

THE OLIVE PRESS

the quarterly newsletter of
Olivet Lutheran Church

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



IT'S TIME FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

by **Rev. Dr. Robyn Provis** *Interim Pastor*

Summer fun wouldn't be the same without Vacation Bible School (VBS) so let's make some memories!

Olivet's VBS is coming up **June 16-20**, from **9 AM to 12:15 PM**. The program is for children **ages 4 through 5th grade**.

Registration is now open through June 10 at a cost of **\$10 per child** or **\$25 maximum per**

family. Older kids are encouraged to volunteer as VBS staff.

VBS can have a lasting impact on children's faith development, shaping their understanding of God and God's teachings for years to come.

It's also an effective way for churches to engage with their community and area organizations while reaching out to families and children who may not regularly attend church. Becky Cress, Olivet's Director of Children, Youth and Family Education adds, "This year's theme is **ROAD TRIP: On the go with God!** Join Scout the dog and his kitty cat sidekick as they learn that no matter where they are, God will be with them!"

Here's a more detailed look at what VBS is about:

- **Faith Formation:** VBS aims to help children develop a foundational understanding of their faith and learn about God through Bible stories, songs, and interactive activities.
- **Gospel Sharing:** A primary focus of VBS is to share the gospel message with children, teaching them about Jesus and his teachings.
- **Community Building:** VBS fosters a sense of community within the church and among the children who attend, encouraging friendships and social skills.
- **Engaging Activities:** VBS typically includes a variety of activities, such as Bible lessons, games, crafts, skits, and music, designed to be fun and interactive for children.

See you there!



Our Vision

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

June-August 2025 | Contents

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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

Pastors

Robyn Provis, Interim Pastor
Melissa Micham, Associate Pastor

WOMEN'S RETREAT MAR. 1 + 2

Olivet Women's Retreat was a wonderful weekend for 24 ladies. Our Bible study was *Finding Jesus in the Psalms* by Barb Roose. The weekend was filled with scripture, crafts, games, fellowship, and our loving Savior, Jesus. See you in 2026! - Jan Kirk & the Retreat Committee



A CHURCH FOR ALL DISABILITY AWARENESS & ACTION

a learning series in February hosted by Olivet's Accessibility Team

Our Olivet community, along with members of the greater community, gathered for a three-part seminar led by our own Kim Nielsen. Dr. Nielsen is a captivating lecturer and is the Ability Center of Greater Toledo Endowed Chair of Disability Studies at The University of Toledo. Each of the sessions was held in the Christian Life Center and attendance at each of the sessions ranged from 30-40 participants. We had closed captioning throughout the event thanks to Hunter Morrison. In session one, we explored the history of disability, and how the world has been incredibly inaccessible to so many populations. Session two had us "rethinking disability," and learning of new ways to look at disability; session three looked at "faith, church, and disability" with many fruitful discussions about how the church can be a place of harm or help.



A beginning list of suggested resources was provided to attendees to continue to explore the subject of disability. This, along with course PowerPoints and recordings, are available for everyone! Participants came from the sessions with their views of disability expanded and challenged. So many of our discussions were on how we can do more for the cause of

accessibility, in our church and in the greater world.

Interested in learning more? Contact a member of the Accessibility Team! (Becky Cress, Jennifer Quackenbush, Hunter Morrison, Kim Nielsen, Joyce Rupley, and Sarah Lewis.) Our group is exploring ways Olivet can enhance accessibility so all people can enjoy being a part of our community. Please consider joining this team and help us work towards "a church for all." God has work for us to do!

HUNGER NETWORK ADVOCACY DAY MAR. 25

Amy Dixon of Olivet and Calla Gilson, Northwestern Ohio Synod Director of Community & Global Engagement, were part of a contingent of people from Northwest Ohio who attended the ELCA Hunger Network Advocacy Day in Columbus on March 25. Four women from Salem Lutheran's Norf-end Neighbors' group were part of our individual group meeting with legislators or their staff. The four topics we discussed were support/increasing funding for school lunches, child tax credit, food banks, and fair housing reform. It was an inspiring day, where we were able to have our voices heard.



CARING FOR CREATION TEAM'S LENT LEARNING SERIES

During three Sunday sessions in Lent, Olivet members learned small things we all can do to care for our world and help preserve it for future generations. The "What We Eat" session showed us how eating plant-rich diets and buying local products can reduce food waste and keep us healthier at the same time. "Where We Live" urged us to plant more native, pollinator-friendly garden plants and reduce some of our chemically-dependent green lawn space. "What We Waste" showed us how much of what we throw away can now be recycled. Composting food waste is easy, and most plastic packaging is now accepted at several local sites.

There is a display of resources and eco-friendly products on the glass shelves in the atrium. To learn more, borrow the books to take home and check out the Caring for Creation bulletin board in the hallway for more recycling information and a list of upcoming events. If you would like printed copies of the recycling information, call the office and copies will be provided.



Caring for Creation Team members Cynthia Fett (left) and Barb Stough (right) helped educate session participants on important environmental topics.



URBAN WHOLISTICS FARM COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR APR. 26

Olivet hosted the Health and Hydration booth at Urban Wholistics Farms' Community Health Fair. Four Olivet volunteers joined Amy Dixon in providing blood pressure screenings to more than 20 residents of an underserved neighborhood. Fairgoers also received bottled water and valuable information on heart-healthy nutrition & lifestyle habits.

