December 2020

Olivet Connections

Making the grace of God real for people.

Psalm 126 opens with the line: *"When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream."* What does it look like to live as those who dream? The prophets, the psalmists, John the Baptist, Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph, Simeon, Anna, the shepherds and the Magi—they were all dreamers. They received, discovered, and responded to God's dreams for the world. Join us this Advent and Christmas season, as, in worship and through our various ministries and activities, we step into the mystery and awe of God's dreams and pray they shape our reality.

Angel Tree

You should have received a letter in the mail recently giving you an update and ALL the details about our Angel Tree collections. We want to provide gifts and poinsettias—important ministries of Olivet—and you can help do that by doing any of the following:

1. Go to the Target registry website and search for "Olivet Angel Tree" in the organization registry.
2. Donate to Olivet and specify your donation for "Angel Tree." Then, an Outreach volunteer can do the shopping for you. Your generous gift will not only help buy gifts for children, but will also supply a food voucher for their family and poinsettias for Olivet members who are suffering illness, are home-bound, or grieving the lost of a loved one.
3. If you *really* like to shop, contact Linda Reed Brown for a list of items that you can choose to purchase and bring to the church on **November 29th.**

Ornament Drop-Off

We may not be able to all gather in the sanctuary this Advent and Christmas season. However, we *can* bring a little bit of ourselves onto holy ground. You are invited to bring an ornament (old or new) that represents you or your family to Olivet. All the ornaments collected will be placed together on a tree in the sanctuary, so they can be viewed during our livestreamed services and we can symbolically worship together. Ornaments will be collected before and after the 10:30 AM drive-in services no later than Sunday, November 29. Ornaments will be returned on Sunday, January 10, 2021. Be sure to clearly write your name somewhere on your ornament so that we can safely return it to you.

Caroling

If you and your household would like to spread some extra holiday cheer by caroling this year, please contact Rev. Hannah. She will provide you with a name or two of church members who would like to enjoy your singing to them from their front yard.

Longest Night Service

Monday, December 21 at 7:00 PM
(Facebook/YouTube)

There's an Advent tradition of inviting people to come together for the Longest Night, a night around the time of the winter solstice, when there are more hours of darkness than light. It's a time to come together for prayers and laments, to mourn the losses and griefs of the year, to let the tears flow for the hurting places in our own lives,

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

as well as for our country and our world. The Longest Night service is a safe and sacred space to share anguish, to plead with God to remember us, to pray for justice and restoration, even to hope against hope, through our doubts and tears and fears, that "God will set things right all over the earth."

All are welcome to join in this special service via Olivet's Facebook and YouTube pages. We extend a special invitation to all who are carrying grief, anxiety, and fears during this season.

Christmas Eve
Thursday, December 24

5:00 PM
Simple Candlelight Service
(Drive-in at Olivet Christian Church)
A very short drive-in service of scripture and candle-lighting will be held in Olivet's parking lot. Communion, liturgy, and candles will be provided. Enjoy Olivet's beautiful outdoor spaces, decorated for the holidays, and wish a socially-distant "Merry Christmas" to your Olivet family.

6:00-6:30 PM
Communion pick-up
(Olivet Christian Church circle drive)
If you'd like to pick up pre-packaged communion to take home with you to use during our virtual service, you are welcome to drop by the church 6:00-6:30 PM. Pull up to the circle drive and someone will hand you communion through the window of your vehicle. (We will also be handing out extra communion packages on Sunday, December 20th from 10:00-10:30 AM.)

7:00 PM
Virtual Traditional Service
(Facebook/YouTube)
Join us for a more traditional worship service on Facebook or YouTube. Our choir members will offer some of our favorite carols, we'll hear words of comfort and hope from Holy Scriptures, and participate in communion from our homes.

COVID-19 Worship Update

It's getting cold outside and yet COVID-19 cases are on the rise, so we're having to make some shifts to Sunday's worship services. As we continue to seek ways to worship our holy God that are faithful and provide much-needed connection and fellowship, we remain thankful for your flexibility, patience, and grace. Know that we—staff, Board, and many others—are working hard to provide opportunities to worship that are safe and meaningful, and together we long for the day when we will all regather in our holy space together. In the meantime, here's our plan for Advent:

Drive-In Service—Starting Sunday, November 29th, drive-in services will look a little bit different. The service will still begin at 10:30 AM and you will still be able to park in Olivet's parking lot and listen on 87.9 FM. However, the worship leaders will be broadcasting from the sanctuary, so you won't be able to see them. The other big change: you will pull up in the circle drive to pick up communion elements and a bulletin if you need them, rather than receive them at the entrance of the parking lot. This will help our volunteers to stay sheltered from any weather. Everything else—receiving communion, singing and praying together, waving to friends in other vehicles—will stay the same.

