

Connections

NEWSLETTER

MAKING THE GRACE OF GOD REAL FOR ALL PEOPLE



The **68th Olivet Chicken BBQ** is coming up **June 13!** Please check your mailboxes for tickets. Advance ticket sales are one of the keys to a successful BBQ. Please sign up to provide pies (or donate money to purchase pies). You can sign up at the link in the Updater, or the sign-up sheet posted at church. Here is a schedule for BBQ week:

Wednesday, June 10 Pie Baking Event for all ages. Meet in fellowship hall at **5:30**. Contact Tracy Keel for more info, 573-864-3938.

Saturday, June 13 BBQ Day! Please bring your uncut pies to church by **9 AM**. Pies should be at least 9 inches in diameter and fully cooked. We need apple, cherry, peach and pecan pies.

Luncheon for workers will be served at **11:30 AM**. Sandwich fixings will be provided. Please bring a side to share, i.e. fruit, salad, chips, cookies, brownies. **All children and youth present at the BBQ must sign in at the nursery to pick up a shirt and color-coded bracelet. This is for young people under the age of 18.** We are trying to be very intentional in knowing the whereabouts of our youngest hard workers. Child-care will be available during serving times, 3-6 PM. **Please sign in by 2:45 PM BBQ day. Please bring a**

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- And MORE good news!

water bottle for your child. Please apply sunscreen. Snacks will be provided.

Serving begins at **3PM** and ends at **6PM**. Please help with cleanup if possible. Many hands make light work! If you want to help and aren't already part of a team, please sign up at church, or contact Lori Valleroy at 573-808-5129. Committee chairs should be contacting folks for work availability.

Thank you for making this year's BBQ a success!

Movement & Meditation Class

Join Melissa Robison as she leads a Sunday morning **Movement & Meditation Class**.

This 30-minute chair-based class offers a gentle way to care for your body and nurture your spirit. It is designed for all fitness levels and requires no special equipment. Come as you are and leave feeling more grounded.

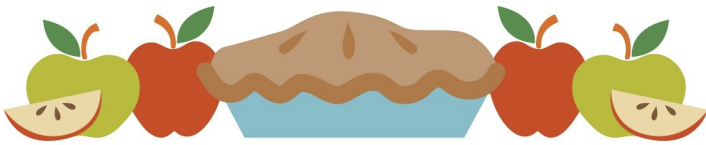
This class will meet **9:15-9:45 AM on Sundays** beginning **May 24th** and continuing through June. Please help us determine what space we'll need by letting us know if you plan to attend. You may sign up on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board or contact the church office.

Olivet Pie Baking Event for All Ages!

Please join us, Wednesday, June 10th at 5:30 to make pies for the Olivet BBQ. Pie crusts and filler will be provided, so please come prepared to assemble and decorate the pies.

You are also invited to provide your own pies for the BBQ. It takes LOTS of pies to cover this event! Sign up in Fellowship Hall to provide one or MORE pies! You can also sign up online at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd0Kzsj9Syl8i1hL1H9msOlgNXW9Ee8m1ogVlgFFYQeRljW7Q/viewform?usp=publish-editor>



Camp Mail

It's church camp time! If you would like to send our campers some care via snail mail, you can find their addresses below. Cards and notes need to be mailed EARLY so they can arrive on time. Early mail will be held at the camp until campers arrive.

June 1-5:

Natalie, Fae & Nora Crewell

Abby Jablonsky

Junior Camp

Disciples Center @ Camp Tawakoni

8492 SW Tawakoni Rd

Augusta, KS 67010

June 5-7:

Abigail Ryan

Try-It Camp

Jo-Ota Camp and Retreat Center

1272 Hwy MM

Clarence, MO 63437

July 20-25:

Garner Crewell

Chi Rho Camp

Jo-Ota Camp and Retreat Center

1272 Hwy MM

Clarence, MO 63437

Rev. Hannah's Sabbatical

Olivet Beloveds,

Beginning June 15th, I will enter a time of intentional Sabbath rest. I plan to spend the following three months ceasing from the need to accomplish and be productive and creating space instead for new growth—for connectivity and imagination and presence in the midst of the Holy.

One way I hope to accomplish this is to engage with art. I believe that if God is the ultimate Creator, then our creative impulses are a reflection of God's nature within us. I also believe that art and the humanities are vitally important in this moment, as they help us tell the story of what we know to be true and often remains unseen, guide us to imagine newness in spaces that are stagnant, and create spaces for hope and connection where there is so often isolation and despair. So, during my sabbatical, I plan to re-engage with art-making, re-connecting with outlets that give me joy without a need for purpose or perfection.