BELL CHOIRS CELEBRATE 40TH ANNIVERSARY MAY 4

by **Carol Miller** *Director of Handbell Choirs*

What a celebration we had welcoming back past members of our handbell choirs for the past 40 years. We set up both five octave sets of handbells and combined Rejoice & Jubilee on all four handbell numbers (one with the Olivet Choir and one with the congregation). The front of the sanctuary was three rows of handbells (even behind the communion rail). The service is available to replay on Olivet's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@OlivetLutheran). I was **EXTREMELY PROUD** of both choirs combining all four numbers and ringing to perfection. It was a beautiful morning!

Rejoice's first rehearsal was January 1985 and Jubilee's first rehearsal was September 1990. Sue Meyer, Carol Leupp and Carol Miller are the three original members with many to follow a few years later. Over the years we have gone to seven Handbell Festivals and performed special music for over 40 different events at many churches. We have also put on programs at Highland Meadows, Oakleaf, Oakshade Grove, the Toledo Club, WTVG TV, Make a Wish, Flower Hospital Tree Lighting, and others. Rejoice performed Christmas Concerts at the Art Museum in the Great Gallery from 2009 to 2015, and in the Peristyle from 2016 until COVID. Rejoice also was invited to perform at the Hennage Auditorium in Williamsburg for the Grand Illumination in 2002. Rejoice & Jubilee continue to have a Christmas concert at Olivet each December.

It's been a joy and honor to be the director for 40 years. I'm blessed and very thankful for the opportunity!! Thanks to our congregation for your support. God bless you all.



AROUND OLIVET

DAILY BREAD'S IMPORTANT COMMUNITY PARTNER

by Susan Santoro

Main Street Sweets (located at 5639 Main Street in Sylvania) is a wonderful partner with Daily Bread, Olivet's weekly community meal. Their predecessor, Brieschke's Bakery, began donating baked goods every Wednesday over five years ago. When the Barnharts purchased the bakery in 2021, they carried on the generous tradition. Our Daily Bread guests enjoy the homemade baked goods!

As Downtown Sylvania is undergoing construction that is seriously impacting businesses, we wanted to highlight Main Street Sweets so that Olivet members can support them and tell friends and family to do so. Here is a self-introduction from bakery owner, Colleen:



Hello, we are Colleen and Tim Barnhart, owners of Main Street Sweets in Downtown Sylvania. As a blended family with six kids, two sons-in-law, two daughters-in-law, one granddaughter and one grandson, we're accustomed to a busy life. We were so excited in 2021 when we were asked if we would be interested in purchasing the bakery. After much talking and planning, we as a family were ready to take on the challenge of having a bakery in the heart of Downtown Sylvania.



Main Street Sweets owner Colleen Barnhart (right) with daughters Megan (left) & Madeline (center).

This year marks the 105th anniversary of this building being a bakery. We love it when customers walk in the door and tell us about all of the memories they have had at the bakery over the years, but it is just as rewarding to see a little one walk in and be excited as they look at the cases of sweets in awe.

In our cases, you will find our yummy fresh homemade **donuts**. They are the perfect way to start your day. We also have an assortment of **pastries**, **cookies** (including our famous sugar cookies), **cupcakes**, **brownies**, and more. Need a **cake** for that special occasion? Give us a call and we can help you with that, too. We also can provide **dessert bars** or **breakfast bars** for parties or a business event.

Although Sylvania's construction project has made it harder to visit us, we're eager to see the finished result. In the meantime, we need your support more than ever. Please stop by for a sweet treat and/or to place an order. You can also call us at **419-882-2302** to place an order for pick up at the back door. Let's spread the love through our community, one SWEET treat at a time.

THE VOZNIUK FAMILY

There is good news that despite warnings from multiple agencies that follow and lobby for immigrants the current administration has not moved to deport Ukrainians currently in the United States under the program that brought the Vozniuks to the U.S. Most, if not all, of the other nationalities have had their U.S. legal status terminated immediately or at stated dates. For Ukrainians, no new persons are allowed to arrive but those currently in the United States have been allowed to stay.

Viktor, Mariia, Ivan and Tymofii continue to be very busy with work and school. They are doing well managing both the joys and trials typical for young families, including Ivan breaking his arm playing soccer at school (he's fine!).

OLIVET & NORTHWEST OHIO SYNOD WELCOME SOLIETTE LOPEZ

On March 21, members of Olivet and our synod welcomed Soliette Lopez. Soliette is a Lutheran pastor, a medical doctor and her current position is Coordinator of the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) in Mexico. We managed to divert Soliette to spend a day with us on her travels from Mexico to Chicago where she attended meetings with her counterparts from the United States and around the world to discern and place next year's young adults into various countries. Soliette's warmth, caring and devotion to her calling made an impact on the people that traveled to Mexico City in the Fall of 2023, so many were looking forward to reconnecting in person.

During her one full day in our area, she had lunch with Bishop Beaudoin and Calla Gilson of the Northwestern Ohio Synod. That evening, we hosted a dinner for Soliette and others at Olivet in the Teen Room. The group had a lot of questions for Soliette, wanting to know the situation in Mexico—both with the current YAGMs and also within the migrant shelters where most of the YAGMs and Soliette help people who are in desperate need to legally migrate both to Mexico and also the United States to escape life threatening situations in their native countries. In addition, Soliette had recently completed a week "immersion" with Border Servant Corps in the United States and was able to provide guests with an understanding of both the immersion experience and the current situation on the United States side of the border.