Virtual Services—Virtual services will also be different during Advent. Beginning on Sunday, November 29th, we will be recording our Sunday morning services live in the sanctuary and then uploading them by 3:00 PM in the usual Facebook and YouTube places. Here's what this means: everyone who attends either the virtual or drive-in services will be participating in the same worship *and* will hear the same musical offerings! However, because we don't have access to high internet speeds in our neck of the woods, we do ask you to be patient as you wait for the service to come online later in the day on Sunday.

Clear as mud? We know. Please reach out if you have questions. We want to make sure worship is accessible to everyone!

Olivet's Ministerial Search Team has completed the Congregational Pro-file, and now Olivet is officially on the listing of congregations in search of a called co-minister! Hooray! First of all, please extend your words of gratitude to the members of the Search Team for a job well done, and for many meetings, conversations, and piece by piece work on a document that offers candidates a picture of Olivet --- who you are, where you've been, and where you hope to go in the coming years. This was a task that involved input from many sources to complete!

The final piece was the work of the Board to craft four primary goals of the congregation so that candidates can have a grasp of what the priorities and aspirations are looking ahead. This was very focused, intentional work, and Hannah and I both were inspired by the level of thought that went into this portion of the Profile, and the time and energy Board members gave to this process. This was definitely NOT a "check the boxes" exercise, and the profile reflects the integrity of the process.

What this means is that the final draft of the Profile went to Regional Minister, Paul Koch. He has now listed Olivet on the Mid-America website as a congregation in search of a Co-Minister, and this information will appear also on the Disciples of Christ Search and Call website as of the first of December.

Candidates who are interested in being considered by the Search Team will ask that their profiles be sent to the Region, and then to Olivet, and the Search Team will begin receiving these documents electronically to begin their review process. When team members agree that they are interested in interviewing a candidate, then they will set up the zoom meeting to do so.

We will continue to keep you apprised of the progress of the Search Team, and let you know how you can support this vital ministry.

As I have reminded the Team, this is a spiritual exercise. Olivet is NOT "hiring" a new pastor; you are CALLING a covenant partner, who hopefully is led by the Holy Spirit, with a commitment to Jesus' model of compassion and justice for all of God's children. Discernment takes time, and your prayers and offers of support are very much needed and welcomed!

Members of the Search Team: Linda Cook & Rob Foss – Co-Chairs; Linda Reed Brown, Barb Fitzgerald, Linda Graue, Chalen Jackson, Joe Reeder, Eileen Sharp, Lori Valleroy.

Peace and Grace,
Rev. Coletta

To the Shawl Ministry Members,

I have been blessed to have been a recent recipient of one of your care bags. My husband and I lost our son, David. When Jackie (Glenn) arrived with the bag, we talked and Jackie did what she does so well: she brought comfort and solace. She spoke soothingly, and before long, we were able to speak of our common interests of horses and various other topics. Periodically we spoke of our relationship with God.

It wasn't until after Jackie left that we opened the care bag. I can hardly express my feelings at touching the shawl. It is a work of art! As I placed your shawl around my shoulders, I wept. I wept because I felt the hands of those of our church envelope me with loving comfort at a time when I so desperately needed it. My husband, Lynn, has his prayer patch on his table by his recliner. When I'm not wearing my shawl, it rests on my recliner.

A mere thank you seems to inadequate for such a meaningful gift you have given both of us. We are so appreciative. When this siege of COVID-19 is over, I hope to meet you in person at one of your gatherings.

God bless you and your mission. You do make God's grace real even during very difficult times.

Sincerely with Peace and Grace to each of you,
Carolyn Tatlow

Year-End Giving

Your gifts to Olivet Christian Church are gratefully acknowledged and have helped to support the work of Jesus Christ locally, regionally, and around the world.

- ✓ Olivet Children Ministries (VIRTUAL Christian Education, Vacation Bible School, etc.)
- ✓ Loaves & Fishes Soup Kitchen
- ✓ Disciples Mission Finance (Reconciliation)
- ✓ Disciples General & Mid Am Ministries
- ✓ Week of Compassion/Church World Service/ Hurricane Relief
- ✓ Olivet Hands On Ministry/Christian Education/Sustainability/Worship
- ✓ And the list goes on …….

Please consider giving TODAY and help Olivet close out the year strong. Together, we can make new and better Christ followers who influence the culture and impact the city of Columbia and the world for the glory of God.

All financial gifts/contributions to Olivet are considered charitable giving and are tax-deductible.