I also plan to spend time reconnecting with colleagues and friends who participated in my ordination process over a decade ago. Those relationships are precious and keep me grounded in the most meaningful ways.

It is my hope that Sabbath rest will allow me time and space to cultivate new spiritual practices around creativity, relationship, mindfulness, and presence that will refresh my spirit, and that I might return renewed and grounded in ways that will be sustaining for us all as we continue to do ministry together.

I will return from my sabbatical on **September 8th**. I will not be returning emails or calls during my time away so that I might honor this intentional time of rest. I have been working diligently to make this time go as smoothly as possible for the life of the church. Rev. Natalie, as you know, is extraordinarily equipped to continue our shared work in my absence. She and Adriene are prepared to manage many of my day-to-day tasks. And many others have committed to ensuring our ministries have all the support they will need to thrive this summer.

It will be difficult for me to not be with you. I will miss you all. And I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to take a deep breath of Sabbath.

With thanksgiving and love,
Hannah

OLIVET CHRISTIAN CHURCH BOARD MEETING

APRIL 20, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

Present:

Officers: Justin Walensky, Jim Spain, John Cunning

Board Members: Carolyn Henry, Mary Dewey, Joyce Mast, Ginny Edgar, Bob Moore, Rockie Alden, Rob Foss

Staff Members: Reverend Hannah Ryan, Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell

Treasurer: Jason Enright and Barb Fitzgerald

The April 20, 2026 Olivet Church Board Meeting was called to order by Chair Justin Walensky at 7:00 pm. Reverend Hannah opened the meeting with a prayer.

Bob Moore moved that the minutes for March 2026 be approved; Rob Foss seconded and the motion passed.

Financial Reports

The Financial Reports for March 2026 were presented by Jason Enright and Barb Fitzgerald.

Jason:

- Updating of financial documents have been completed.
- A one page overview report has been created to give simplified, at a glance report. The same more detailed reports from the past are still being provided.
- A question was raised about what appeared to be an \$18,000 difference in the endowment reports between February and March. The endowments reports had not been reconciled for about 18 months; they have now been reconciled.

Barb:

- Reviewed the reasons for the review of past financial statements.
- Barb explained how the four-month restriction is being reported (the need to keep a balance equal to four months expenses in the bank).
- The Finance Team will meet in May to review policies.

Cell Tower Update: Dave Mast

- Committee members are Pat Fitzgerald, Dennis Bettenhausen, Rich Edgar, and Dave Mast.
- After reviews and edits by our attorney, we have an acceptable agreement.
- The agreement the committee is asking the board to approve is a 36 month time period to finalize permits and County approval for the project. The company will pay the church \$1,500 for an option.
- The final contract once the project is approved by the County will be a 99 year lease for \$145,000. There will also be a \$25,000 bond to ensure removal of the equipment if necessary. The company will maintain the property they lease.
- The final location is on the north side of the tree line from the pavilion out to the road. An access road will be built north of the tree line.
- Carolyn Henry made a motion to approve the option; Rockie Alden seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- Rob Foss made a motion to approve the option and have the Chair and Vice Chair sign the option on behalf of the church. Rockie Alden seconded the motion, and the motion passed.
- Follow up note: The company later required proof that the Chair and Vice Chair had the authority to sign the option. Minutes from the congregational meeting in October 2025 were provided and the company accepted this as proof.

Minister Reports

Reverend Hannah Ryan

- Natalie cannot attend this meeting, but sent notes for her report to Hannah.
- Attendance at Palm Sunday service was so large we ran out of palms.
- 73 attended the Good Friday service shared with Millersburg Christian Church.
- 140 attended the Easter service with two baptisms. 18 children participated in the easter egg hunt.
- Hannah took a day off on Sunday, April 19. LeAnn Skinner provided pulpit supply.
- The Grace Expansion Team has reviewed the

(cont'd on p4)

(Cont'd from p3) survey of the congregation regarding being recognized as an open and affirming congregation. Comments were largely in favor of moving to the next step in the process. Rockie and Natalie put together an information board with examples of welcome statement from other area churches. The team has drafted a Welcome Statement which will be available for feedback by the congregation. The congregation will need to approve the final welcome statement.

- The Vision Team is reviewing results from their recent survey.

Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell (from notes provided to Hannah)

- Continuing mentorship of Sarah Mertz, a theological student and pastor in Auxvasse
- All Lillian Endowment grant request items have been received. Will have more news in August.
- A little over 200 people attended a town hall meeting hosted at the church.
- The grief group has some new faces
- Up to 25 people have expressed their willingness to serve as Shepherds
- Natalie just completed a Just Peace Pilgrimage. More details will be coming in the future.

New Business

- Carolyn Henry will need a replacement after the June meeting as she will be moving to Arkansas

Motion to adjourn made by Rob Foss, Jim Spain seconded the motion. The board meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Submitted by John Cunning



FOOD GENEROSITY BOX

156 meals of LASAGNA and all the “fixins” were served at Loaves & Fishes on May 4. The lasagna was provided by some of our friends at Lenoir Woods and the sides were provided thanks to a special donor.



Dads and Kids - That's What We're About in BBQ '26!

As you know (if you've looked at the back of the BBQ tickets or listened to announcements, or read Olivet's May newsletter) this year we are supporting 2 relatively new organizations in Columbia and focusing on family well-being through programs for dads and children.

Good Dads, Inc. was established in Columbia in 2024. Experience has proven that children without strong “father relationships” are more likely to drop out of school, have discipline problems, be incarcerated, experience homelessness, attempt suicide, engage in violent behaviors, and experience addiction. Whereas kids with actively involved dads are more likely to have stronger verbal skills, get better grades, and show increased curiosity and problem-solving skills. And, most people, including dads, learn best when they have hands-on training, so that's why Good Dads has designed classes and participatory activities that get dads (including step-parents, adoptive parents, and grandparents) engaged with others while focusing on responsible fatherhood living, communication and teamwork, economic stability and more. Courses of study are also available for co-ed groups and dads and their co-parents.

P.E.A.C.E. and H.O.P.E. Center for Youth was also founded in 2024 as a cooperative partnership of two dedicated 501(c)(3) organizations, Destiny of H.O.P.E. and P.E.A.C.E., who are passionately dedicated to empowering youth in our community by providing a safe and inclusive space for young people to explore their interests, connect with others, and foster their creativity. They offer a variety of programs including mentorship, tutoring, art and music classes, and leadership development academic support, tutoring program, career readiness initiatives. The Active Learners Day Program is structured for students who have been suspended, expelled, or are homeschooled; to keep them academically engaged while promoting personal growth and accountability.

(See accompanying photo, bottom of p5)

Extending the Season

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in our spring Sustainable Living events and Property work sessions. Whether you enjoyed the bird walk at Eagle Bluffs, Seeds 'n Sprouts at the end of April or helped in anyway with the Spring Property Work Day on May 2nd or the many work sessions to get ready for that event, we appreciate you! Our Olivet children do too. They enjoyed planting their mini-veggie & flower garden on Sunday, May 3rd and look forward to seeing strawberries develop in the neighboring raised bed.

We invite you to take 10 to 15 minutes before or after church and visit the different garden areas. Pick a small plot you would be willing to monitor for weeds and water once a week. Please visit with **Dennis Bettenhausen** or **Bob Broz** for more details on 'adopting a spot'.



Columbia CROP Hunger WALK Sunday, September 20, 2026

Some years ago, the Loaves & Fishes Team was enjoying a picnic supper at Stephens Lake Park on Labor Day after we had served our evening meal as usual, on the first Monday of the month. Jered Sharp noted that "Hunger doesn't take a holiday."

As we head into summer vacation mode, put this fall event on your calendar. Loaves & Fishes Soup Kitchen and three local church food pantries or community meal programs benefit from the local portion of CROP WALK funds. Church World Service effectively helps families around the world – providing disaster relief and working with communities on sustainable development projects to make lasting change. Together we truly can improve lives in all seasons. Thank you!

A Special Thank You

After the May 4th Loaves and Fishes dinner, the L&F team thanked Carolyn Henry for her many years of serving dinner by giving her dinner at Chili's. "Carolyn, who will serve the peaches? Thanks and many blessings in your future work".



Carolyn Henry with a Loaves & Fishes shirt



Lonnie Lockhart Bey, Co-Founder (left adult) and Stephanie Bey, Director (middle adult) with Youth Center participants (see article p4)



Thanks for the Olivet family! Your calls, cards, and prayers were truly blessings of encouragement to me. **You** are truly God's angels spreading love into a needy world.

