

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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ABOUT US

MISSION

Build a vital community of believers within which each person is nurtured, supported, and strengthened in Christian faith through worship, education, and fellowship.

Challenge believers to share with others the Good News of God's love and salvation, as revealed in Jesus Christ.

Send people forth from worship in service to others in our community and beyond who are in pain or in any kind of need.

2020 OLIVET COUNCIL MEMBERS

Executive Commission: Steven Wood (President), Lori Askew (Vice-President), Tracy Lyson (Treasurer), Denise Eide (Secretary), Kris Gorden (Senior Pastor), Sarah Lundblad (Director of Operations)

Resource & Development Commission: Tracy Lyson, Jill Christopher, Michael Raum, Senior Pastor Kris Gorden, Sarah Lundblad

Parish Life & Social Outreach Commission: Denise Eide, Tim Rensch, Dan Hansen, Pastor Tiffany Sundein, Deacon Brenda Bauer

Worship & Witness Commission: Steven Wood, DeNae Millar, Nola Storm, Senior Pastor Kris Gorden, Bev Gravdahl

Lifelong Learning Commission: Lori Askew, Nany Hagglund-Morgan, Amy Aasen, Pastor Bill Boelter, Michelle Elness, Tyler Wright

We are an ELCA Lutheran Church centered in the Grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ. The people of Olivet seek to live like we believe it, that we're changed and set on a path to share this love with the world. We're not perfect. Each of us carries a burden of brokenness in some way, shape or form. We make mistakes, we sin. Grace means this does not exclude us from God's Love. Jesus forgives us, heals us, dusts us off, and sets us back on a new path each and every day. Our lives are lived in gratitude for this Gift.



FEBRUARY 28, 2021

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

- Call to Order
- Opening Prayer
- Secretary's Report
- Election of Church Council Members
- Election of Foundation Trustees
- Treasurer's Report
- Presentation of 2021 Mission Plan
- Pastor's Reports
- Closing Prayer
- Adjournment

FEBRUARY 9, 2020

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

President Tim Rensch called the annual meeting to order at 9:42 am.

Pastor Kris Gorden opened the meeting with prayer.

It was moved and seconded (Janice Anderson/Joe Askew) to approved the revised agenda. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report. The minutes of the 2019 annual meeting were distributed in the annual report. They were approved as written.

Pastor Kris Gorden recognized the outgoing members of the Foundation Board – Joan Rustvang and Tracey Stenhjem – and the outgoing members of the church council - Janice Anderson, Missy Heilman, Doug Reardon, and Michael Wohlfeil. They were thanked for their service.

Elections. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Doug Reardon introduced the slate of candidates for election to the Church Council and the Foundation Board. Nominated to serve on the council were Jill Christopher, Nancy Hagglund-Morgan, Michael Raum, and Nola Storm. Nominated to serve on the Foundation Board were Mikkel Pates and Steve Strinden.

President Tim Rensch asked for additional nominations from the floor for council. Seeing none, it was moved and seconded (Jill Gorden/Doug Reardon) to approve the ballot with unanimous consent. Motion carried.

President Tim Rensch asked for additional nominations from the floor for Foundation Board. Seeing none, it was moved and seconded (Bruce Anderson/Dan Hansen) to approved the ballot with unanimous consent. Motion carried.

Before introducing Treasurer Steve Wood, President Tim Rensch thanked Steve and Sarah Lundblad (Director of Operations) for the phenomenal work to enhance the format and look of the budget report.

Treasurer's Report. Steve Wood gave an overview of all the documents provided to the congregation, both at the meeting and in the annual report. He said that an informational budget meeting was held on February 2 to introduce the 2020 mission plan to the congregation, with about 30 members present. He summarized the 2019 budget, noting that contributions were under budget by \$106,486.09 and that expenditures were under budget by about \$61,458.14. He said that the council had approved using memorial funds to address the deficit and asked the congregation to support that decision.

Steve provided a list of all of the organizations that Olivet supports, either directly through financial assistance or through in-kind support, primarily by providing meeting space without charge. The list named more than 50 organizations benefitting directly from Olivet's generosity, with total financial contributions from Olivet of at least \$122,035.

Steve said Olivet's mortgage has a current balance of \$1,819,875. He announced that in addition to the current principal and interest payments made from the Olivet general fund, an additional \$55,000 was given by Olivet members in 2019 to apply to the mortgage principal.

It was moved and seconded (Bob Monson/Bruce Anderson) to use memorial funds to cover the 2019 deficit. Motion carried.

Steve provided an overview of the proposal for the 2020 mission plan, which included projected contributions of \$1,275,613 and expenditures of \$1,416,612. He said most of the increases in expenditures represent inflationary adjustments. Steve indicated that in order to make up the difference, we plan to (1) increase the number of pledgers, (2) have more frequent special appeals, and (3) use memorial funds as designated.

