

THE OLIVE PRESS



the quarterly newsletter of
Olivet Lutheran Church

5840 Monroe Street • Sylvania, OH 43560 • www.olivetsylvania.org



Holy Pepperoni is a new Bible study for working adults, offering a weekly opportunity for multi-generational connection.

Dear People of Olivet:

Did you know the 2020 pandemic increased worship participation? It seems counterintuitive. We all remember this house of worship being closed and attendance being limited to ensure safe distancing. But think about it again. Has there been a Sunday you were under the weather—or perhaps recovering from surgery—when in-person attendance was not possible, but you were able to connect online? Are there summer weekends you're at the cottage, but you tune in from the lake? Do you travel extensively or work on weekends but catch a particular service online because of a baptism, exceptional music, or a provocative sermon? Did you join the congregation during the pandemic because of what you experienced online?

Our worship services' YouTube "views" are remarkably consistent. An average of 100 "devices" connect to worship weekly, bringing our annual worship engagement to higher levels (2000 more!!) than before the pandemic. I continue to learn more about who these worshipers are...

This fall, with the support of **Amy Dixon** as one of our Body Shop (confirmation curriculum) teachers, I have scooped up **parents of junior high students** for a shared meal and monthly conversation. At our most recent gathering, I learned these two bonuses of online worship:

- If you play **travel sports**, you can tune in to worship on the ride home!
- If you **worship from home** with your parents, you can ask questions during the service without being shushed by your parents (and without your parents getting sideways glances from other worshipers).

Olivet families are doing both!

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Our Vision

Celebrating the power of the Holy Spirit by inviting all people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

DEC 2025 - FEB 2026

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2025 Congregational Council

President	Ed Rupley
Vice President	Linda Gubbe
Secretary	Amber Espinosa
Treasurer	Bill Cook
Financial Secretary	Mike Vince

Members

Janet Beilstein Dave Bell
Noel Heisler Dave Hupp
Kent Jackman Mike Linehan
Steve Mierzejewski
Jennifer Quackenbush
Steve Sanderson

Pastor

Rev. Melissa Micham, Lead Pastor

Welcome to Worship

Of course, worship in person is usually best. The music sounds better. You get to enjoy the connection of human community. During the sacred weeks of Advent, when we raise our plea for Christ to come among us again, I hope you make in-person worship a priority. Please note these upcoming Sundays with ONE worship service:

- First Sunday of Advent & **Advent Festival** | Sunday, November 30 @ 10 a.m. in the Christian Life Center
- **Christmas Cantata** | Sunday, December 21 @ 10 a.m. in the sanctuary (invite friends & neighbors!) [see page 7 for details]
- First Sunday of Christmas, **December 28** @ 10 a.m. in the sanctuary
- Second Sunday of Christmas, **January 4** @ 10 a.m. in the sanctuary
- Worship & **Annual Meeting** | Sunday, January 25 @ 10 a.m. in the Christian Life Center

See you in worship!

Pastor Melissa Micham

Lead Pastor

OLIVET REWIND | AUGUST - NOVEMBER



LUTHERANS FROM BEIT SAHOUR, PALESTINE VISIT OLIVET AUGUST 31

Amer, Laila, and their infant daughter, Lia Hannunah, visited Olivet on August 31 and explained the situation in their home city of Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem. Amer is an employee of Alternative Tourism Group, an organization under the auspices of the Lutheran Church in Beit Sahour. The collapse of tourism in their home region due to the ongoing war has had a devastating impact on many Christian families who depend on the sale of hand-carved olivewood religious items. Amer visits churches to sell these handmade olivewood items on behalf of the affected families.



five families in the region who have been gravely impacted. Sales of the olivewood carvings were nearly \$3,900. Olivet's Global Mission Team purchased a nativity set that is displayed in the glass case in the atrium next to the Global Mission bulletin board. If you did not have a chance to purchase items, scan the QR code linking you to their Etsy shop. There are also cards on the bulletin board for those of you who purchased gifts. Two members of Olivet purchased a large cross which is displayed above the "tech" room in the Christian Life Center.

PASTOR MELISSA MICHAM INSTALLED AS OLIVET'S NEW LEAD SEPTEMBER 9

The sanctuary was filled with the Olivet community, Lutheran ministers, Pastor Melissa's family, and glorious music on Tuesday evening, September 9, as Pastor Melissa was installed as Olivet's Lead Pastor. We celebrate the work God has done through Pastor Melissa's ministry with the people of Olivet. We look forward to all that is to come with her continued leadership!



GOLDEN HOUR GALA SHINES BRIGHT AT OLIVET OCTOBER 18

The Christian Life Center was transformed into an elegant ballroom on October 18 as Olivet hosted nearly 150 guests for the annual Golden Hour Gala, benefiting Urban Wholistics Farms. More than 25 Olivet volunteers worked tirelessly to create a memorable evening—and stayed to restore the space in time for The Vine service the next morning. The Olivet community was a major contributor for the event which raised over \$10,000 in support of Urban Wholistics Farms' summer youth programming. Founder Sonia Flunder-McNair expressed heartfelt appreciation for the generosity and spirit of the Olivet congregation, noting that our partnership played a key role in the gala's success. We're delighted



that the Golden Hour Gala will continue as an annual tradition at Olivet—mark your calendars for next year's event on October 17, 2026!

