

# Olivet Connections

NEWSLETTER

January 2025

MAKING THE GRACE OF GOD REAL FOR ALL PEOPLE

## Care Connect Ministry is Growing

As our Olivet community continues to grow in number, we have felt the call to restructure our care groups and increase our shepherd team to ensure that everyone receives the exceptional care and connection we strive to offer. It has been a joyful time of discernment as members have been invited to consider taking on the role of shepherd. In 2025 we are adding four new shepherds to our team—all of them bringing unique spiritual gifts that will be highlighted in this ministry. We are grateful for their willingness to serve God and our community in this way!

As care groups shuffle around you may receive notes and calls from our new shepherd friends as well as those who have been serving in this capacity for some time. We are a team after all and lift one another up as we seek to offer love and compassion to all of you. It's also not too late, if you have been feeling the tug to serve Olivet as a shepherd, please reach out! There is always room for more on our team!

Our Shepherd Team beginning January 2025 is Marilyn Bettenhausen, Linda Cook, Jackie Glenn, Karen Broz, Robert Floyd, Gabby Comstock, Linda Graue, and Carol Gilles.

## New Team Forming

As our 150th year comes to an end, there are noticeable voids on our church calendar we hope to fill. We have enjoyed this year of intentional fellowship and want to keep that momentum going.

Fellowship is such an essential part of our faith community. Joining together in laughter and fun helps us solidify our sense of community as well combat loneliness.

Do you enjoy planning events? Do you have a spirit of joy? Do you want to help bring Olivet friends together? Do you want to be part of a team at Olivet but get frustrated with long meetings?

Please consider joining our in-the-process-of-being-formed Membership / Fellowship Team (better name TBD). Please let Pastor Natalie know if you'd like to join us!

## FLOAT TRIP RESPONSE NEEDED!

We are already in the process of planning our annual Float Trip for JULY 25 - 27, but we need to ensure there is plenty of interest before we make our reservations.

Please respond to Natalie or the church office by JANUARY 15 if you plan on going. The more, the merrier!!!

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## New to Olivet? Now What!? Class

We are finally coming together for our rescheduled 'New to Olivet' Class. We will meet January 12th and 19th @ 9am in the Fellowship Hall. We will tour our spaces, learn more about Olivet's history and current structure as well as what makes Olivet special. We will also spend time learning about our denomination the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). All ages are welcome Please contact Pastor Natalie if you have any questions.



## February Edition Deadline

Firm deadline for submitting articles to the February edition of the OCN is January 15th. Please don't be late!



**SAVE THE DATE.....OCC Annual Rummage Sale****Saturday, February 22, 2025****Watch for more details later in January!**

**Start now!** *Start saving and gathering up the things that you'd like to have go to a new home and benefit OCC!*

We will accept: toys, games, puzzles · books · clothing for men, women and children · baby toys, accessories and clothing · home décor · kitchen and dining items · bedroom items · linens, blankets, sheets, towels · crafts, jewelry, fabric · seasonal décor such as Christmas, Halloween, Easter · collectibles · small appliances, tools, · office supplies · outdoor items such as bicycles, garden tools, construction or woodworking tools, lawn furniture, outdoor toys, camping equipment · plants

Let your neighbors know too that this opportunity is available for them to contribute. **REMEMBER:** items should be in respectable condition as they are a reflection of our church.

### **YOUR OUTREACH TEAM HAS BEEN BUSY ON YOUR BEHALF!**

- Collected 36 coats, 33 gloves & mittens, 57 hats and scarfs, 152 pairs of socks, and 22 miscellaneous other warm clothing items for The Wardrobe in October
- Served 150 friends and family a scrumptious Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov 10
- Served 120 meals on Nov 4 and 163 meals on Dec 2 to guests at Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen
- Collected Christmas gifts and grocery gift cards (worth \$1,080) and delivered them to 8 families through the Voluntary Action Angel Tree Holiday Program
- Granted an emergency grant of \$300 from our Hands On Ministry funds to CoMo Mobile Aid Collective to purchase coveralls, hand-warmers, and warm socks for people who are "on the streets" all day during the winter
- Dinner in celebration of Bill Matthews' life for approximately 50 family and friends
- Shared 20 live Poinsettias and 9 "virtual" poinsettia greetings to neighbors and friends on Dec 15

**PARTNER UPDATES:**

**Voluntary Action Center** – Alesha's life quickly went from stable to the brink of homelessness. "Before the crisis, I was working," Alesha says. "I was able to provide for my children without assistance. I was self-sufficient at that point. Then life happened."

Alesha came to VAC and received a warm welcome and resources for assistance that she worked hard to take advantage of. Now, several years later, Alesha has made great strides in improving life for herself and her 3 children. She has a good job and pride in herself and her work.

