

# Connections

NEWSLETTER

MAKING THE GRACE OF GOD REAL FOR ALL PEOPLE

## Welcome Statement

The **Olivet Welcoming and Affirming Statement** is ready for a congregational vote! The Grace Expansion Team appreciates your continued exuberant contributions which helped us expand our welcome! The team carefully considered your thoughts shared on the first draft, edited the draft accordingly, and then sent it to the Board for vote. The Board unanimously affirmed the statement and now presents it to you, our beloved community.

Because it is summer and the Board wanted everyone to have a chance to vote, they determined an **extended voting session - beginning July 12th and continuing July 19th and 26th**. Voting will be done on paper ballots. You must be present to submit a ballot on one of the three dates listed; you must also be an **active member** of the congregation.

If you would like your voice heard, and you have not yet joined our congregation in membership, there is plenty of time to do so! Please reach out to Pastor Natalie with questions about membership. (ed. - Did you know that Olivet accepts dual membership?) Additional copies of the below Welcome Statement can be found in the Fellowship Hall.

## Olivet Welcoming and Affirming Statement

Olivet Christian Church is a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination. We strive to make the Grace of God Real for All People. Our congregation welcomes everyone to join in worship, fellowship, leadership, and community. All are welcomed here, regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, identities, abilities, politics, or economic status--including those people who have been devalued and discriminated against within the church and/or society.

We affirm that as a community of Christ, we provide a

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space that is accepting and loving for everyone. We offer God's radical love, a place at Christ's table, and the sincere support of our community.

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## Virtual General Assembly Opportunity

Are you interested in learning more about what it means to be part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)? Do you love learning and worshipping with others? This is a great opportunity to join us for our first Virtual General Assembly.

### What is General Assembly?

The whole church throughout the United States and Canada is invited to attend General Assembly 2026, taking place July 10–11. Rooted in Ephesians 3:14–21, this gathering invites the Stone-Campbell tradition of today and tomorrow to be grounded in the love of God that surpasses knowledge and barriers, calling the Christian Church to set a bigger table that extends beyond previous capacity. More than just a series of meetings, General Assembly is a covenantal table for education, discussion, worship, business, fellowship, and action, where each congregation is encouraged to boldly claim its place in shaping the life and ministry of the church.

### Details

We have been invited to join other Disciples at Millersburg Christian Church to engage in the Virtual Assembly together. We will participate on Saturday, July 11, 10am to 6pm with lunch provided. Please check in with Rev Natalie, ASAP so we can get you registered!

## Columbia CROP Hunger WALK

Sunday, September 20, 2026

WALK – GIVE – IMPROVE LIVES ... AROUND THE BLOCK – AROUND THE WORLD

[www.crophungerwalk.org/columbiamo](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/columbiamo)



Our WALK improves the lives of real people facing real challenges in need of real solutions – here in Columbia and around the world through **Church World Service**. Escalating costs of food, transportation and housing, plus the reduction of other funding, makes our support more critical than ever before. But together Columbia CROP Hunger WALKERS can:

- Raise \$27,000
- ‘Stock the Shelves’ with 500 nutritious canned/boxed food items for our local partners
- Walk 1,500 miles (including the week before the WALK)
- Rank #75 in the CREAM of the CROP – the Top 100 WALKs in the nation.

This month we feature two of our local food program partners.

**Loaves & Fishes Soup Kitchen** – our Olivet Team has served a delicious evening meal the first Monday of the month at the Soup Kitchen for many years and we see more and more persons needing this valuable program. In June, our Team served 183 meals!

Our Olivet Team is serving the first meal in the new **Opportunity Campus** location on Monday, July 6th. This site features a larger kitchen and expanded dining area but for the first time in over 2 years, the Soup Kitchen will be paying rent, now at \$1,000 per month. Over two dozen volunteer groups help provide and serve evening meals each month but Kitchen essentials like coffee, sugar, creamer, peanut butter and jelly, as well as several meals a month are regularly provided from the Loaves & Fishes pantry shelves. Without CROP Funds, it would be difficult to provide this essential meal program for our community.