HALLOWEEN HIKE AT OLANDER OCTOBER 25

This year, Olivet hosted a table at Olander Park's annual Halloween Hike on October 25. The event gives kids a chance to walk around the park in costume and collect candy from volunteers. It's estimated that over 1500 people attended this year! Whether you donated candy, decorated Olivet's table, prepared flyers, or passed out goodies the day of, thank you for helping make Olivet's participation in this event a success. (Right) Abigail and Emily Hepner dressed as Garfield and Vito as part of Olivet's table theme of Vito's Pizzeria.



FALL BIBLE WORKSHOP FOR KIDS NOVEMBER 10

Five elementary-aged kids explored the Bible with Pastor Melissa on a snowy Monday evening in November. Olivet hosts an annual fall Bible Workshop for children in grades 3, 4 and 5, to learn how the Bible came to be, what's in the Bible, and what we do with the Bible.

To learn more about Faith Formation at Olivet Lutheran Church, please contact Becky Cress at rcress@olivetsylvania.org.

AROUND OLIVET

NEW “GROWING IN FAITH” GRADUATE, BECKY CRESS!



Lay members are integral to healthy discipleship in our churches and communities. *Growing in Faith*, formerly known as *Diakonia*, is a ministry within the ELCA and sponsored at the synod level which is committed to fostering learning environments for followers of Jesus to strengthen and enrich their faith. Over two years, participants gather via Zoom for twelve 5-week classes. Meeting once a week, each class is three hours long and involves a combination of instruction, discussion, and experiential learning. Becky did a LOT of homework!

Classes taken:

Worship Matters
Christianity in a Lutheran Key
Introduction to the Old Testament
Introduction to the New Testament
Lutheran Creeds & Confessions
Living as a Christian in the World

Healthy Congregation Dynamics
Pastoral Care
Cultural Diversity/Anti-bias Training
Church History
Communicating the Gospel
Christian Ethics

More than a course of study, *Growing in Faith* is a chance to grow spiritually and to experience Christian community with others across the region. Many of the students followed the same courses throughout the two-year period, allowing them to get to know each other, pray together, and support each other in love and affection. If you are interested in growing your own faith, Becky would be happy to share her experiences with you and to connect you with the *Growing in Faith* community.

RAIDEN & JORDAN JOURNEY TO SOUTHERN BORDER

By publication of this Olive Press, Jordan and Raiden Browning will have returned from their journey to the borderlands in partnership with Border Servant Corps (BSC) to learn about the current reality of immigration through a faith lens. Many of us look forward to learning from their experience. A send off was held at Olivet's November 2 worship service ahead of their November 5 departure. Jordan and Raiden traveled with a group comprised of Andrew Wells and Pastor Chris Hanley (Glenwood Lutheran), Pastor Shawn & Megan O'Brien and Connor Kacenjar (St. John Lutheran - Williston), Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, Pastor Sarah Schaaf and Calla Gilson Burns (NWOS Synod Staff). The planned itinerary was designed to explore the infrastructure, legal systems and on-the-ground work that impact immigration at the US southern border. It also included the opportunity to visit BSC partner shelters on the Mexican side of the border who are responding to the current immigration situation in faithful ways.

MEET OUR ADOPTED YAGM

In the last Olive Press we announced that Olivet was planning to "adopt" one of the 2025/2026 Young Adults in Global Mission. That person is Reagan White, who will be walking alongside Casa Fuente, a family migrant shelter, in Mexico. Reagan is 22 years old and originally from South Carolina. She graduated from the College of Charleston this past spring and hopes to earn her PhD in clinical psychology sometime in the future. We will be supporting Reagan spiritually, which besides having her in our prayers might include letters or drawings from Sunday School and Body Shop classes, or sending a care package here and there. It will



provide us at Olivet an opportunity to walk with her and understand her experience through her periodic newsletters and in other ways. Scan the QR code to read Reagan's first newsletter!



EQUITY ARTWORK TEAM

As part of the Congregational Mission Group, we have installed part one of the Equity Art Wall in the Adult Ed Room! Please stop in and enjoy the images that reflect the love, justice, and mercy of Jesus. If you share an interest in this mission, we welcome you to our vibrant group to help select the art for part two.

We meet 'as needed' since most of our 'work' is done at home scrolling websites for equity-centered art. Please contact any team member: Nancy Hamilton, Heidi Lohrmann, and Becky Cress.



Becky Cress helped pass out candy to OCNS trick-or-treaters.

contact Jennifer Crooks, OCNS Director, for further information at 419-882-4616 or ocns@bex.net.

NEW OLIVET WEBSITE

new look, same name | www.olivetsylvania.org

Olivet has launched our new website! The launch comes after nearly a year of collecting feedback, researching, snapping new photos, and testing. It has very much been a community effort, and we are grateful to everyone who had a hand in contributing to it.

We hope you'll find the new website to be a concise, helpful, and easy-to-navigate resource. (And be sure to check out the online calendar!)

As you explore the new website, feedback is welcomed. Feedback can be sent to Sara Martin at communications@olivetsylvania.org.



OLIVET'S NEXT DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS HIRED!

