

Olivet

Connections

NEWSLETTER

May 2026

MAKING THE GRACE OF GOD REAL FOR ALL PEOPLE

Open & Affirming Welcome Statement

Thank you to the many of you who took time to respond to the recent survey about our **Open & Affirming process**. Your thoughtful responses have helped the Grace Expansion Team discern next steps as we, at Olivet, seek to expand the variety of ways we share God's grace.

First, the team encourages you to review the display in the Fellowship Hall, which includes a list of some local congregations who have already completed a similar process, welcome statements from neighboring faith communities, and a resolution adopted by the 2013 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Next, the Grace Expansion Team asks for **your input** on a proposed Welcome Statement. This statement ultimately would need to be approved by the congregation before we can officially receive the designation of an Open & Affirming Congregation, indicating to those outside of our community that we are welcoming of all persons into equal participation in the life and ministries of the church. You will find the proposed Welcome Statement on display in the Fellowship Hall. Please take time to read the drafted statement, pray about it, and, on the provided copies, write down either your agreement with the statement or suggested edits.

Lastly, please utilize the **Question Box** available on our Grace Expansion Table in the Fellowship Hall. Your feedback and your access to information is important. If you have questions about any part of this process, please don't hesitate to drop a note in the box or reach out to one of the members of the team.

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Summer Camps Registration is OPEN

Registration for summer camps is open! Church camp is a wonderful and transformative experience for many, and our camping program has a variety of opportunities for all ages. Find out more and register here: www.mid-americadisciples.org/summer. Contact Rev. Hannah with questions or for information on scholarships.

Olivet Work Day May 2nd

Whether you are new at flower gardening and yard work or have years of experience, come join the fun and fellowship on **May 2 starting at 9:30 am**, as volunteers join in on the work day at Olivet.

Volunteers will spread mulch, trim bushes and plant flowers in the different areas of the church property. We will also plant a few vegetables in the raised beds by the Multipurpose entrance. If you have a favorite tool to use feel free to bring it but no experience needed and tools will be provided if you don't have them.

Come join in the fellowship with the Sustainability and Property teams as we work together to beautify the church grounds.

Graduation Sunday

Help us celebrate our recent graduates on **Sunday, May 31st**. We will offer them our blessings, love, and well-wishes as they enter the next part of life's journeys. If you have a graduate in your life (pre-K, high school, college, grad school, etc.) that you would like us to lift up, please let Adriene know in the church office.

The Wardrobe: Did You Know Olivet Members Serve?

The Wardrobe was started more than 56 years ago by churches in Columbia focused on providing good used clothing at an affordable price for anyone needing it due to home fire, theft, or limited resources; most items cost less than \$2 on sales days. And, on Tuesdays, families with a referral from a social service agency or church SHOP FOR FREE.

All profits from sales provide the \$60 vouchers for new shoes at Shoe Carnival twice a year for Boone County school children whose family has a referral – what a relief for low-income parents to know that fast-growing feet will have proper fitting shoes.

Marilyn Bettenhausen, Carla Lind, Karen Broz and Bob Broz have all volunteered to help with the “daily work” around The Wardrobe – sorting, hanging, and selling clothing. Linda Reed Brown works nearly every Referral Tuesday, helping those most in need get clothing and shoes once a month. We share the work on the 5th Wednesdays with Rock Bridge Christian Church.

Our next work day is **Wednesday, April 29; the hours are 11-2**. If you are interested in working all of the 3 hours or a shift from 11-12:30 or 12:30-2, get in touch with Marilyn, Linda, or Karen and we can answer questions or give you the vital information.

Food Generosity Box—April

- 167 meals of turkey potpie at Loaves & Fishes on April 6 (turkey was left-over from our own Thanksgiving dinner) and thanks to a special donor for providing the biscuits, veggies, and gravy mix
- 172# of shelf-stable food to the Fifth Street Christian Church Food Pantry

Mother's Day & Blanket Sunday is May 10th

Church World Service blankets are about more than warmth – they are about showing someone they are seen, loved, and not alone.

Just \$10 will buy a CWS warm winter blanket and ship it anywhere in the world; these are tough insulated and long-lasting for frigid climates or extreme weather A Blanket Bundle of just \$60 will provide 3 wool and 3 fleece CWS blankets to families recovering from a house fire, a storm, or housing crisis (personal, immigrant, or refugee).

Olivet... be the warmth, be the hope, be a MASSIVE bundle of love!