The evening produced a range of emotions as Soliette answered our questions and at one point discussed that she also is an immigrant, migrating from Nicaragua to Mexico alongside her husband to escape suppressive and dangerous conditions. Her father-in-law in Nicaragua is very ill but conditions are such that they cannot safely visit him there.

The dinner wrapped up with a touching blessing from Pastor Nate to Soliette. She was presented a prayer shawl from Olivet, and Soliette brought a gift for us—a hand-painted ceramic cross that we will display within the church to keep her, the young adults and the people they work with in our thoughts and prayers.



Northwestern Ohio Synod staff member Sarah Schaaf (right) looks on as Soliette Lopez (left) presents Olivet with a hand-painted ceramic cross.

NEW MEMBERSHIP BULLETIN BOARD

Be sure to check out the membership bulletin board located near the atrium by the couches! Each month different members will be highlighted.



MANY HANDS TIE QUILTS FOR LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

by Carol Leupp

A record number of Olivet members helped tie nearly 100 quilts for Lutheran World Relief on Saturday, May 10. Some helpers even took quilts home to finish tying. These quilts, made by Olivet's Tuesday Quilt Group, are delivered to disaster areas at home and abroad. The Tuesday Quilt Group surely appreciates these Olivet workers!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

SUNDAY, JUNE 1

New Member Orientation
12:15-1:45 PM | Adult Ed Room

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

High School Graduation Recognition
Both services | 10:15 reception in bell court

MONDAY, JUNE 16 to FRIDAY, JUNE 20

Vacation Bible School | see page 1 & 8

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

No Daily Bread due to Vacation Bible School

THURSDAY, JUNE 26

Men's Retreat | see page 12

SATURDAY, JUNE 28

Olivet Day at Urban Wholistics Farms
9-11 AM | see page 13

*SUNDAY, JUNE 29

10 AM combined worship
Christian Life Center

** denotes one combined worship service at 10 AM*

JULY

*ONE WORSHIP SERVICE EVERY SUNDAY AT 10 AM

JULY 6 sanctuary

JULY 13 Christian Life Center

JULY 20 Christian Life Center

JULY 27 sanctuary

SATURDAY, JULY 26

Olivet Day at Urban Wholistics Farms
9-11 AM | see page 13

WEDNESDAY, JULY 30

No Daily Bread due to Rummage Sale

THURSDAY, JULY 24 to SUNDAY, JULY 27

Rummage Sale donations drop off

THURSDAY, JULY 31 to SATURDAY, AUGUST 2

Rummage Sale

AUGUST

SUNDAY, AUGUST 3

9 AM & 11 AM services BOTH in sanctuary

*SUNDAY, AUGUST 31

10 AM combined worship
Christian Life Center



(THU) JULY 31 to (SAT) AUGUST 2

DONATION DATES. Thursday, July 24 - Sunday, July 27

New this year: **electronics recycling** will be accepted during donation dates!

For a list of accepted items, visit
www.olivetsylvania.org/rummage-sale

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

Urban Wholistics Farms Golden Hour Gala
in Olivet's Christian Life Center

FOOD MINISTRIES DATES TO NOTE

There will be **no food distribution** or **Daily Bread** on **Wednesday, June 18** or **Wednesday, July 30** during Vacation Bible School and the Rummage Sale.

Thank you for understanding!

FAITH IN ACTION | GET INVOLVED

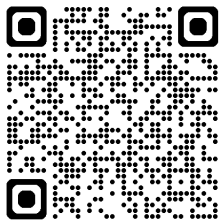
OLIVET HELPS LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES “STOCK THE SHELVES”

For the last four years, **Lutheran Social Services of Northwestern Ohio** has held an annual **Stock the Shelves Food Donation Event**. This food drive helps to replenish LSS's pantry which feeds over 900 individuals each month. This year more than ever, LSS experienced a great need to make its Stock the Shelves event on May 16 a success, and Olivet was able to offer aid. In addition to Olivet's annual \$1,200 donation to Lutheran Social Services (LSS is one of 12 local organizations Olivet supports through an annual benevolence donation), Olivet was able to contribute an additional \$1,000 toward Stock the Shelves. The women's Bible study also collected pantry donations and delivered a car load to LSS on May 16. In a thank you letter to Olivet, LSS Vice President Traci Jaksetic wrote:

Thank you for being the hope, inspiration and blessing that you continue to be for the clients we serve. During uncertain times, clients turn to our agency for needs that we are able to meet due to your generosity. This cannot be measured or summed up by a small thank you. Our mission is fulfilled with the assistance of wonderful individuals like you.

For more ways to support LSS, visit their website at www.lssnwo.org.

OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERSTAND OUR SOUTHERN BORDER NOV. 5 - 9



Scan QR code with phone camera for more information

The ELCA Northwest Ohio Synod has put together a border immersion opportunity with Border Servant Corps in Las Cruces, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. If you are curious about what the situation is or want to understand first hand from those directly involved, this is a unique opportunity. Border Servant Corps regularly does these immersions. The organization is a social ministry organization of the ELCA. You will have an opportunity to hear from and ask questions to the various organizations involved with immigrants on the southern border—including government agencies such as border agents and judges—and also Border Servant Corps, attorneys and others depending on the situation at the border in November. You can learn more at this link Border Immersion Landing Page. Any questions can be emailed to Calla Gilson at calla.gilson@nwos-elca.org. Note: those interested may still sign up beyond the initial registration date of May 1.