Olivet's HR Team is excited to announce Amie McGee has been hired as Olivet's next Director of Operations! With more than 20 years of operations experience, Amie has spent her career improving systems, supporting teams, and helping keep behind-the-scenes operations running smoothly. Amie will begin training with Shannon Walker on December 1 and assume the role after Shannon's last day on January 15. Welcome to Olivet, Amie!

OLIVET CHRISTIAN NURSERY SCHOOL FALL UPDATE

What a busy fall it has been for OCNS, and now the holidays are in full swing!! The children experienced the excitement of beginning a new school year and making new friends as they explored colors, shapes, and the beauty of Fall. They even spent a day at the farm with the Gust family, and trick-or-treated through the church. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this fun event!

The students will have their first singing performance in November as they wish their families a Happy Thanksgiving. Christmas will bring stories of the Baby Jesus' birth, a flurry of gift making and the excitement of a visit from Santa.

The OCNS curriculum aligns with the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards which nurtures the children's growth in all developmental domains. Tours and registration for the 2026-2027 school year will begin in January. Please contact Jennifer Crooks, OCNS Director, for further information at 419-882-4616 or ocns@bex.net.

HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES NOW AVAILABLE



Olivet has hearing assistance devices available in the sanctuary and the Christian Life Center. For people **with** hearing aids, the device, which is worn around your neck, amplifies sound to your hearing aids. For people **without** hearing aids, bring your own corded headphones or earbuds to plug in. Please see an usher at either service for assistance.

UPCOMING EVENTS

(www.olivetsylvania.org/calendar)

DECEMBER

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

Advent by Candlelight | 7 PM | sanctuary

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

Parents' Night Out | 5-8 PM | page [8]

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

Euchre | 7 PM | Teen Room

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

Handbell Choir Concert | 7 PM | sanctuary

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

Council meeting | 7 PM | Adult Ed Rm

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19

Youth & Young Adult Christmas Party
6-8 PM | Teen Room | page [8]

*SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

Christmas Cantata | 10 AM | sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve services

4 PM (Christian Life Center)

7 PM (sanctuary) | **9 PM** (sanctuary)
livestream available

THU & FRI, DECEMBER 25 & 26

Church office closed

*SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

10 AM worship | sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31

Church office open 8:30 AM - 2 PM

JANUARY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1

Church office closed

*SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

10 AM worship | sanctuary
Chili Cookoff | 11-1 | Christian Life Center

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

Euchre | 7 PM | Teen Room

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

Crafting & Scrapbooking Day
8 AM-6 PM | Christian Life Center

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

Council meeting | 7 PM | Adult Ed Rm

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

MLK service at Glenwood Lutheran | 3 PM

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

Blood Drive | 12-6 PM | Christian Life Center

*SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

Worship & annual meeting | 10 AM | CLC

FEBRUARY

FRI-SUN, FEBRUARY 6-8

Body Shop Retreat | Camp Storer | page [8]

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Euchre | 7 PM | Teen Room

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Adulting 101 | 5 - 7 PM | Teen Room
Sexual Health & Family Planning

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner | 5-7 PM
Christian Life Center

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Ash Wednesday

Drive-thru ashes | 12-1 PM
Worship service | 7 PM | sanctuary

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Council meeting | 7 PM | Adult Ed Rm

* denotes **one combined worship service** at 10 AM

2026 SAVE THE DATES

WOMEN'S RETREAT. Sat-Sun March 7-8

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA. Sat, March 21

EASTER CANTATA. Sun, March 22 at 10 AM

FIRST COMMUNION RECOGNITION.

Palm Sunday, March 29

EARTH HEROES UNITE: LOVE YOUR MOTHER EARTH.

Sat, April 11

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL. Mon-Fri, June 15-19

ADVENT MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

Advent by Candlelight: The Bells of Advent

Thursday, Dec 4 at 7 PM (sanctuary)
Ladies tea to follow in the
Christian Life Center

Christmas Handbell Choir Concert

Sunday, Dec 14 at 7 PM (sanctuary)

A Weary World Rejoices: A Christmas Cantata

Sunday, Dec 21 at 10 AM (sanctuary)

REJOICE & JUBILEE HANDBELL CHOIRS

We have been working hard toward our Handbell Concert at Olivet on December 14. We have beautiful sacred and fun Christmas music with a special soloist and also a duet. We are thrilled our Olivet Choir will join us on one of the numbers. Sarah Lewis will have beautiful Christmas piano music prior to our concert. Mark your calendars and invite your friends and family. It's a beautiful way to start the Advent/Christmas season.

We are thrilled to have Ross Sendi back ringing in Rejoice and Jubilee Handbell Choirs again. WELCOME BACK, ROSS!!!

God bless you all!

Carol Miller Handbell Choirs Director
419-283-1895 | carolamiller5@hotmail.com

CELEBRATION FOR PASTOR LEE ANN POMRENKE'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION



(Left to right) Stan and Marilyn Machosky with their daughter, Pastor Lee Ann Pomrenke, and Bishop Daniel Beaudoin at a ministry celebration for Lee Ann in September.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21
IN THE ATRIUM
AFTER 10 AM SERVICE

This year Pastor Lee Ann Pomrenke celebrates the 20th anniversary of her call to Ordination. Let us join together in thanking God for calling this faithful servant into rostered ministry.