In April 2026, **Russell Chapel Community Food Pantry** celebrated 25 years of service to their central Columbia neighborhood with a totally volunteer staff of coordinators and workers! Open the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, the Pantry served nearly 700 children and 2,700 adults in 2025. CROP funds have been used to purchase nutritious food items, expand food access through community outreach, provide emergency food assistance and have also been used to cover operational costs as necessary - such as utilities and transportation to pick up donated food from Natural Grocers. As the Pantry faces a new challenge – raising funds to repair a damaged floor – they continue to build hope, restore dignity and demonstrate that no one has to struggle alone.

NEXT MONTH: **Fifth Street Christian Church** *Feed the Community* Program and **Destiny Worship Center Food Pantry**.



### FOOD GENEROSITY BOX

**183 meals** of potato casserole, hamburgers, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches served on June 1.



Several Lost & Found items have been living at the church and want to go home! We have a Champion hoodie, a silver chain, 2 earrings (not a set), a pair of ladies’ readers, and a watch. Please drop by the office and describe your item so we can reunite you with it!

## OLIVET CHRISTIAN CHURCH BOARD MEETING

MAY 18, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

Present:

for one year was made by Joyce Mast and seconded by Rockie Alden; motion passed.

Officers: Justin Walensky, Jim Spain, John Cuning

Board Members: Rita Reeder, 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 May 18, 2026 Olivet Church Board Meeting was called to order by Chair Justin Walensky at 7:01 pm. Reverend Natalie opened the meeting with a prayer.

The minutes for April 2026 were reviewed. Two corrections were made to the minutes. John will provide corrected minutes. The motion to approve the corrected minutes was made by Jim Spain and seconded Bob Moore; motion passed.

### Financial Reports

The Financial Reports for April 2026 were presented by Jason Enright.

- April was a good month financially.
- No questions were asked regarding the reports.

Finance Chairperson, Barb Fitzgerald:

- Adjustments are being made to the reports and procedures.
- Jerre Gilles has requested to step down as the assistant treasurer when a replacement can be found.
  - ⇒ Jerre is one of the committee members whose signature is on the bank account.
  - ⇒ Karen Broz has offered to take on Jerre's duties and serve as a trainer on some of the procedures.
  - ⇒ The committee would like to have one more board member as an alternant signature on the bank account. John Cuning's name was mentioned. Do not need to make this decision tonight.
  - ⇒ Motion to approve Karen as assistant treasurer

### Minister Reports

Reverend Hannah Ryan

- The Vision Team met in April and will meet again in May. They are wrapping up the visioning process and hope to have something to share in one or two months.
- Provided support to the finance team.
- Attended property workday on May 2.
- On May 3rd the children planted their garden. Have tomatoes and strawberries.
- Melissa Robison will teach a Sunday morning motion and yoga class starting in May.
- Hannah has been supporting the BBQ Team as they plan for the 2026 BBQ.
- Attended a webinar on preaching and empire
- Have been working through required boundaries training
- This is Hannah's last meeting before she starts her sabbatical. She will be on sabbatical from June 14 through September 8. Volunteers are lined up to help with classes. Have lined up people to help with preaching this summer. Also need volunteers to help with worship services.

Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell

- The first presentation on her Civil Rights Pilgrimage is scheduled for May 19th at noon. More presentations will be scheduled.
- Natalie is planning for Hannah's sabbatical.
- The Grace Expansion Team will meet soon to review comments on the draft welcome statement and decide next steps.
- We need more people to serve as Shepherds. There are 25 people in the congregation that need Shepherds.
- Natalie is on the alumni board for Phillips Seminary and recently attended a board meeting.

### Unfinished Business

- Cell Tower Update
  - ⇒ The option for the cell tower was signed this past

Friday.