God bless you!
Carol Darnell

To the good folks at Olivet Christian Church,

Your continued support of [CoMo Mobile Aid Collective](#) is so appreciated! Your recent gift of \$50, making a total of \$550 for 2025, will help us supply needed items and outreach to our neighbors experiencing homelessness. We couldn't do this work without the kindness of groups like yours.

Thanks again!

Dear friends at Olivet Christian Church,

Thank you for your generous donation of \$550 for [Room at the Inn](#). Your contribution will help many brothers and sisters in need here and across Boone County. As you may know, [Room At the Inn](#) will soon "roll" into the Opportunity Campus and will operate within the Voluntary Action Center.
Fact: Room At the Inn has 110 cots that have been full nearly every night since the year-around operations date.

Dear Olivet Christian Church friends, Thank you for standing with us against hunger with your recent donation of \$250 to [The Food Bank](#), making a total of \$500 for the year of 2025. Support like yours makes it possible for The Food Bank to make a lasting difference for thousands of individuals and families each month across our 32-county service area. With support like yours, we are able to share food for families facing difficult decisions about balancing essential costs.

Fact: In 2025, The Food Bank distributed 5.5 million pounds of food in their 32 county service area (5,706,753 of which were in Boone County); 4.8 million pounds of food were saved from landfills through partnerships with 270 retailers; 2,775 seniors received food boxes each month; 500 veterans received food boxes each month

Olivet Christian Church,

Thank you so much for your generous gift to the [Voluntary Action Center FISH Fund](#) of \$1,000 in March. The FISH Fund allows us to meet immediate basic needs immediately. One family recently came to us facing a difficult choice: pay for gas to get to work or fall behind on rent and risk losing a tenuous stability all together. Because of donors like you, we are able to step in with support at exactly the right moment. Thank you for standing with our neighbors when they need it most.

Fact: In 2025, VAC served 1,827 individuals in 1,618 households across Boone County; \$30,198 was granted in gas vouchers to help people get to work, school, and medical care; \$11,055 was granted for prescriptions and doctor's visits; and \$2,266 for identification assistance such as drivers licenses, state IDs, and birth certificates.

Help the Harvest of Hope Bloom

Church World Service Special Offering for Tools of Hope - June 21

Agricultural Programs = Empowering Farmers - 13,181 individuals received training, seeds, livestock and tools--helping them grow more food and secure stable incomes

Nutrition Programs = Healthier Futures for Families - 18,652 individuals participated in training, feeding demonstrations, and mother-to-mother support groups

Tool Programs = Equipping Communities - 89,475 people now have the simple tools – like shovels, gardening hoes, and watering cans – they need to grow food, provide for their families, and build sustainable futures

Reliable Source of Food = Seeds - A handful of seeds can grow into a reliable source of food and income for a family and their community



JUNE

Monday, June 1

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

Wednesday, June 3

7:00PM Choir

Sunday, June 7 - 2ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

9:15AM Movement & Meditation Class
9:30AM [Deacon Training: All are Welcome](#)
9:30AM JYF Sunday School
9:30AM Worship & Wonder
9:30AM Fellowship Time
10:30AM Worship
11:30AM Sustainable Living Team
11:30AM [Deacon Training: All are Welcome](#)

Monday, June 8

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

Wednesday, June 10

5:30PM All-Church Pie Baking event
7:00PM Choir

Saturday, June 13

[68th Annual Olivet BBQ](#)

Sunday, June 14 - 3RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

9:15AM Movement & Meditation Class
9:30AM JYF Sunday School
9:30AM Worship & Wonder
9:30AM Fellowship Time
10:30AM Worship

Monday, June 15

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)
1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)
5:30PM Program Council
7:00PM Board Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, June 16

10:00AM Grief Support Group

Wednesday, June 17

[Newsletter Articles Due](#)

Saturday, June 20

10:00AM - 2:00PM - Private Event

Sunday, June 21 - 4TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

[Father's Day](#)
[Tools of Hope Special Offering](#)
9:15AM Movement & Meditation Class
9:30AM Fellowship Time
9:30AM JYF Sunday School
9:30AM Worship & Wonder
10:30AM Worship

Monday, June 22

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

Sunday, June 28 - 5TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

9:15AM Movement & Meditation Class
9:30AM JYF Sunday School
9:30AM Worship & Wonder
9:30am Fellowship Time
10:30am Worship

Monday, June 29

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



Olivet Christian Church

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LIVESTREAM

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Articles for the Olivet Connections Newsletter
must be received
by the 3rd Wednesday of each month,
and will be edited for clarity and/or brevity.

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

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