Please join us in a special recognition celebration and expression of appreciation on Sunday, December 21 in the atrium following the 10 AM Christmas cantata service. See everyone there!

CHILI COOKOFF

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4
11 AM - 1 PM IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER

Everyone is invited to join us for ice cream sundaes and a chili cookoff! Plain spaghetti will be available for youth. Free will offering proceeds to benefit the Family Ministries Support Team.



YOUTH & FAMILIES

NURSERY.

Available for children ages infant through 3 years during worship services.

SUNDAY SCHOOL. 10:10-10:55 AM

Spark. Ages 3 - 2nd grade; Spark Room

Club 345. Grades 3-5; Clubhouse

NOTE: No Sunday School on **12/28 or 1/4**

FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION.

Sundays, Feb 22 & Mar 1 | 10:10-11 AM

Grades 3-5

TEEN BIBLE STUDY.

10:10-10:55 AM | Grades 8-12; Adult Ed Rm.

Upcoming date: December 7

SCHEDULE & LOCATION CHANGE

Teen Bible Study is shifting to once a month at Sylvania Diner (5623 W Alexis Rd) after the 11 AM service. Lunch will be provided. **First date is February 15, 2026.**

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

Parents' Night Out

Saturday, December 6 | 5-8 PM

Parents! Take an evening off from the kids to enjoy a quiet dinner or do your holiday shopping. The Youth & Family Support Ministry will provide a fun, safe drop-in space to leave kids ages 3 years-5th grade. Kids will have the opportunity to play games, decorate cookies, and watch a movie! Pizza will be served for dinner at 5:30pm. RSVP to Becky at rcress@olivetsylvania.com or 419-464-2964.

Youth & Young Adults Christmas Party

Friday, December 19 | 6-8 PM | Teen Room
High school and college students are invited to join in games, merriment, and a white elephant gift exchange! Dinner provided with an RSVP. Invite your friends!

MLK Day Lock-in

Do you care about social justice and racial equity? Join Becky in attending the Martin Luther King, Jr. event at Glenwood Lutheran Church in Toledo at 3 PM on Sunday, January 18. Following the event, high schoolers are invited to a High School Lock-in at Olivet Sunday-Monday (MLK Day)! Play games, watch movies, eat snacks, and have time to just be yourselves. RSVP to Becky at 419-464-2964.

Follow-along art project | February date TBD

BODY SHOP. 12-2 PM | Teen Room

Upcoming Dates:

December 7, February 1 & 22

Scrapbooking Fundraiser

is taking place **Saturday, January 10** to raise funds for the ELCA 2027 Youth & Young Adult Gatherings in Minneapolis, MN. Anyone interested in or wanting to support those attending the Gathering is encouraged to volunteer!

Body Shop Retreat

February 6-9 | Camp Storer, Jackson, MI

Body Shop Parents' Group

Meets monthly for lunch & conversation during Body Shop classes.

12:30 - 2 PM | Next meeting: Feb 1 (location TBD)



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW CONFIRMANDS!

On Sunday, October 26, four of Olivet's young people shared their statements of faith with the congregation and affirmed their baptisms in the rite of confirmation. One of our young adults also affirmed their baptism! Please continue to hold these young people in your prayers, as their Christian faith matures: Addie Ruddy, CC Dent, Gavin Owen, Viktoria Pomrenke, and Blaine Schultz.

MINISTER SPOTLIGHT

Ministers are everyone who responds to God's call to care for God's people and creation.



Get to Know Shannon Walker

by **Sara Martin** Communications Specialist

It was Labor Day 2003. Shannon Walker and her husband, Skip, were at a family Labor Day picnic with Skip's cousin and his wife, Craig and Chrysanne Timm. Shannon had recently been laid off from her operations manager position at Dillard's (formerly Lion Store) where she'd been climbing the retail management ladder for 26 years. Due to stressful conditions in the company, Shannon was ready for a change and knew God had something else in mind for her. Aware of her job loss, Chrysanne approached Shannon at the picnic about a job opening at Olivet Lutheran Church where she served as pastor—an opening for the position of Director of Operations. After three rounds of interviews to confirm her optimal fit for the position, Shannon was welcomed on staff at Olivet on October 1, 2003, beginning her "second career" that would span 22 years. As her retirement on January 15, 2026 approaches, we've asked Shannon to give us a glimpse into her role as Director of Operations and what her years at Olivet have meant to her.

In simplest terms, the role of the Director of Operations is to lead the administrative and operational functions of our church. This includes supporting our pastors, staff, and volunteers; handling day-to-day concerns related to Olivet's building, finances, human resources, and administration; managing relationships with vendors; and creating a welcoming and well-managed environment. Shannon does it all with excellence and care.

"Every day of the week has a flavor to it, and that's what makes it really rewarding," Shannon shared. "You never know who you're going to help, what you're going to tackle, or what problems are going to come your way. If you're lucky, you've solved a few of them by the end of the day, or at least have a plan. I like the challenge of that."

Over the last 22 years, Shannon has worked alongside numerous pastors, volunteers, and vendors on many major endeavors around the church. Six months into starting her position at Olivet, Shannon became the on-site liaison between church leadership and the foreman during the Christian Life Center's construction (complete with her own hard hat). She's seen Olivet's food ministries expand from a cupboard of canned goods in the kitchen to three major feeding ministries. A more recent project Shannon was ecstatic to see completed was the restrooms renovation in the main hallway by the food pantry.