FEBRUARY 9, 2020

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES CONTINUED

Steve reported that council will be developing spending policies around expenditures during the year, based on better tracking of the budget on a quarterly basis. Steve also emphasized that additional steps will be taken to improve regular communication to the congregation about the status of the budget.

Steve mentioned some of the generational changes being seen around giving, noting that some younger members prefer to give to specific causes rather than an annual pledge to the general fund. But he said that people need to understand that we do have a deficit and we need to communicate that need better. He said there are a lot of people who don't attend the annual meeting who love this church and we need to reach them in more effective ways.

Arlen Anderson said that all organizations similar to Olivet are short of funds.

Sharon Larson asked if the 2020 mission plan includes raises for staff. Steve said that it does include a pool of funds for raises.

Steve was asked what the interest rate on our mortgage is. He thought it was around 3.75%.

Joe Askew expressed gratitude for the outstanding work that Steve Wood and Sarah Lundblad had completed on the budget. Steve and Sarah were given sustained applause.

Larry Gauper said he appreciated all of the work on the budget and asked if there was any assessment on the impact [to Olivet] of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in specific dollar amounts. Steve said he could not give a number, but anecdotally noted that, in the past, the last week of the year, was our busiest time for giving. This is not the case since the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law. He also noted that we had about \$55,000 of 2020 pledges paid in advance, that is, paid in 2019.

Pastor Kris Gorden said no one likes to see a situation when income does not meet expenditures. While grateful for the generous estate gift, he pointed out some of the negative impacts that such a significant gift can have on a congregation.

Pastor Kris Gorden estimated that the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has resulted in individuals giving \$20,000-30,000 less per year to Olivet Lutheran Church. He made several additional comments about giving. He said about 115 families are active members, but are not contributing financially to the church. We are calling them and asking those families to support the church. He said that some significant givers to Olivet have died in recent years and those contributions are not being covered by others. Pastor Kris said we will look at a number of special appeals during the year. For example, in March we are going to have a special appeal to cover snow removal.

Pastor Kris emphasized that individuals did not need to give to every special appeal. He said, if you are already giving, please feel good about what you are giving, but we want to continue to reach those who may be stirred to give in a different manner.

Pastor Kris alerted the congregation to a capital campaign to address the mortgage, hopefully tied to our centennial celebration. He said most of us need some education about what it means to be a giver.

Leanne Gronneberg asked about his strong language in respect to the estate gift. Pastor Kris said he worried that many people feel that they don't need to give because of the large estate gift. He said that when we have a gift like that, it can be detrimental to our souls.

Sharon Larson said she was surprised that people would reduce giving because of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

FEBRUARY 9, 2020

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES CONTINUED

Pastor Kris Gorden said some individuals have given gifts previously to the church, but are now giving it elsewhere because of a tax credit. The Olivet Foundation hopes to benefit from that in the future.

Jennie Millerhagen said we need to find a way to somehow get money from somewhere else, citing St. Anthony Church and its fall fund raiser as an example. She encouraged Olivet to have events that can raise money and perhaps also bring in new members.

It was moved and seconded (Bruce Anderson/John Larson) to approve the 2020 mission plan. Motion carried.

President Tim Rensch said commission reports are included in the annual report. He announced that Olivet is looking for delegates to attend the Eastern ND synod meeting, June 6-7. It will be an important meeting as a new bishop will be elected.

Pastor Bill Boelter Report. Pastor Bill said he has finished 15 years at Olivet Lutheran Church, that it has been a blessing to be here, that every year he discovers new 3 ministries and new opportunities to engage. He said his family is actively engaged in Olivet Lutheran Church and they want him to stay involved at Olivet. He emphasized that Jeanette also thoroughly enjoys being a part of Olivet Lutheran Church.

Pastor Tiffany Sundeen Report. Pastor Tiffany said she has been at Olivet for 18 years, that it is a privilege to serve and to serve with you. She cited examples of ways that Olivet Lutheran Church has provided financial and food support to those in need and highlighted the joy of telling a young person about Jesus. She said that it's because of what we do together that those opportunities are even possible. Pastor Tiffany thanked the congregation for its generosity, for allowing 55 nonprofits to meet in our building. She said that Olivet is known as a community church, that we are all ministers and we still need to invite people to come, that people still need to hear about Jesus.

Lay Minister Grant Vanderford Report. Grant said he has been a staff member since 2012. He will graduate in May, the call process will begin sometime after March, and they are waiting to see where God is calling them. Grant said he is eternally grateful for what Olivet Lutheran Church has done for them and the preparation it has provided for a future call.