OUR GARDEN NEEDS YOU!

THE PASTOR WILLIAM & MARTHA COX GARDEN OF PEACE

“Garden Angels” are still needed throughout the coming growing season. Volunteer “Angels” help with the routine maintenance of our garden—which includes picking up litter, light weeding, sweeping, watering, etc. If you enjoy being outdoors (no green thumb required) please consider becoming an “Angel” this year by joining us in this simple ministry. If you are interested or just have questions about being an “Angel” this season, please contact Sandy and John Husman at 419-882-3438 or email jhusman@bex.net.

EQUITY ARTWORK TEAM

This team is part of the Congregational Mission Group, working on sharing the diverse and expansive love of God through the imagery within our church building. Our goal for 2025 is to communicate the love, justice, and mercy of Jesus on the walls of the Adult Ed room. We meet ‘as needed’ since most of our ‘work’ is done at home scrolling websites for equity-centered art. If you share an interest in this mission, we welcome you to our vibrant group. The team members are Nancy Hamilton, Heidi Lohrmann, Rebecca Gauchet, and Becky Cress.



YOUTH & FAMILIES

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL ROAD TRIP: ON THE GO WITH GOD

June 16-20 (Mon-Fri) 9 AM - 12:15 PM

Ages 4 - 5th grade

\$10 per child or \$25 maximum per family

Registration open until June 10
sign up form available at olivetsylvania.org/vbs



OLIVET'S NEWEST FIRST COMMUNICANTS



Nine First Communicants made their first communion on Palm Sunday, April 13: **Elliott Andrews, Elizabeth Banister, Olivia Barber, Julia Hammerling, Abigail Hepner, Skyler Field, Trace Fields, Parker Lehman, and Rhys Lewis.**

TO THE BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN OF OLIVET

by **Carol Miller** Children's Choir Director

Thank you all for singing on Palm Sunday with the Olivet Choir, Jubilee Handbell Choir, Keith Hamen on (bongos), Sue Hamen (maracas), and Aaron Banister (bass guitar). It was FANTASTIC. It was a GREAT start of the Palm Sunday service and very special to see all the kids singing their hearts out. I loved every minute of it and so did the congregation. Thanks to all the kids for learning the song at church and singing it at home so you knew all the words. God bless all the parents who make church a priority and getting their kids to church on Sunday mornings. We all love seeing the children on Sunday mornings.



MINISTER SPOTLIGHT

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

Get to Know Karen Keefer

by Sara Martin Communications Specialist



What does it mean to have a **servant's heart**? Reflecting Christ's example of serving others, having a servant's heart means embodying characteristics like selflessness, compassion, humility, and service. It's those with servant hearts who become the tangible hands and feet of Jesus, making His love evident both within and outside our church's walls. One such example of possessing a servant's heart within our Olivet community is **Karen Keefer**.

Karen Keefer and her husband, Carl, have been attending Olivet for almost 35 years. She is the mother of two living daughters, Mandee and Allyson, and a third daughter, Jillian, who passed away in 2001 at the age of 17. Karen has seven grandchildren, ranging in age from 2 to 11 years old. She's a retired dental hygienist, and helps out once a week at Bunker, her son-in-law's bar and grill, in Holland.

Karen's "Olivet story" began on a Good Friday. While working as a dental hygienist at a dental practice nearby, Karen decided to attend a Good Friday service at Olivet. The message Pastor William Cox delivered that day *in character* as a disciple—sandals, robe, and all—remains one of Karen's favorite Olivet memories. It also moved her in the direction of making Olivet her family's new church home.

The Keefer family officially joined Olivet in the early 1990s and became very involved. Wednesday evenings were always spent at church. Jillian and Allie participated in trips with the youth group to St. Louis and San Antonio respectively. Karen fondly recalls watching her kids grow up here; two of her daughters attended preschool at Olivet Christian Nursery School, as well as some of her grandkids (a few of which are still current OCNS students). Olivet is also where Jillian's funeral was held, with over 500 in attendance. A memorial to Jillian hangs on the northeast-facing wall in the Teen Room.

In speaking with her, Karen's servant's heart shines, and she exudes a "however I can help" attitude. Truly, there are few ministries Karen *hasn't* helped with in some capacity! Since joining Olivet, Karen has served as a Sunday school teacher, helped with Daily Bread in its early days, served as church council secretary for 6 years, was a Garden of Peace trustee for 7 years, assisted with large celebration meals (including Pastor Chrysanne Timm's 25th ordination anniversary), helped out with Vacation Bible School, and serves as a cashier at the rummage sale.

Karen's particular ministry of expertise, however, is a unique and creative form of fundraising. Twelve years ago, Karen began what has since become Olivet's **scrapbooking and crafting fundraisers**. Encouraged by her friend Jill Oblizajek, a scrapbooking vendor, Karen decided to give it a try.

These fundraisers take place at Olivet three times annually. Currently, two benefit Olivet youth programs, and one benefits the choir. The fundraisers, which began with just four attendees and raised \$100, now see over 60 crafters in attendance and raise around \$3,000 each. [See **page 10** to read more about Karen's fundraisers.]