When asked to describe her job, Shannon didn't describe it as being a job, but rather a ministry. Beyond staff and church volunteers, Shannon knows almost the entire congregation and has developed deep friendships with many over the years. She treasures the children and staff who fill the building each day. She attributes her success in her position to her husband, Skip, and all of his support whether she needed to be connected to work outside office hours, or helping right by Shannon's side during water leak emergencies.

A member of the Catholic faith and St. Clement Parish, Shannon says "[working at Olivet] has given me a whole new outlook on faith and religion—just the interaction of different religions together, and how we all fall under the Christian umbrella." In her 22 years of ministry at Olivet, she's been able to sit with individuals made to feel like outsiders in their own faith traditions and extend a warm welcome to them.

As projects have been checked off the list and Olivet has been transitioning into a new season of pastoral leadership, Shannon felt ready to begin planning for her retirement. With an exciting trip to New Zealand and Australia on the calendar, she was able to set a retirement date and begin the task of preparing for who would fill her role after her. Although her Director of Operations title will be passed on to another individual, Shannon plans to remain involved in her favorite ministries at Olivet after retirement. "I hope to be serving meals at the curb until I can't walk anymore," she said. "That's my favorite part of Daily Bread, is seeing people as they pull up." She hopes Olivet's pastoral team will continue developing the congregation into a community that is inclusive and known by all for its ministries.

Thank you, Shannon, for your steadfast dedication and compassionate ministry to the people of Olivet and to our community these last 22 wonderful years.



Shannon (center) poses with Olivet Christian School director and teacher, Jennifer Crooks, and teacher Melissa Fuller. Greeting preschool students and their families as they arrive each morning is a favorite part of the workday for Shannon.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES featuring Bookworms

When Cynthia Fett and her husband, Greg, first joined Olivet in 2004, she was looking for a place to connect with other women in the church. Cynthia had enjoyed being part of a women's book club at their former church in Fort Wayne, Indiana, but when the book club grew too large, it split into two groups—causing rifts in many friendships. Cynthia envisioned starting a women's book club at Olivet that would maintain a stable size where close relationships could be fostered.

In 2006, after discussing her idea with Pastor Chrysanne Timm, Olivet's women's book club officially began. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2026, "Bookworms" (named by original member Judi Paul) remains an active group of women readers, and an example of how vital small groups are to creating community within larger congregations.

Small groups add richness to our spiritual lives and offer a chance to engage with others you may not normally cross paths with on a Sunday morning. They are a place to engage in a favorite activity, utilize special skills, learn something new, or make an impact in the world—all while getting to know and become known by others.

Olivet's Congregational Mission Emphasis, one of three current focuses of Olivet's mission, aims to create a safer place for growing, listening and loving, in part by "address[ing] social fragmentation by creating opportunities for people of all ages to connect and reconnect." Small groups are prime places where these opportunities are created!

Group Example: A Small (but Mighty) Group in Action

Marilyn Machosky has been part of Bookworms since its beginning. She and her husband, Stan, joined Olivet around the same time as the Fetts. Marilyn, a teacher at the time and avid reader, found it challenging to read during the school year between teaching and raising three children. When she heard about Bookworms, she thought it would be a great way to push herself to read at least one book a month, plus get plugged into the community at her new church home. Twenty years later, Marilyn is still an active Bookworms participant with many treasured memories of the group from over the years.



This past spring, Bookworms gathered at Finch & Fern Book Co. in Downtown Sylvania for their monthly meeting.

Since it began, Bookworms has read more than 180 titles from a multitude of genres. Each month when they meet, readers bring groceries to contribute to Olivet's food pantry. During meetings, they discuss a book selected by another group member and tangibly engage with the material be it through an activity, food, or visit to a related location.

As an intentionally small group, Bookworms has been able to build a close-knit sense of community. They've taken Bookworms to nursing homes to include members no longer able to travel. A book shower was held in honor of Marilyn Machosky's first grandbaby. A book exchange takes place each Christmas at a group member's home. In this smaller context, the women of Bookworms are able to personally minister to each other and grow together.

A Place for Everyone

Olivet is home to many other small groups and ministries spanning a variety of interests, skills, and passions. Grab a membership directory and browse through the entire first section detailing Olivet's many ministries, or check out the "Ministries & Groups" list available under the "Connect" tab at www.olivetsylvania.org.

Have an idea for a new small group? Ideas for enriching our church community are always welcomed. Reach out to Pastor Melissa to brainstorm possibilities, or contact Becky Cress, convener of Olivet's Congregational Mission Emphasis Team, with your small group proposal.

It's a core part of Olivet's mission to create opportunities for people of all ages to connect and reconnect. Whether it's plugging into an existing ministry or group or, like Cynthia, imagining an opportunity to lead your own, it's our prayer that everyone experiences deeper community and belonging at Olivet.

FAITH IN ACTION | GET INVOLVED



Are you looking for an opportunity to become more involved at Olivet, without overcommitting yourself?