News From Our Partner: Job Point

Olivet has been a funding partner with Job Point for a number of years now, most recently in March when we were able to send our budgeted 2025 grant of \$550!

Job Point is celebrating 60 years of service this year. In those 60 years, more than 40,000 Missourians have found employment success, dozens of homes have been built and multiple generations of families have thrived. Their skills training and certificate courses include: certified nursing assistant office technology, HVAC, highway maintenance and repair, retail sale, carpentry, commercial driver license training and a new hair braiding program.

In 2025, they served 405 people; in partnership with the City of Columbia and Ameren Missouri students began construction on a new single-family home to be finished this summer; in partnership with Columbia Housing Authority students completed construction on a new home; the Solar Jobs Pathway Initiative expanded to offer an add-on credential for Youth-Build Carpentry students; rising high school junior and seniors living with disabilities participated in the Summer Work Experience for 6 weeks; and much more.

OLIVET CHRISTIAN CHURCH BOARD MEETING

MARCH 16, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

Present:

Officers: Justin Walensky, John Cunning

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

Staff Members: Reverend Hannah Ryan, Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell

Treasurer: Jason Enright

The March 16, 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 .

The minutes for February 2026 board meeting were reviewed. Carolyn Henry moved to approve the minutes; Rockie Alden seconded the motion, motion passed.

Financial Reports

Finance Committee report:

- Still waiting for some reports for February
- Awaiting updated statements for 2024 and 2025 statements for Permanent Fund.
- Updated statements for 2025 will impact 2026 statements.
- The Outreach Team was not fully funded in 2025. That was corrected this week. This fulfilled our obligations to several local charitable organizations.
- Some other funds were not fully funded. This is being corrected.
- Some members who prepaid their annual giving for 2026 at the close of 2025 were placed in the wrong year – that has been largely corrected.
- Cleaning up several errors in the 2025 reports as well as some categories for QuickBooks. This should be completed by the April board meeting.
- Working on a simplified report that will be easier to read in addition to the more comprehensive reports.
- Working to streamline some processes.

- Working with the bank to auto pay bills when possible.
- The team's goal is to have everything cleaned up by the end of the first quarter.

Minister Reports

Reverend Natalie Dixon Crewell

- The past month has been very busy.
- The Grace Expansion Team (GET) will meet on March 22 to review survey results and comments and plan the next steps in the process.
- Pastoral care has been busy and included Bill Russel's funeral.
- Hung rope in the sanctuary to "our tell us what is good" items.
- The sabbatical grant application has been submitted. We will know in August if the grant has been approved.
- Almost 70 people attended the talent show.
- This coming Saturday, the church building will be used to host a town hall meeting. Hosted by Missouri Jobs for Justice.
- The Mennonite Mission for Peace and Justice has invited Natalie to attend a civil rights pilgrimage next month.

Reverend Hannah Ryan

- We had a good Ash Wednesday service.
- Twelve children and several adults helped serve over 40 guests at the Angel Tree dinner
- Two girls have started baptism classes.
- Hannah has attended several Finance Team meetings.
- The new Vision Team met in the past month.
- Met and spent time with a Global ministries' missionary
- Attended a Regional Board meeting
- Olivet will partner with Millersburg Christian Church for the Good Friday service.
- The Easter egg hunt has been planned.
- Hannah is taking a day off on April 19. Natalie and Hannah will both be gone that Sunday. Pulpit supply is all arranged.

(cont'd on p4)

New Business

- Do we have any demographics on new people visiting and attending Olivet?
 - ◇ Large group comes from Old Hawthorn area
 - ◇ Many came from churches with more restrictive backgrounds
 - ◇ Many have commented that the welcome was warm and real at Olivet
 - ◇ Many are aged 50-65
 - ◇ Some visitors are from Broadway Christian Church
 - ◇ Visitors are very positive of their experience in visiting Olivet.
 - ◇ A suggestion was made to create a photo board with names of new people since the directory was printed.

Motion to adjourn made by Joyce Mast, seconded by Rob Foss; the motion passed and the board meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Submitted by John Cunning

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

Read about our 2026 BBQ Grant Recipients

Each year, the profits from our BBQ are split evenly between the Olivet Ministry Fund and grants to local service organizations chosen by your Outreach Team. Although this will be the 68th BBQ, we don't have statistics for all those years, but we know for certain that 47 organizations and 18 OCC mission trips have received over \$105,900 from our BBQ efforts.