***In the midst of a crisis, basic needs do not feel so basic... they are enormous, insurmountable, and a person feels hopeless. Olivet's partnership with VAC becomes acts of love and empowerment. Thanks, Olivet for your generosity to the VAC assistance fund called the FISH FUND.***

**CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)** – "When CASA volunteers come, they don't come with any prejudices in their heart. They pay atten-

tion, observe everything. Their care helps lessen the trauma and hardships that being in foster care has on children."

Brothers Liam, Ben, and Noah spent six long years in foster care, separated from each other. Liam, the oldest, was nearing the time when he would age out of the systems without a permanent family. CASA Mark, however, was relentless in his work on the boys' behalf. And finally, the boys were reunited in the home of their grandparents – something that had once seemed impossible.

***And now they are awaiting their adoption day! Thanks, Olivet for your generosity to CASA, helping provide more volunteers to children like these brothers.***

**The Food Bank** – Across Missouri, thousands of children and their families lack access to a reliable, nutrient-rich diet, but The Food Bank's School Market Program is adapting to this need in new ways. For children, short- and long-term food insecurity have impacts that extend far beyond hunger to health and learning challenges.

The Food Bank began the Buddy Pack program in 2005, which supplies pre-packed single-serving foods to help keep children fed over weekends. School Markets take a different approach. Rather than proving single servings in a pack that served one student, the new School Market offers larger packages of food that can serve a child and their family with items needed for family-style meals.

***Students and families get to select the foods they want to take home, offering the dignity of CHOICE. Thanks, Olivet for your generosity to The Food Bank, keeping food and creative services available to families across central Missouri.***

## One Home One Future

[www.onehomeonefuture.org](http://www.onehomeonefuture.org)

One Home One Future is a coalition effort of many US faith denominations and organizations for visible and collective creation care, and just and equitable climate solutions. This initiative includes Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith communities and organizations. One Home One Future calls people of all faiths to stand together in caring for this beautiful blue-green planet we all call Home.

Each congregation or organization sets their own priorities and creates programming and chooses activities that fit their spirit and values and that build on their strengths and gifts. Our denomination, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Disciples Green Chalice program are among the leaders of this effort.

This past October, Olivet's Sustainable Living Team recommended to our Board that Olivet, a Green Chalice congregation, participate in this initiative. It aligns with Olivet's Vision Statement for 2023-2026, affirms the work of our Property & Sustainable Living Teams, and offers many resources for education and action. Plus, it can connect us to other participating congregations, such as St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation here in Columbia, to enable us to learn from one another and encourage joint programming. After review and discussion, the Board approved Olivet's participation at their November meeting. Watch for more information about One Home One Future as the Sustainable Living Team develops programs and activities in the year ahead.



## November Board Minutes (cont'd from page 4)

cleaning out those areas. Hannah purchased items to make the fenced in playground areas more welcoming.

150 Year Celebration Team - One more event to gather for old fashion Christmas decoration making to keep or give away.

### New Business

New Board Officers - if anyone is interested in being a board officer to let Karen or Chris know.

Property Request to Make Firearms Signs Permanent - signs were made before the election. They were laminated signs. There is a request for signs to be made in more permanent material.

After discussion, the board would like to ask the property team for a formal recommendation about firearm and video surveillance signs.

The board meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Submitted by Sarah Frost

## "Why I ... Am A Member of the OCC Program Council"

by Linda Reed Brown

The easy answer to this statement is that as the chair of Olivet's Outreach Team, I want to be present to keep informed about the plans of other program teams, as well as help coordinate our busy church calendar. The Program Council meets by Zoom every other month to do reporting on (and sometimes evaluation of) past events and continue the collaborative planning for our future as the community of Olivet. It has a short 4-year history of including Program and Mission Family chairs and our pastors,

but we're hoping to expand participation beyond just the few. *So far, this sounds like pretty routine administrative stuff, right? So, why am I inviting YOU to consider joining this very special team at Olivet?*

*Because you probably have enthusiasm, energy, or expertise for inventing and creating new, exciting – and faith-filled approaches – to our activities, community outreach, and vision of making God's grace real for all people. WE ANXIOUSLY AWAIT HEARING YOUR INPUT ON HOW TO CONTINUE DOING THINGS "THE OLIVET WAY".*

For more information, please feel free to talk to me, to our chair Chris Valle-roy, or to Pastors Hannah or Natalie.

## NOTES OF THANKS

Dearest Olivet Community

My cup overflows with gratitude. I am grateful for your appreciation, cooperation, and most of all your love!

Serving alongside you is one of the greatest joys of my life!

Thank you for the generous Pastor Appreciation gifts-you are such a blessing!