The Garden of Peace is looking for two new trustees to help oversee our lovely Garden in 2026. Trustees serve for a three-year term and attend four brief meetings each year, as well as helping with occasional light gardening and possibly assisting with interments. It is a wonderful way to serve our Church Community and is personally very rewarding. There are always six trustees on our board, and since two must leave at the end of this year, having completed their terms, we are seeking two new volunteer trustees. New trustees will be voted into their positions at the next Congregational meeting in January 2026.

If you are interested in joining this important, although less intensive ministry, please contact any one of the current trustees: Ann Hansen, Helene Lyon, Donna Mens, Mike Linehan, Deb Shock or John Holshoe. We would be happy to discuss the Garden trustee role with you. Reach out to us in person - or use our contact information found in the Church Directory. Thank you!

MAKE A GLOBAL DIFFERENCE THIS CHRISTMAS

Are you looking for Christmas gifts to honor your friends and family? The ELCA Good Gifts catalog allows you to choose meaningful gifts that also make a tremendous impact in the world. Choose a gift from the catalog, such as a goat for a family in need, school fees and uniform for a student, or clean water access for a community. If you give online, you can print, mail, or download a card to share with your loved one at Christmas. This is a wonderful way to make a real difference in the lives of people around the world and can be a way to share your faith with your friends and family. Copies of the catalog with instructions on how to order are on the small tables inside the Christian Life Center or at the bottom of the stairs in the sanctuary.



CHRISTMAS "GIVING TREES" TO BENEFIT LOCAL FAMILIES

Starting the week of Thanksgiving, the Giving Trees will be up! Olivet has "adopted" a number of individuals through Sylvania Area Family Services and Redeemer Lutheran Church to provide Christmas gifts for. Simply select which items from the Giving Trees you'd like to contribute and return them to the church by **December 14**. Thanks for your support of this mission! For more information, please see Deb Shock.

MAKING AN IMPACT BY MEETING BASIC NEEDS

Toilet paper on the move from Olivet to Redeemer—this is what your generosity looks like! 572 rolls of toilet paper were delivered to Redeemer in October. Over 2,200 rolls of toilet paper have been delivered so far this year and the need for assistance is greater than ever. Please continue to donate as you are able. Toilet paper donations can be placed by either outhouse poster, located in the Welcome Center near the sanctuary or by the entryway to the Christian Life Center. One roll at a time we are making a difference in someone's life. Thank you!



FAITH FORMATION

YOUTH

See **Youth & Families** on **page 8** for youth faith formation opportunities.

ADULTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL. 10:10 AM in the Teen Room. Mike Moore leads this great Bible study using the Upper Room devotional (available freely at each entrance).

FAMILIES. TUESDAY TABLE TALKS: FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

second Tuesday of the month | 6-8 PM | light meal provided

Registration required. Childcare available. Call the church office or visit www.olivetsylvania.org/ttt to sign up.

December 2 - Word Made Flesh: A Promise Kept (The Mens' home: 4438 Vicksburg Dr.)

January 13 - Vertical & Horizontal Morality: Living a Cross-Shaped Life (Christian Life Center)

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY. Mondays at 9:30 AM | Teen Room

MEN. GUYS 'N GOSPEL. Tuesdays 7-8 AM at Panera on Central Ave.

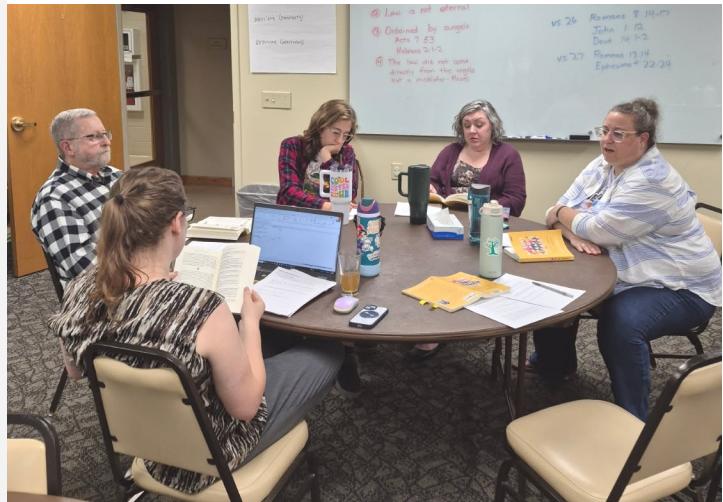
WORKING ADULTS. HOLY PEPPERONI. Wednesdays 5:30-7 PM at Jo-Jo's Pizzeria at Mayberry Sq. No gatherings on December 24 or 31, or January 21.

A THANK YOU & AN INVITATION FROM OLIVET'S ACCESSIBILITY TEAM

Thanks to all who attended the *My Body Is Not a Prayer Request* book study in October! Attendees now have a better understanding that being a more accessible church, both as a building and as a community is part of God's vision of a church for all. If you were not able to read the book, there are a few books left – see Becky to claim one! Or borrow a copy from the JEDI Library in the atrium.

The Accessibility Team will meet **Mondays, Dec 8, Jan 12, & Feb 9 at 7 PM in the Teen Room.**

All are welcome to join us!