Preparation for these fundraisers happens year-round. Karen is always on the lookout for crafting supplies sales and items to be raffled or auctioned off during the events. She also helps with planning and prepping meals for each event—and the food is always highly anticipated by crafters. Thanks to Karen's tireless effort, planning, and coordination of these fundraisers, tens of thousands of dollars have been raised for Olivet youth programs over the years.

When asked what's kept Karen at Olivet, Karen expressed that Olivet has become her church home, close to home. The community, the genial environment, the growth of her kids and grandkids here, the proximity to where she worked and lives, and the down-to-earth message of Pastor Cox that first drew her in all have become the roots continuing to connect Karen to Olivet. Plentiful opportunities to get involved, Karen cited, is another vital aspect about Olivet she greatly values.

Karen's primary hopes for Olivet's future are twofold: a peaceful transition in the present search for a lead pastor, and seeing more youth become part of Olivet's community. She amusingly recalled Pastor Ed Strietelmeier would often say, "if the church ain't crying, it's dying!"

Olivet is incredibly blessed by and indebted to Karen for all the ways she has supported its people and ministries over the years. May her willingness to serve wherever help is needed be a source of inspiration to us all to roll up our sleeves, jump in, and say "**however I can serve.**"



Karen chatting with a crafter at the April 26th Scrapbooking & Crafting Fundraiser.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

SCRAPBOOKING & CRAFTING FUNDRAISERS

by **Sara Martin** *Communications Specialist*

It's a crafter's dream: an entire day to work on projects in the company of other crafters, with delicious food, snacks, and even the opportunity for a massage provided. That's what you'll find at each of Olivet's three annual Scrapbooking & Crafting Fundraisers spearheaded by Karen Keefer. [Learn about Karen's story on **page 9**.]

Encouraged by a friend, Karen held the first scrapbooking fundraiser 12 years ago with just four attendees and raised \$100. Now, Karen's fundraisers draw upwards of 70 crafters from all across the region and raise around \$3,000 each.

The scrapbooking and crafting fundraisers take place three Saturdays each year in Olivet's Christian Life Center. The day commences at 8:00 AM and wraps up at 6:00 PM. The \$30 registration fee includes breakfast, lunch, an afternoon snack, and half a table of workspace. Those needing more surface area can reserve an entire table for \$10 more. Throughout the day, there are opportunities to win raffle prizes, bid on silent auction items, peruse a wide selection of scrapbooking materials for purchase, and even reserve a timeslot with an on-hand massage therapist (for an additional fee).

The latest Scrapbooking & Crafting Fundraiser took place on Saturday, April 26. Seventy-six crafters spent the day scrapbooking, quilting, knitting, and cardmaking. There was even one crafter working on an intricate crystal art project! Janet Kish was working on a scrapbook of prayers when I stopped by her table. Janet and her friend, Pat, from Blissfield, have attended every crafting fundraiser since their inception. Of all the crafters present, Janet was the sole crafter from Olivet Lutheran Church.

Like Janet, many others in attendance have been coming for years. Some travel all the way from mid-Central Ohio and Indiana to participate. Before the day ends, a few even prepay for the *next* fundraiser! I spoke with Ginny, a crafter who lives in Swanton, who told me the food served is always top tier. "There aren't many crafting events like this anymore," she added. I also stopped to chat with two women busy at their sewing machines.

"Scrapbooking is not my thing," one admitted with a laugh. But she comes to get her creative fix and converse with other crafters like her.

The funds raised from these scrapbooking and crafting days are used to support Olivet's youth programs and, as of last year, the Olivet Choir as well. Becky Cress, Olivet's Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries, described the immense impact of these fundraisers:

"Karen's fundraisers have raised thousands of dollars, both for the annual Body Shop retreats to YMCA Storer Camps in Jackson, Michigan, and for the ELCA Youth Gatherings that happen every three years. In my time here, none of our kids or mentors have had to pay to attend a retreat—scrapbooking covers it all! Scrapbooking also paid for nearly all the expenses of the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, with our youth paying only a nominal amount."

How can you get involved? If you're into arts and crafts, sign up to join in! Whatever your creative niche is, there's a spot for you. You can contact the church office or Karen Keefer (419-356-1902) to reserve your spot at the next fundraiser happening Saturday,

September 20. If crafting isn't your thing, lend a hand with set-up, meal prep/service, or cleanup. It takes a team of about 20 people working in shifts to pull off each fundraiser. Those interested in volunteering can reach out to the church office or Karen. Monetary donations or items for raffle prizes and the silent auction are also welcomed!

Whether it's working on a project or being part of the team that makes it all happen, there's a place for you at the Scrapbooking & Crafting Fundraisers.



Janet Kish, a long-time attendee of the scrapbooking & crafting fundraisers, worked on compiling a scrapbook of prayers.



Renee Kornowa and her kids, Lindsey, Claire, and Thomas, were some of the volunteers helping out at the April 26th fundraiser.

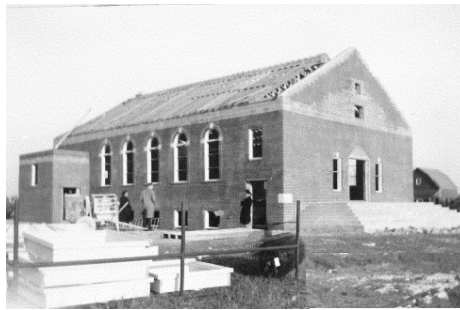
HISTORY OF OLIVET PART 2

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

In Part 1, we explored the beginnings of Olivet Lutheran Church. Here in Part 2, we will explore Olivet as it expands and becomes a staple in the community.