- ⇒ Update -- On May 31, Dave Mast let John know that the company wants a notarized copy of the April minutes as proof that the Chair and Vice Chair have been authorized by the board to sign the contract. A notarized copy was provided on June 1.
- Carolyn Henry will move soon for her new job in Arkansas. A new board member will be needed to replace her.

### New Business

- Justin will not be able to chair the July meeting as he will be in Japan.

The board meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Submitted by John Cunning



Saturday morning, September 26, 9:30 to 11:30 AM  
Visit to DeShon Family Farm in Boone County

What is 'regenerative agriculture' and why does it matter? We'll find out together as we enjoy a wagon tour of this active fourth-generation family farm to learn about the many conservation practices the family has in place and how these practices improve soil health and crop and livestock production, not only in the near term but for the future as well.

Watch for more information, including ways to sign up for this event, in the August newsletter. Our thanks to Jeff & Glenda DeShon and family for providing this special learning opportunity.

## 3rd Quarter Food Collection for the CROP Walk "Stock the Shelves"

Each quarter of the year, the Outreach Team encourages the congregation to bring a few specific grocery items for a designated food pantry in our community. You've probably noticed the food collected on the wire shelves in the Fellowship Hall.

**During the 3rd quarter this year, the Outreach Team is asking YOU to help us support the CROP Walk (September 20) by collecting a specific list of grocery items for the Food Pantry shelves each month.**

The CROP Walk Planning Team surveyed the food programs – both the pantry partners (Russell Chapel Community Food Pantry and Destiny Worship Center Food Pantry) AND the meal preparation programs (Loaves & Fishes and 5th Street Christian Feed the Community Meals) – to ask about their greatest needs.

So, every month – July, August, and September – we will have a list of items most needed by the pantries and meal programs. **Watch for the lists in the newsletter and on the table display that will be set up in the Fellowship Hall.** Thanks, everyone!

**Our July list:** Tuna – 14 oz up to 29 oz cans  
Potatoes (diced or whole) – 14 oz up to 29 oz cans  
Beef Stew – 14 oz up to 29 oz cans  
Beef & Gravy – 14 oz up to 29 oz cans  
Peanut Butter – 16 oz  
#10 cans of Green Beans  
#10 cans of Corn  
Instant Mashed Potatoes – boxes of 26 oz up to 3.25 pounds (not single servings)





**Saturday, July 4**

11:00AM Private Event all day

**Sunday, July 5- 6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

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

**Monday, July 6**

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)  
 4:00PM Loaves & Fishes @ new location!

**Wednesday, July 8**

7:00PM Summer Choir rehearsal

**Sunday, July 12- 7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

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

**Monday, July 13**

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)

**Tuesday, July 14**

10:00AM Grief Support Group

**Wednesday, July 15**

[Newsletter Articles Due](#)

**Sunday, July 19 - 8TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

9:30AM Fellowship Time  
 9:30AM JYF Sunday School  
 9:30AM Worship & Wonder  
 10:30AM Worship  
 11:30AM Frost 50th Anniversary celebration

**Monday, July 20**

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

**Saturday, July 25**

All day - Private Event (wedding)

**Sunday, July 26 - 9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

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

**Monday, July 27**

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)

**Wednesday, July 29**

11:00AM The Wardrobe Work Day

*Church family is invited to share in the joy! Please do RSVP!*

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

**50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary Party**

DATE: Sunday, July 19th, 2026

TIME: 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM

LOCATION:  
**Olivet Christian Church**  
 (Multipurpose Room)

Please RSVP by text/email:  
 573-823-3199 or  
 frostrebekah@yahoo.com

*50 Years of Love, Laughter & Faith*

## Olivet Christian Church

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Columbia, MO 65201

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LIVESTREAM

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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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GIVING

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

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### CALENDAR:

[https://www.olivetchristian.org/  
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### STAFF:

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Rev. Natalie Dixon Crewell  
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Angie Carlson  
*Pianist*