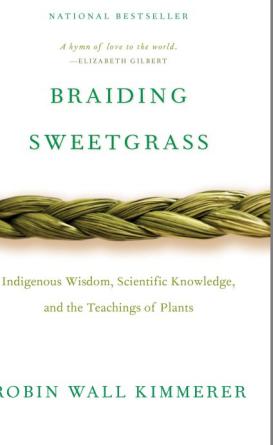


NEW IN THE JEDI LIBRARY

[located in the atrium] | by Cynthia Fett



Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants. Author Robin Wall Kimmerer, an environmental scientist and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, argues that we need to move from an extractive, consumptive mindset to one of mutual respect and partnership with the natural world. The book uses the metaphor of braiding sweetgrass to illustrate how this reconnection can be achieved through stories, ceremony, and the understanding that humans are not separate from, but part of, the Earth's living network.



HISTORY OF OLIVET PART 4

by **Tyler Martin** in collaboration with the research of Bob Mens

In Part 3, we watched as the sanctuary expanded to what we know today and looked at some of the trials Olivet faced. Now, in Part 4, we will explore Olivet's recent history that some of us may have experienced firsthand.



The newly completed main office in 1985.

In 1969, Pastor Antilla resigned and Pastor William Cox was called in 1970. Pastor Cox would serve until 1987, making him the longest serving pastor at Olivet at the time. During the 1970s, Olivet saw a high growth period, major inflation, gas rations, and the end of the Vietnam War.

Additionally, Pastor Ewald Berger would serve as associate pastor from 1978 to 1984.

Looking forward, in 1982, Pastor Dale Truscott was called as associate pastor and ended up serving until 1995. In 1983, it was determined that the old analog organ that was providing Olivet with music for the past 20 to 25 years was beyond repair and that a new organ would need to be purchased. In March of 1984, a brand new Allen Organ ADC-7000 was installed and dedicated. This computer-based digital organ continues to provide us with beautiful music each Sunday more than 40 years later!

Also during this time, it was determined that Olivet needed to expand yet again. This was not done easily, however. Due to debt that Olivet still had from a previous expansion, the congregation was split on the decision to move forward with yet another expansion. However, on July 22, 1984, a ground breaking ceremony took place for the \$500k expansion of the OCNS classrooms that we know today, a new office, the atrium, and Fellowship Hall. The construction was completed and dedicated on February 10, 1985.

When Pastor Cox retired in 1987, Pastor Bill Diehm was called in 1988 to serve as associate pastor and Pastor Truscott was called as lead pastor.

Around this time, a large number of Grace Lutheran church members transferred to Olivet. Pastor Truscott met with these new members and ensured that no conflict with Olivet grew from this.

When Pastor Diehm resigned in 1994, Pastor Chrysanne Timm was called and installed on November 20, 1994, as associate pastor. Pastor Timm would end up being the longest serving pastor in the entire history of Olivet. With the resignation of Pastor Truscott in 1995, it took until September 7, 1997 to install Pastor Marcus Lohrmann as lead pastor.

Pastor Lohrmann would only serve about 9 months at Olivet as he was elected as Bishop to the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the ELCA! Bishop Marcus was installed August 29, 1998, Pastor Timm was then called as lead pastor in late 1998, and Pastor Darrell Cousino was called as associate pastor on July 1, 1999.

Bringing Olivet into the age of technology, on June 22, 1999, Olivet registered the domain "olivetsylvania.org". Thanks to the power of the Internet Archive's "Wayback Machine", we can take a glimpse into what our website looked like on August 23, 2000. This website was created and maintained by "The Computer Coach" who was none other than Lisa Schuster, mother of current member, Michael Schuster.

While this was originally supposed to be a 4-part series, it just wasn't possible to fit everything in! Look forward to Part 5 where we explore Olivet as it enters a new millennium and reaches the major milestone of 100 years.



*(left & above)
Fellowship
Hall and
adjoining
kitchen were
completed in
1985 along
with the
construction of
the main
office, atrium,
and preschool
classrooms.*



Olivet Lutheran Church
5840 Monroe Street, Sylvania, Ohio 43560

(right) The original logo on the homepage of Olivet's website in 2000.

PRAYERS & PASTORAL ACTS

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

For those hospitalized or anticipating tests/procedures: Jan Cook (11/21), Tina Yoppolo (11/25)

For those grieving:

For those rejoicing: the marriage of Jennifer Quackenbush & Roy Glodowski (10/25)

For members who have requested prayers because of illness or recovery from injury or surgery: Janet Overmyer, Bruce Quatman, Bob Sheets, Martha Kupsky, Chuck Cook, Kelly Cipiti, Steve Hodge, Mary Glover, Hunter Morrison, Brian Hart, Marge Warnock, David Tucker, Bill Smith, Jim Rentner, Eric Adams, Pastor Nate Tuff & Kim Nielsen.

For those in assisted living, extended care, or rehabilitation: Naomi Loose and Patty Cross at Otterbein Sunset Village; Doris Fry and Arlene Holtfreter at Oakleaf Village; Fred Heintz at The Waterford at Levis Commons; Billie Iles at Mill Manor, Vermillion, OH; Brad Kupsky at Elizabeth Scott; Mae Kyser at Genacross, Wolf Creek Campus; Marjorie Lay at The Lakes of Sylvania; Matthew Wesley at Northwest Ohio Developmental Center.