In the 1930s, the population of Sylvania (city and township) had grown to about 6,400. Likewise, the community of "The Little White Church on the Corner" was seeing exponential growth. In 1926, Olivet had about 100 members. When Rev. Anderson resigned in 1942, there were over 400 members! This little church built 25 years ago was no longer able to sustain the growth in the community. In 1943, a fundraiser was started to build a new church. Being in the middle of WWII, the purchase of War Bonds was a significant source of funds for the new building. As of October 1947, just over \$25k was raised for the new church. Pastor Getter (1943-1948) led the congregation through this growth and fundraising through 1948 when he resigned and Pastor Mueller (1948-1951) was called.

With an initial proposed building cost of \$60k plus \$7.5k for the land, a vote was taken at the annual meeting on January 14, 1949. Having only raised \$35k for the new church, an approval was given by the congregation. The ground-breaking ceremony took place late July 1949 and used the same spade that was used in the ground-breaking ceremony for the original church in 1916.



On Easter Sunday, April 9, 1950, Olivet Lutheran Church celebrated its very last service on the corner of Alexis and Whiteford. While the original plan was to keep and remodel this building, soil tests and a \$20k more expensive church than initially expected pushed Olivet to sell the original building for \$9k. The building would be demolished in 1957 and became a gas station. On Sunday, April 16, 1950 at 3 PM, Olivet Lutheran Church celebrated the dedication service at the Monroe-Alexis location that we are all familiar with today. The chandeliers were purchased for \$160 each, and still light the sanctuary to this day.



By 1953, the number of children attending Sunday School at Olivet had grown so large, the congregation was already discussing expanding the building to add classrooms. The initial idea was to build a two-story addition at the back of the sanctuary, where the present-day altar is. However, the plans changed through the years. By 1957, the average monthly attendance had more than doubled since 1952 and warranted 3 services: 8 AM, 9:30 AM, and 11 AM, with Sunday School at 9:30 and 11. After only 6 years of building the sanctuary, Olivet broke ground to expand for the first of many times. A new office and education wing was built and opened in March 1957 at a cost of \$150k. A chapel was included as part of this addition and was then known as the "Keyser Chapel" after Pastor James Keyser (1952-1957). Plans started being drawn up for expanding the sanctuary, which would ultimately occur in 1965. I hope you have enjoyed learning about Olivet growing in the community. Look forward to part 3 where we explore some of the trials of the church as it continued to grow.

FAITH FORMATION

CHILDREN & YOUTH

NURSERY. Ages infant through 3 years during worship services.

SUNDAY SCHOOL. On summer break after May 25 until mid September.

BODY SHOP & TEEN SUNDAY SCHOOL. On summer break after May 18 until mid September.

See *Youth & Families* on **page 8** for more news & upcoming event information.

ADULTS

MEN'S RETREAT THURSDAY, JUNE 26

Where. Linehan Cottage | Pinehill Lake in Horton, MI

Theme. *Living on Purpose: Finding purpose through faith, action, and love.*

Agenda. 9 AM - Golf (9 holes) at Deer Run Golf Course. **11:30 AM** - Non-golfers join the group for lunch at Deer Run GC clubhouse. **Afternoon** - Living on Purpose discussion. **Evening** Group cookout.

Sign up by June 15 by contacting Mike Linehan at 614-595-6666 or mline926@gmail.com.

SUNDAY SCHOOL. 10:10 AM in the Teen Room

FAMILIES. TUESDAY TABLE TALKS: FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

Summer Sanctuary Series | Second Tuesday of the month | 6:30-8:00 PM

Registration required. Light meal provided; childcare available. Call the church office at 419-882-2077 or visit olivetsylvania.org/ttt to sign up.

June 10: **Sabbath in the Sunshine:** Rediscovering Rest

July 8: **Growing in Grace:** Cultivating Spiritual Renewal

August 12: **Front Yard Fellowship:** Strengthening Community

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY. Monthly June-August | Teen Room [watch the Olive Branch for dates]

MEN. GUYS 'N GOSPEL. Tuesdays 7-8 AM at Panera on Central Ave. **On summer hiatus from Memorial Day to Labor Day.**



IN THE JEDI LIBRARY [located in the Atrium] | by Cynthia Fett

Two books have been added to the JEDI library as a follow-up to Dr. Kim Nielsen's discussions in February on disabilities and the church:

Disability Visibility, edited by Alice Wong, is a collection of essays written by those living with a disability, which includes one in every five people in the US. Together the stories spotlight the passions, talents, and everyday experiences of this community, and give the reader a better understanding of the disability experience.

In **My Body Is Not a Prayer Request**, author Amy Kenny reveals with wit and humor the unintentional ableism present in most Christian communities and urges the Church to start treating disabled people as full members of the Body of Christ.

ALSO NEW IN THE LIBRARY. **Somewhere Beyond the Sea**, TJ Klune's sequel to *The House in the Cerulean Sea*, continues the story of Arthur, Linus, and their houseful of very special, magical children. This saga celebrates inclusion, understanding, and love of those who are "different." This book is also suitable for young adults.