Due to COVID-19 last minute delivery of donations will not be an option this year, checks that are written, mailed, and postmarked in 2020 will be deductible in 2020, though they may not be received by Olivet until 2021. You also have the option of making contribution on-line Give Now! https://www.olivetchristian.org/give-now

The following options are available for giving in support of Olivet and its mission to serve Jesus Christ in today's world:

- **Cash Contributions:** December 27 is the last Sunday in 2020
- **Stock gifts:** Olivet has an investment representative who is available to accept stock transfers. Since this takes a few days to take place and there are bank holidays to take into consideration, it must be initiated at least 15 working days prior to year-end (preferably by December 8th). Contact Ken Bartley if you need more assistance or information.
- **Charitable IRA Rollovers:** For those who qualify in 2020 (at least age 70 ½), it is important for the donor to inform the church treasurer (Diane Bartley) of the transfer because Charitable IRA Rollover checks often contain no information identifying the donor.

Your Olivet contribution statements will be mailed by January 31, 2021. Statements are also available upon request by emailing the church office (olivetcc.office@gmail.com) or Diane (bartleys@missouri.edu). Statements will be sent out to the name and address that is on file in our ServantKeeper database. If you have moved recently please let the church office know your current address so we can keep our records correct.

Once again, thank you for your generous commitment to the work of Jesus Christ through Olivet Christian Church.

~Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year~

Diane Bartley, Treasurer
Ken Bartley, Finance Chair

Just when everything is bearing down on us to such an extent that we can scarcely withstand it, the Christmas message comes to tell us that all our ideas are wrong, and that what we take to be evil and dark is really good and light because it comes from God. Our eyes are at fault, that is all.

God is in the manger, wealth in poverty, light in darkness, succor in abandonment. No evil can befall us; whatever men may do to us, they cannot but serve the God who is secretly revealed as love and rules the world and our lives.

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, God Is in the Manger

Embracing the Good News for Planet Earth

Sustaining Connections…
During this time of pandemic. sustaining our connections - our relationships - with one another is likely the most desired Christmas gift. Whether you connect via email, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, cell phone or text, or simply use those old-fashioned tools – the landline or hand written card, that connection matters!

Honoring friends or family members with a gift that works toward a sustainable future…
Heifer International and Church World Service each offer special gift catalogs - www.heifer.org/catalog and https://www.bestgiftcatalog.org – that invite you to make a donation in honor of a friend or family member and create a brighter future for others by providing livestock, food production supplies, water collection and purification systems, nutrition education, care giver training and much, much more – all designed to enable persons to better provide for themselves and their families.

Closer to home -
COMOGives, sponsored by the Community Foundation of Central Missouri provides opportunities throughout December to both honor a friend and support any of 142 nonprofit organizations working to benefit people in central Missouri. Many local programs that Olivet's Outreach budget and Outreach BBQ grants help support are included here: Rainbow House, Habitat for Humanity, Room at the Inn, The Food Bank for Central and NE Missouri, Turning Point, Voluntary Action Center, The Wardrobe, plus many, many more. Go to https://comogives.com to learn more.

New to COMOGives this year is Missouri Prairie Foundation which works to protect and restore prairie and other biologically rich native grassland communities through land acquisition, management, education and research. Ecologists rank temperate grasslands as the least conserved, most threatened major terrestrial habitat on the planet. Of Missouri's original 15 million acres of prairie, fewer than 60,000 scattered unplowed acres exist. Also new this year, MPF is partnering with the US Forest Service in a new program to work toward prairie enhancement in some areas of the Cedar Creek Unit of Mark Twain National Forest here in central Missouri. MPF also promotes the use of native plants through their Grow Native! program and, through the Missouri Invasive Plant Task Force, supports the identification and control of invasive plant species. Learn more about their work at http://moprairie.org.

May you be truly blessed this Christmas season through many connections with friends, family, our church family and our wider community.

~Sustainable Living Team

Christmas Cards
We're coming up upon Christmas card season! If you would like an updated copy of the Olivet directory so you can spread holiday cheer with our church family, contact the church office.

Volunteers Needed at the VAC Gift Distribution to Families

It's easy to sign up and show up to help with delivery of family gifts through the Voluntary Action Center Holiday Program. There are a lot of slots available!

You can sign up to volunteer at the collection center, Woodcrest Church (2201 W Nifong Blvd) in December for collection and distribution at: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090f4eafab22a6fe3-vacholiday7

Make the Holidays Even More Meaningful!

Do your friends and family already have more "stuff" than they need or can use? Do you hate just giving gift cards, because you don't know what else is appropriate? Are you tired of being stressed over buying gifts?

Take part in the growing holiday tradition of giving gifts that help those in need… CHANGE A LIFE! SHARE THE JOY! TRANSFORM THE WORLD! GIVE A POWERFUL GIFT!