For members at home in our care: Bonnie Ahrendt, Joyce Barger, Mary Carl, Hilda Hawk, Betty Moore, Marcia Morrison, Larry Sass, Marv Stephenson, Bill Willis.

Family and friends for whom prayers have been requested: Michael Bokesch, John Plenzler, Steven Hunsicker, Dave Burkhardt, Mary Jo Macaro, Barb & Bob W., Sara & Chris, Jan Kistner, Spencer, Mason DiLorenzo, Erna Pomrenke, Ukrainian people & leaders, Rita & Larry Kerstiens, Scott Reynolds, Heather Taberner, Garrett.

For those in the military: Christopher Adams, Kurt Budde, Tanner Eggers, Jarrod Konz, Jeremy Reynolds, Sarah Reynolds, Michaela Reynolds.

For our bishops: Northwestern Ohio Synod Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry, ELCA Secretary Lucille "CeCee" Mills.

For Olivet's local mission partners and international missionaries: Redeemer Lutheran Church; Salem Lutheran Church; Rev. Dr. David (and Alicia) Brondos of Augsburg Theological Seminary in Mexico City.

For Olivet's companion churches: Dodoma Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania & our companion congregation, Lwihomelo; Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Vojvodina, Serbia; Iglesia Luterana Mexicana (Mexican Lutheran Church).

PASTORAL ACTS | MID-AUGUST - NOVEMBER

Funerals:

Stephen Paluck (8/13)
Kathy Troxel (9/7)
Amy McMacken-O'Brien (11/8)

Weddings:

Joshua & Shelby Petcoff (8/22)
Jennifer Quackenbush & Roy Glodowski (10/25)

Baptism:

Sophia Carter (9/14)

PASTORAL CARE REQUESTS

For **pastoral care requests**, please contact the church office at 419-882-2077. For **pastoral emergencies**, please refer to the voicemail message. We love and care for all our members, so call and let us know your needs.

Help us keep our prayer list up to date by contacting the church office with names to add and remove as appropriate. Updates may be sent to membership@olivetsylvania.org.

GIVING

NEW TO CHARITABLE GIVING?

by Pastor Melissa Micham

In the United States, the average household contributes 2.1% of their adjusted gross income. Some give more, about a third give nothing. *If you worship at Olivet Lutheran Church, consider contributing 2% of your income to any organization whose purpose inspires you!*

Use simple math to get started. Here's an example:

- Use the amount of your paycheck: \$2,000.00.
- Move the decimal point over two spaces to the left: \$20.00.
- Give this amount to any charitable organization. (Rotate through several charities if you like!)
- Once you develop the pattern, double the amount: \$40.00.
- Be surprised by how FUN it is to contribute!

For many of us, giving at such a level simply requires us to be more mindful about our financial choices. *Often, we make a greater impact with the same income once we prioritize giving.* If you are ready to contribute to Olivet, know that even the smallest gifts enable meaningful ministry. Treat your **charitable giving** like your **retirement savings**: increase your contribution by 1% each year. You'll be amazed at what is possible!

FUN Fact: Those who make under \$100,000 give the largest percentage of their income, with those who earn less than \$20,000 leading the way!

Finally, if you need help breaking a cycle of debt, I have resources available in my office!

Olivet's Endowment Trust Fund.

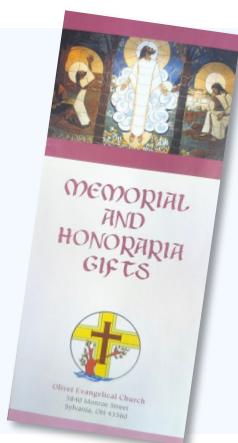
The **Outreach Ministry Endowment of Olivet** encourages generous giving to ensure the future of Olivet's local and global ministry commitments. Both cash and non-cash donations (e.g., as listed beneficiary, retirement distribution, or via charitable trust) are welcome! This fund is invested within the Toledo Community Foundation.

Once the principal of the endowment fund reaches **\$100,000**, its interest becomes a revenue source for Olivet's outreach ministries.

LEARN ABOUT MEMORIAL & HONORARIA GIFTS

A gift to Olivet's Memorial and Honoraria Fund is a way to perpetuate the memory of a loved one or honor someone in your life through a contribution that supports the ministries of Olivet Lutheran Church.

Informational brochures about memorial and honoraria gifts to Olivet can be found in the lobbies outside both worship spaces. For further information, call **Shannon Walker, Director of Operations**, at 419-882-2077 or email operations@olivetsylvania.org.





Olivet Lutheran Church
5840 Monroe Street
Sylvania, OH 43560

Church Office Hours
419-882-2077

Mon-Thu | 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Fri | 8 AM - 1 PM

Email
operations@olivetsylvania.org

Website
www.olivetsylvania.org

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Sylvania, OH
Permit No. 36

You're Invited!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

4 PM family service | Christian Life Center

7 PM | sanctuary

9 PM | sanctuary (*livestreamed*)

[see **page 6** for full Advent events schedule]

WORSHIP & ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 25

10 AM

Christian Life Center

childcare provided



Stay connected!

Sign up to receive weekly devotional +
announcement emails right to your
inbox. Scan the QR code or call the
church office to get started!