Following is your first introduction to this year's grant recipients – Good Dads, Inc and P.E.A.C.E. and H.O.P.E. Center for Youth. ***Watch for information about visits from these organizations on Sunday mornings in May.***

GOOD DADS, INC.

Many of the men served have encountered significant obstacles that have made it difficult to stay connected with their children and communities. Through the New Pathways for Good Dads program, fathers are presented with practical tools to strengthen communication, overcome parenting challenges, and rebuild trust. This program is made up of two classes; "Good Dads 2.0" (a 16-week class that emphasizes fatherhood skills) and "Healthy Relation-

ships Are Within My Reach" (an 8-week class that provides tools to foster stronger, more positive relationships). Through the New Pathways for Good Dads program, participants gain support from other dads, learn about child-support and co-parenting, and often see families reunited as a result of their efforts. Through the Strong Schools initiative, fathers join their children in family-centered school activities.

When fathers are able to engage in activities and conversation with their children, the children are more likely to have strong verbal skills, have fewer behavior problems in school, get better grades, and show an increase in curiosity and problem-solving skills.

P.E.A.C.E. and H.O.P.E. CENTER FOR YOUTH

Every child holds the seed of greatness inside them. Too often, those seeds go un-watered because of the challenges our young people face: poverty, broken homes, violence, or a lack of positive role models.

Every day the YOUTH CENTER is providing a safe, supportive environment where kids can learn, grow, and thrive. They provide academic support, life skills training, mentorship, and enrichment opportunities that many central Columbia children would otherwise never experience. Whether it's tutoring to strengthen their education, leadership programs that teach accountability and responsibility, or civic engagement projects where they meet local leaders and learn how their voices matter – seeds of hope, resilience, and responsibility are being planted.

The Active Learners Day Program is a structured, supportive environment for students who have been suspended, expelled, or are homeschooled. The goal is to keep students academically engaged while promoting personal growth and accountability.

After School Program: - This spring break they introduced the Spring Break Empowerment Program 2026 where they introduced new clubs and programs for ages 7-12, and in the newly opened Teen Center, ages 13-17, offering Chess Club, Podcasting, Heat transfers and branding, and the Barber Skills Building Program. They provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks during the day program, and snacks during after-school hours; all programs at the Center are completely free, with the exception of the Summer Program.

**Saturday, May 2**

9:30AM Property Work Day

Sunday, May 3 - 5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

9:00AM Adult Book Study

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder

9:30AM Fellowship Time

10:30AM Worship

11:45AM Finance Team

Monday, May 4

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)

1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)

4:00PM Loaves & Fishes

Tuesday, May 5

10:00AM Grief Support Group

Wednesday, May 6

6:30PM Chime Choir

7:00PM Choir

Friday, May 8

5:30PM Cub Scout overnight onsite

Sunday, May 10 - 6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER[Mothers Day](#)[Blanket Sunday Special Offering](#)

9:00AM Adult Book Study

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder

9:30AM Fellowship Time

10:30AM Worship

Monday, May 11

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)

1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)

Wednesday, May 13

6:30PM Chime Choir

7:00PM Choir

Sunday, May 17 - ASCENSION OF THE LORD SUNDAY

9:00AM Adult Book Study

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder

9:30AM Fellowship Time

10:30AM Worship

Monday, May 18

12:00PM Bible Study (Zoom)

1:30PM Staff Meeting (Zoom)

7:00PM Board Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, May 19

10:00AM Grief Support Group

Wednesday, May 20[Newsletter Articles Due](#)

6:30PM Chime Choir

7:00PM Choir

Sunday, May 24 - PENTECOST SUNDAY

9:30AM Fellowship Time

9:30AM JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder

10:30AM Worship

Monday, May 25[Memorial Day](#)

Church Closed - All Events Canceled

Wednesday, May 27

6:30PM Chime Choir

7:00PM Choir

Sunday, May 31 - TRINITY SUNDAY[Graduate Recognition Sunday](#)

Quarter Sunday / Hymn Sing Sunday

9:30am JYF Sunday School / Worship & Wonder

9:30am Fellowship Time

10:30am Worship

CANCELLATION: June 27th Garden Tour at the Columbia Public Schools Gifted Center

Our Garden Tour at Columbia Public Schools Gifted Center, 1010 Rangeline Street (the historic Eugene Field Elementary School) has been cancelled due to work planned for the playground there this summer. It is hoped that a new outdoor classroom might be added to this site as part of this project. We'll look to schedule a visit there at another time.

~Sustainable Living Team

Olivet Christian Church

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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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