The Equity Team hopes that our members will take advantage of this wonderful collection of books on the issues of race, immigration, disability, and sexuality. Books may be checked out anytime, but please return them within a month so others may enjoy them. Questions, comments, or book suggestions can be directed to Cynthia Fett (cynthiafett@gmail.com).

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Growing Together: Olivet's Ongoing Partnership with Urban Wholistics Farms

by Mike Linehan

At Olivet, our passion for social justice and racial equity calls us not only to reflection, but to action. For members of our Equity Team and congregation, one truth has become clear: **if we want to understand and support our neighbors of color, we must build authentic relationships**—not as outsiders offering aid, but **as equals sharing the work and the vision**. This conviction is at the heart of our growing, years-long partnership with Sonia Flunder-McNair and the team at Urban Wholistics Farms (UWF).

How It All Began. Our journey with Urban Wholistics began in January 2022, when Sonia spoke at a MLK event hosted at Olivet. Her passion for youth empowerment and sustainable urban farming struck a deep chord within the Olivet community. A month later, during a Racial Equity Taskforce meeting, a "dot exercise" prioritized our church's commitments—and a partnership with Urban Wholistics quickly rose to the top.

Soon after, taskforce member Mike Linehan met with Sonia to discuss what collaboration might look like. From there, the seeds of something beautiful began to grow.

What We've Built Together. Over the past three years, our partnership has blossomed into something far deeper than occasional volunteer work. We've rolled up our sleeves—together—at monthly Olivet Days at Tatum Park, participating in planting, weeding, harvesting, and seasonal cleanups. Families from Olivet have made it part of their rhythm to show up and lend a hand.

In addition to time and labor, we've also offered financial support. Since 2022, Olivet's annual contribution to the UWF youth farming program has grown substantially. We've helped with tangible needs too—like the mower we purchased to help maintain the growing number of lots Sonia and her team tend.

Our involvement has extended into relationship-building and shared celebration as well. We've supported Sonia's *Golden Hour Gala* each fall, and in 2025, we're thrilled to host the event right here in our Christian Life Center on Saturday, October 18th.

We've also helped behind the scenes—connecting Sonia with other community leaders and churches. One memorable collaboration was with Community of Christ Lutheran, who helped install flooring in the farmhouse adjacent to Tatum Park. And just last year, our VBS kids raised nearly \$500 in a chicken-naming contest to fund a new coop at UWF!

Perhaps most exciting is the produce program we helped launch in 2024, which brings fresh fruits and vegetables from UWF and Bench Farms to the Tuesday community meals at Salem Lutheran Church. This initiative doesn't just feed people—it deepens community ties. In fact, this connection led to Salem's Pastor Mike Hanck joining the Urban Wholistics board of directors.

In recognition of our shared efforts, Urban Wholistics honored Olivet with their *Community Partner Award*—a reminder that the work we've done is meaningful and mutual.

What's Next in 2025 and Beyond. Our partnership with Urban Wholistics is only growing stronger. Here's a look at what's ahead:

- **2025 Olivet Days at Urban Wholistics Farms.** Spend a morning at the farm with us! There are plenty of ways to help: support Sonia with the children's gardening program, assist at the kids' farm stand, or pitch in with general farm maintenance. Bring your kids or grandkids—there's something for everyone. This summer, we'll be visiting on **these Saturdays from 9:00 to 11:00 AM: May 31, June 28, & July 26**. Urban Wholistics Farms is located at 1209 City Park Drive in Toledo.
- **October 18: Golden Hour Gala at Olivet.** We'll host this year's fundraising gala in the Christian Life Center. We'll need a team of 10-15 volunteers to help with everything from set-up and AV support to silent auction help and clean-up. Stay tuned for sign-up information this summer!
- **Ongoing Support.** We'll continue to provide financial support at current levels, including purchasing fresh produce for the Salem community meals.

A Partnership That Grows Both Ways. At Olivet, we believe true partnership is not measured by what we give—but by what we learn, build, and become together. Our work with Urban Wholistics Farms is one of the most life-giving ways we live out that belief. We're proud of what we've sown so far—and even more excited about what we'll grow in the years to come.



Olivet's very first service day at Tatum Park in May 2022.

To learn more about
Urban Wholistics Farms, visit
www.urbanwholistics.org
or scan the QR code.



PRAYERS & PASTORAL ACTS

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

For those hospitalized or anticipating tests/procedures:

For those grieving: John & Pam Casper at the death of John's mother, Madelyn Casper (5/9); Cindy Vines & family at the death of Jim, (4/29; memorial 5/31 at Olivet 11 AM & luncheon); family of Phyllis (Jean) Daly at her death (5/1; memorial at Reeb 5/9); family of Carol Savolaine at her death (4/29; Garden of Peace memorial 6/14 at 2 PM); family of Sandy Belinske (memorial at Olivet 5/24); Ruth Ann Ware at the passing of Jack (memorial 5/3); Ron & Ryan Pritts at the death of Patsy (9/2024; memorial 4/5).

For members who have requested prayers because of illness or recovery from injury or surgery:

Hunter Morrison, Judy Gonia, Bonnie Ahrendt, John Borton, Bev & Brian Hart, Amy Dixon, Emi Jakes, Marge Warnock, Scott Franklin, Jan Cook, Kelly Cipiti, Sandy Owen, Dale & Sharon Heuberger, Bill Smith, Jenny Quackenbush, Ash Lovegood, Jim Rentner, Eric Adams, Bill Genson, Roxie Dodge, Wendy Shock, Riley Rawson, Pastor Nate Tuff & Kim Nielsen, Mary Glover, Scott Reynolds, Barb Aker, David Tucker, Bill Willis.