There are a number of organizations who urge you to consider honoring your friends, family or business associates with gifts that help struggling families lift themselves out of poverty. Won't they be surprised if you gift them with bees, pigs, propane fuel, ornaments, clothing, jewelry, coffee, chocolate, a reading class, or a share of an alpaca? Check out these possibilities:

Heifer International:
https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/index.html

The Global Fair Trade Market at Community United Methodist Church:
https://www.facebook.com/TheGlobalMarketFairTrade/
https://communityumc.net/serve/global-market
Open 10:00 AM-1:00 PM, Tuesday & Saturday.

Church World Service:
https://cwsbestgift.org/

Pine Ridge Lakota Center:
Pine Ridge will once again be providing grants to families for propane for heating and cooking. Send donations to Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center, PO Box 862, Pine Ridge, SD 57770 or go to http://www.pineridgereconciliationcenter.org/ to see other needs.

COMO Gives Campaign:
beginning Tuesday, December 1. https://comogives.com/ approximately 142 Columbia charities are listed and can use your support

Olivet Christian Church:
One more way to support and participate in Olivet.

Do you receive our weekly email Updater newsletter? Do you read our weekly Updater newsletter? In these times when we cannot gather in person weekly (and even when we can again) this is an important way we try to keep you updated on Olivet Church events and activities. We provide you with our monthly Olivet Connections newsletter but sometimes dates and times are changed, and new activities & events are created before the next Olivet Connections is created and sent to you. The Updater is the best and most efficient way we know to keep you informed of all that is happening on a weekly basis. Take a few moments each week to read it so you, too, will be in the know and up-to-date on "everything Olivet"!

December Calendar of Events & Activities

Sunday, December 6
2nd Sunday of Advent
10:30 AM Drive-in Worship
3:00 PM Worship (FaceBook & YouTube)
3:30 PM Youth Group (Zoom)

Monday, December 7
12:00 PM Bible Study (Zoom)
1:30 PM Staff Mtg. (Zoom)
4:15 PM Loaves & Fishes

Sunday, December 13
3rd Sunday in Advent
10:30 AM Drive-in Worship
3:00 PM Worship (FaceBook & YouTube)
3:30 PM Youth Group (Zoom)

Monday, December 14
12:00 PM Bible Study (Zoom)
1:30 PM Staff Mtg. (Zoom
7:00 PM Board Mtg. (Zoom)

Wednesday, December 16
Newsletter Articles Due

Sunday, December 20
4th Sunday in Advent
10:00 AM Communion Pick-up (Circle drive)
3:00 PM Worship (FaceBook & YouTube)
3:30 PM Youth Group (Zoom)

Monday, December 21
1st Day of Winter
12:00 PM Bible Study (Zoom)
1:30 PM Staff Mtg. (Zoom)
7:00 PM Longest Night Service (YouTube)

Tuesday, December 22
Newsletter Articles Mailed

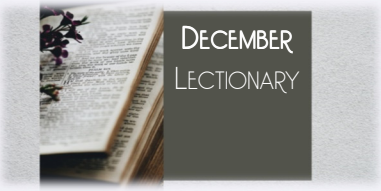
Thursday, December 24
Christmas Eve
5:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Drive-in)
6:00 PM Communion Pick-up (Circle drive)
7:00 PM Christmas Eve Traditional Service (FaceBook & YouTube)

Thursday, December 25
Christmas Day
Office Closed

Sunday, December 27
1st Sunday after Christmas
10:30 AM Drive-in Worship
3:00 PM Worship (FaceBook & YouTube)
3:30 PM Youth Group (Zoom)

Monday, December 28
12:00 PM Bible Study (Zoom)
1:30 PM Staff Mtg. (Zoom)

Thursday, December 31
New Year's Eve
Church Office Closed



December 6
2nd Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

December 13
3rd Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 20
4th Sunday of Advent
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:46b-55
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

December 24
Christmas Eve
Isaiah 9:27
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

December 27
1st Sunday after Christmas
Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40

Olivet Christian Church
1991 S Olivet Rd
Columbia MO 65201

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFITORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 84
COLUMBIA MO

Olivet Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

Office Hours:
Office is temporarily closed
Please contact us via email
(olivetcc.office@gmail.com) or phone

Office Phone:
573.442.0336

Temporary Phone:
636-649-5606

Web:
www.olivetchristian.org

Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/OlivetChristianChurch

Calendar:
https://www.olivetchristian.org/calendar

Staff:
Coletta Eichenberger
Interim Ministry Consultant

Hannah Ryan
Associate Pastor

Adriene Floyd
Music Coordinator/Accompanist

Angela Carlson
Choral Director

Becky Teacutter
Administrative Office Coordinator