lots of things. We have focused on shepherding. We are growing and we need more shepherds. They are looking at ways to change things to make them better and serve with the talents and gifts we have. Natalie signed up for a 6-month continuing education on grief counseling. The 150th celebrations have been going great.

Reverend Hannah reported we just finished a stewardship series on money. It included take home activities

and art during the week. Hannah has been working on the narrative budget. Also planning on Christmas stuff and the children's pageant. She assisted Natalie with the Blessing of Animals. Hannah is off this week.

Unfinished Business

Finance Team - working on a review of the finances. They will wait for the books to close at the end of 2024 before they start the actual review. The team is looking at ways to outsource some things. Karen is leading the team and will add to the next meeting they discuss the church investments and reserves.

Policy/Procedure Manual Update Team- once the current manual is on flash drives for team members.

Bethany Fellows Request - pending

Eleanor Mitter Memorial - Hannah met with Lori and Linda. They went through the spaces and made a wish list of things they would like to do with the space. They have reached out for resources on sensory items and will be asking the property committee about projects.

150 Year Celebration Team - Hayride was a great turn out. Homecoming worship and thanksgiving dinner. We need numbers count if you have extra people in your family coming. There will be a fun photo booth. Then in December we will have an old fashion Christmas ornaments making event on a Saturday morning.

New Business

One Home, One Future - Marilyn Bettenhausen presented information to the board about One Home One Future which is a multi-faith collaborative initiative on positive climate action. After discussion, the board decided to take time to review the information and explore the website. In November, the board will look at this again.

The board meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Submitted by Sarah Frost



DECEMBER

Sunday, December 1**1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder
 9:30AM Fellowship Time
 10:30AM Worship
 11:30AM Outreach packaging Angel Tree gifts

Monday, December 2

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)
 1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)
 4:00PM Loaves & Fishes (Ashley Street Center)

Tuesday, December 3

8:00AM Outreach pick up Angel Tree gifts for delivery
 10:00AM Grief Support Group

Wednesday, December 4

6:15PM Chimes rehearsal
 7:00PM Choir rehearsal

Saturday, December 7

10:00AM Christmas decoration-making -
 Bring the whole family!

Sunday, December 8**2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder
 9:30AM Fellowship Time
 10:30AM Worship

Monday, December 9

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)
 1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)

Wednesday, December 11

6:15PM Chimes rehearsal
 7:00PM Choir rehearsal

Saturday, December 14

9:00AM Setup - Poinsettias

Sunday, December 15**3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder
 9:30AM Fellowship Time
 10:30AM Worship - Choir Cantata

Monday, December 16

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)
 1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)
 7:00PM Board Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, December 17

10:00AM Grief Support Group

Wednesday, December 18**Newsletter Articles Due**

6:00PM Blue Christmas Service
 6:15PM Chimes rehearsal
 7:00PM Choir rehearsal

Sunday, December 22**4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder
 9:30AM Fellowship Time
 10:30AM Worship - Kids' Christmas program
 11:30am Kids / Youth Christmas party

Monday, December 23

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)
 1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, December 24**CHRISTMAS EVE**

4:00PM Christmas Eve family service
 8:00PM Christmas Eve service

Wednesday, December 25**CHRISTMAS DAY**

Church Offices closed

Sunday, December 29**1ST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY****QUARTER SUNDAY****Monday, December 30**

No Bible Study
 No Staff Meeting

Tuesday, December 31

No Grief Support Meeting



Olivet Christian Church

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LIVESTREAM

www.youtube.com

Submitted articles for the January edition must be received by Monday, December 16. All articles may be edited for clarity and/or brevity.

The Church Office is open
8:30AM - 4:30PM
Monday through Thursday.

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ONLINE
GIVING

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