With Greatest Love,  
Pastor Natalie

Olivet Beloveds,

Goodness, you all are wonderful! Thank you for the generous and thoughtful gifts and notes you shared with us for Pastor Appreciation Month. But more than that, thank you for the ways you share God's love and grace with the world every single day. Doing ministry alongside you is an absolute delight and I am endlessly grateful for the opportunity to get to do this work with you.

Rev. Hannah



**OLIVET CHRISTIAN CHURCH BOARD MEETING****NOVEMBER 18, 2024 @ 7:00PM**

Present: Karen Broz, Chris Valleroy, Sarah Frost, David Mast, Jim Spain, Gabby Comstock, John Cuning, Carolyn Henry, Marty Albrecht, Mary Dewey, Joyce Mast, Justin Walensky

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

Treasurer Diane Bartley, and Ken Bartley were present.

The November 18, 2024, Olivet Church Board Meeting was called to order by President Karen Broz at 7:01 pm. Reverend Natalie opened the meeting with a prayer.

John made a motion to approve the minutes for October 2024. Chris seconded the motion and it passed.

**Financial Reports**

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

Finance Chairperson, Kenneth Bartley reported October best month of the year for 2024- and second-best month for ministry fund gifts. August was the best month for ministry fund gifts. Let us celebrate this win. Year to year document shows ministry funds gifts up 9%, dividends and interest are up 9.8%. The old church income (rent) has increased from last year by \$12,000. Expenses were up 8% from last year. Fall BBQ income/expenses has not been included yet.

**Minister Reports**

Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell reported her, and Hannah had finished the stewardship program that was wonderful. Travel with family to officiate a wedding. Working on the homecoming worship experience, which went well. Also working on conversations with people to join the Shepards team. Getting new Shepherds ready to start in January. The continuing education on grief counseling will start the monthly meetings for Natalie to attend and learn more about.

Reverend Hannah reported for Christian Education the class Larry Brown was teaching ended on November 3rd and he had twenty-four participants in the class. Many others read the book. The older elementary class are beginning a new curriculum for advent. Tony and Tracy Keel and Hannah went angel tree shopping with five youth. The money raised in February was put towards adopting a family for the holidays. They purchased gifts for a family of five members. Natalie and Hannah put together a reflective resource for those who want to process emotions from the election. Next is getting ready for advent, the theme is words from the beginning. We will be working with Sanctified Art again so there will be devotionals, advent calendars and more communal art. Along with the choir cantata, blue Christmas service, children's Christmas program and Christmas eve service.

**Unfinished Business**

One Home One Future - board members had time to review documents/websites presented from October. Sarah made a motion based on the recommendation of Olivet's Sustainable Living Team, I move that the Olivet Board approve Olivet's participation in One Home One Future, a national, multi-denominational creation care initiative for positive climate action. Chris seconded the motion and it passed.

Finance Team - met in October. Working on a review of the books but waiting on the books to close. Looking into outsource resources for treasury responsibilities. The team will not meet again until January. Questions about how we are managing the future cost of the property (painting, parking lot etc.); how we are planning for these expenses, will be taken back to the finance team to look at and consider.

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

Bethany Fellows Request - pending

Eleanor Mitter Memorial - Hannah and Lori have been  
(CONT'D on page 3)

**Sunday, January 5****EPIPHANY SUNDAY**

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

**Monday, January 6**

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

**Wednesday, January 8**

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

**Sunday, January 12****BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

9:00am So You're New to Olivet...Now What?  
 9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder  
 9:30AM Fellowship Time  
 10:30AM Worship

**Monday, January 13**

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

**Tuesday, January 14**

10:00AM Grief Support Group  
 6:30PM Property Team meeting

**Wednesday, January 15*****Newsletter Articles due******RSVP Deadline for Float Trip interest***

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

**Sunday, January 19****2ND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY**

9:00AM So You're New to Olivet...Now What?  
 9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder  
 9:30AM Fellowship Time  
 10:30AM Worship - Choir Cantata

**Monday, January 20**

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

**Wednesday, January 22**

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

**Sunday, January 26****3RD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY**

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

**Monday, January 27**

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

**Tuesday, January 28**

10:00AM Grief Support Group

**Wednesday, January 29**

11:00am Wardrobe Work Day  
 6:15pm Chimes rehearsal  
 7:00pm Choir rehearsal

***Food Generosity Box***

- \* 120 Fiesta Pie dinners at Loaves & Fishes on November 4
- \* Turkey, mashed potatoes, green beans and stuffing to Harbor House on November 10
- \* 163 Goulash meals to diners at Loaves & Fishes on December 3



## Olivet Christian Church

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Articles for the Olivet Connections  
Newsletter must be received  
by the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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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*Co-Minister*  
Rev. Natalie Dixon Crewell  
*Co-Minister*  
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