For those in assisted living, extended care, or rehabilitation: Patty Cross at Otterbein Sunset Village; Doris Fry, Arlene Holtfreter & Luann Kornowa at Oakleaf Village; Fred Heintz at The Waterford at Levis Commons; Billie Iles at Mill Manor, Vermillion, OH; Mae Kyser at Genacross Wolf Creek; Margaret Timm at Brookdale Sr. Living, Carmel, IN; Matthew Wesley at Northwest Ohio Developmental Center.

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

Family and friends for whom prayers have been requested: Scott Reynolds, Heather Taberner, Amy McMacken O-Brien, Jared Lohrmann, Eric Zokowich, Rick, Pat, Sam, Barb & Bob W., Bishop Brenda Bos, Kaulana, Kathy W., Shanon Bostater.

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

For our bishops: NWO Synod Bishop Daniel Beaudoin & ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

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.

PASTORAL ACTS

MARCH - MID-MAY

Funerals:

Rachel Sendi (Mar. 8)
Patsy Pritts (Mar. 15)
Howard Kolbe (Apr. 5)
Jack Ware (May 3)
Phyllis (Jean) Daly (May 9)

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.

FINANCIALS & MEMORIAL GIFTS AS OF 5/15

JACK WARE

Marlene Schober
Susan Santoro
Greg & Cynthia Fett
Cynthia Riedel
Rick & Deb Shock
Charles & Debra Fahncke
Naomi Loose
Judith Paluck
Darla Culberson

HOWARD KOLBE

Susan Santoro
Greg & Cynthia Fett
Carol Miller
Karen Hamilton
Naomi Loose
John & Sue Wanke
Jose & Colleen Gonzalez
Carol Leupp
Carl & Jenny Christensen
Janice & Mike Cook
Mary Armer
RF & CE Gillen
John & Carol Borton
Jim & Lina Farley
Leisure League
Brittany & Courtney Teets
Janet McClure
Mark & Brenda Tracy
John & Sandy Husman

KATHIE NIELSEN

Doug & Helene Lyon

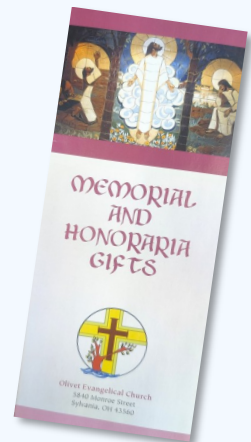
RACHEL SENDI

Dave & Carol Sendi
Audie Jaqua
Jeff, Sue, & Samantha Bernholtz
Doug & Helene Lyon
Karen Steele
Marvin & Christina Ransey
Tom & Susan Schardt
Gene Piniaskiewicz
Barb & Ken Kormanyos
Bill Buehler
Sharon Allan-Pflum
Carol Leupp
John & Cynthia Hoffman
Gary & Dawn Wright
Bob & Luella Humbarger
Karen Reiman-Sendi
Betsy Jo Staber
Janice Johnson
Cindy Waite
Jim & Linda LaRue
Dave & Sandy Weber
Carol Miller
Bob & Mary Miller
Susan Polzin
Christine Lowe
Sheryl Adkins
Rhonda Dicke
Brock & Teri Laurer
Kelly Vogel
Frank & Elaine Robinson
Warren & Noreen Wright
John & Elaine Carone
Anthony, Blaine, Olivia & Vicki Napier
Luann Sendi Jorelan

LEARN MORE 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.



Church Office Summer Hours
419-882-2077

Mon-Thu | 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM
Fri | 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Email

operations@olivetsylvania.org

Website

www.olivetsylvania.org

Pastors

Robyn Provis, Interim Pastor
pastorrobyn@olivetsylvania.org

Melissa Micham, Associate Pastor
pastormelissa@olivetsylvania.org

Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries

Becky Cress
rcress@olivetsylvania.org

Director of Operations

Shannon Walker
operations@olivetsylvania.org

Membership Coordinator

Jill Hepner
membership@olivetsylvania.org

Communications Specialist

Sara Martin
communications@olivetsylvania.org

Sunday Worship

God's gifts of Word and Sacrament are offered in two distinct settings:

9:00 a.m.—Traditional

Liturgy, hymns and music by a select group of gifted musicians. Meets in the sanctuary.

11:00 a.m.—Contemporary

The Vine casual service with music by The Vine Praise Band. Meets in the Christian Life Center.

Both services live streamed:
www.olivetsylvania.org



Olivet Lutheran Church

5840 Monroe Street
Sylvania, OH 43560

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 16-20 | 9 AM - 12:15 PM

Ages 4 through 5th grade

\$10 per child | \$25 max per family

olivetsylvania.org/vbs

UPCOMING COMBINED

WORSHIP AT 10 AM

June 29 | Christian Life Center

Each Sunday in July

July 6 (sanctuary) • **July 13** (Christian Life Center)

July 20 (Christian Life Center) • **July 27** (sanctuary)

August 31 | Christian Life Center

[see **page 6** for full summer worship schedule]

RUMMAGE SALE

JULY 31 - AUGUST 2

Donation dates: July 24 - July 27

olivetsylvania.org/rummage-sale

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!