Pastor Kris Gorden Report. Pastor Kris quoted Dickens, noting that 2019 was the best of times and the worst of times and that he prays to God that he's been through the worst of times. He said he has been reborn, that he anticipates discovering and rediscovering the many ways that God changes our lives. He said one can be new every single day and this is what we will be about in everything we do at Olivet Lutheran Church. He said there are things that a church can offer that the rest of the world cannot, including grace and forgiveness that a new life in Christ promises us. This must always be the message that comes through clearly.

President Tim Rensch provided a thank you to Olivet for its mission, noting that this is where he comes to get his batteries re-charged.

Joe Askew thanked the pastors and council for their dedication to the Eastern ND Synod. He said Olivet is among the top five in giving to the synod of the 192 congregations that are members.

Pastor Tiffany closed with prayer.

It was moved and seconded (Richard Herring/Mikkel Pates) to adjourn the meeting at 10:39 am. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Wohlfeil, Secretary

2020 STATISTICAL SUMMARY

SERVICES DURING	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Regular Sunday	63	87	90	88	101
Communion Sunday	47	24	24	24	101
Marriages	6	8	10	18	20
Funerals	27	41	31	33	37
Wednesday & Holidays	48	62	64	69	70
MEMBERS RECEIVED	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Children baptized	14	23	29	31	35
Adults baptized	0	1	2	1	2
By transfer from ELCA congregations	8	13	24	32	41
From other sources & statistical adjustments	2	8	6	4	6
Total members received	24	45	31	68	84
Young people confirmed	23	21	38	19	20
MEMBERS REMOVED	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
By death	26	35	27	22	32
By transfer to ELCA congregations	22	27	13	34	15
From other sources & statistical adjustments	34	29	1	7	175
Total members removed	82	88	41	63	222
Present membership (confirmed members)	2705	2737	2791	2748	2769
Present membership (non-confirmed)	1211	1229	1246	1259	1243
Total members (through December 31)	3916	3966	4038	4007	4012



107%

107% OF PLEDGE DOLLARS RECOGNIZED

In 2020 we received 107% of our budgeted pledged dollars.

\$59,803

IN ADDITIONAL PRINCIPAL PAYMENTS ON THE MORTGAGE

Your 2020 designated gifts to pay down the mortgage balance made a significant impact.

\$89,301

PAID OUT IN LOCAL & GLOBAL MINISTRY BENEVOLENCES

In 2020 we were able to fulfill our benevolence commitments and extend our support to local and global ministries in need.

STATE OF THE CHURCH: PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings Olivet,

I have been humbled to represent the congregation and council as president this year. This has been a crazy year and I am very thankful for the hardworking pastors, staff, fellow council members, and all of you.

At the beginning of the pandemic, we chose to put safety at the forefront and closed down our building and shifted to operating completely virtual. Streaming our worship services online has been a goal mentioned since I've been on council (and probably before), however it had not yet been accomplished. When we closed due to COVID, Olivet was able to put together a streaming broadcast within a few days. Services at Olivet can now be viewed and shared everywhere. Our 2020 Palm Sunday service has had over 1,400 views! In early 2021, we will be installing a purpose built streaming system which will help us improve the quality and impact of our services. Our youth and other programs also continued to meet with the use of technology. Thank you to all our staff for your creativity and hard work to continue the mission at Olivet.

Thank you Olivet for your continued generosity. During the year you continued to support our mission by fulfilling your pledges or continued regular giving. Despite not having in-person services for most of Lent, Easter, and Christmas, we were able to end the year with a balanced budget without having to make extreme sacrifices to our programs and expenses. During the year we communicated needs and you responded. Our appeal for upgraded camera equipment was quickly raised, our year-end appeal had unprecedented success, and our Christmas Eve dinner was able to expand its scope and scale.

We are ready for 2021 to be a new beginning and hoping to return to the normal before 2020's "new normal." Thank you for being a part of this community.

Steve Wood

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it"
Psalm 118:24

IN MEMORY

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also." - John 14:1-3



We remember these Saints, these Olivet members, who have died this past year.

We know you hold dear many others who also died in 2020.

Barbara Alinder

Joseph A Peterson

Muriel Anderson

Charles Rebsch

Wanda Christensen

Lillian Salisbury

Michael Dronen

Mildred Schimmelpfennig

Violet Halvorson

Joan Scholberg

Marilyn Hartel

Donald L. Scott

Clarence Heinrich

Shirley Short

Marlys Hofstrand

Sherry Selstedt

Gordon Hudson

Peggy Swensen

James R. Krogstad

Norma Tangen

Rodney Kurtti

Howard Vegoe

Geraldine Lechner

Carol Wild

Milton Paulson

Dennis L. Wold

For all the saints who from their labors rest, who thee by faith before the world confessed.

Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest. Alleluia! Alleluia!

But then there breaks a yet more glorious day: the saints triumphant rise in bright array.

The King of Glory passes on His way. Alleluia! Alleluia!

- ELW 422 For All the Saints

PASTOR REPORT

By Senior Pastor Kris Gorden

"What then shall we say about these things?"—Paul, to the Church at Rome

Determining what to say about 2020 in the church is not a task that offers an easy solution. The challenges of a pandemic year are many and varied, yet through it all we experience God's faithfulness in the midst of it all. It is tempting for each of us to dwell in the difficulties and darkness. What brings hope and light is the focus on God's love and never-ending mercy. As always, this will carry the day and bring us into the future God has for Olivet. So, we will move forward covered in a cloak of gratitude.

I am grateful for the people of Olivet. While the length of things like masks, social distancing, and online-only worship was unforeseen, you as the Church, stepped out in faith and said we'll make it through. Financial support, checking in on each other, watching over your congregational family, participating in ministries in a new way witness to the world that the church is not closed, the church as simply left the building. Of course, this is where the church belongs, out in the world of our everyday lives, to share and bring Good News. We learn much about who we are as God's people.

I am grateful for your church staff. Your Olivet staff painstakingly worked through the unknown of the last year. Most of the issues we tackled were new, from how to do worship, getting the livestream going and making plans for new equipment, to reaching out to our congregation in a physically distanced world. Decisions were often not what we wanted nor what our hearts desired, it was simply what we had to do given the circumstances. Your staff worked diligently to make the best, safest and most faithful decisions.

I am grateful for the Church Council. This Council did not meet in person one time. It was painful, yet your leadership team went about its business with faith and determination. What they were able to accomplish over video and email communication is nothing short of miraculous. They kept the ship steady through the storm. This is an amazing group of people and have earned the gratitude of us all.

I am grateful for Olivet's Foundation Board. This group met about 5x the normal amount of meetings, knowing there were decisions to make in managing the Foundation's funds. Moving through the pandemic, they focused on the best use of the funds, made wise investment decisions, made timely grants for ministry, and set up the Foundation for huge success into the future. Great things will come because of the hard work and countless ministries will be supported through their efforts.

I am grateful for the love of God in Christ Jesus. When we start here, nothing is impossible. When we trust this love, no worldly issue is insurmountable. When we nestle in the embrace of this mercy, our lives are different, and the world will see this light in the darkness.

Which brings us back to more words from St. Paul to the Church at Rome. Perhaps these words are the true guide through 2020 and into 2021.

"Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us."—Romans 5:3-5.

May God bless you all.
Pastor Kris

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PASTOR REPORT

By Pastor Bill Boelter

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, ..." — Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

"The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and for evermore." Psalm 121:8

That opening line from Dickens' famous novel describes well the feeling many of us had during 2020. We moved into 2020 anticipating new vitality as we neared the celebration of Olivet's centennial, perhaps a campaign to retire our mortgage debt, renewed worship, continued study opportunities and an exciting youth program with a new director. Lent began and everything went in another direction. Nursing home services were cancelled, home visits discouraged and in-person gatherings for worship or study were put on hold for what we hoped would just be a few weeks. "It was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

We learned about Zoom and GoToMeeting for virtual studies, confirmation and Sunday School. We learned to preach to an empty building while trying to face that distant camera in the balcony so those watching would feel included. We struggled to officiate at weddings and funerals, knowing the risk involved with such gatherings. "It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness."

We found ways to be Church even though we could not gather in person. Phone calls and facetime kept us connected though we continue to long for the human touch.

We learned to celebrate those major events in the life of the Christian community in new and innovative ways. Some have even suggested that perhaps our traditions had been getting in the way of realizing the significance of these occasions. "It was the season of light, it was the season of darkness."

And as we say goodbye to 2020 and move into the new year we trust that the words of the Psalmist are true. "The Lord will keep (our) going out and (our) coming in." We have survived this past year because of the Lord's presence and life-giving Spirit. We are not in this alone and we continue to strive to be faithful in our worship, our study and our service as we respond to the grace of God.

This new year will continue to be a challenge but 2020 forced us to employ our technology in much needed ways. We have developed a system that enables us to reach people all over the country with our worship services and Bible studies. What else will we do in 2021? If 2020 taught us anything it was to be flexible, rely on the Lord, expect the unexpected and know that the Spirit works in many and various ways.

So wear your masks, get vaccinated, keep social distance, pray without ceasing and because the Lord will keep us in all circumstances we will move with confidence from "the worst of times" to "the best of times."

-Pastor Bill

PASTOR REPORT

A Pastoral letter from Tiffany Jeske Sundein about 2020 Ministry

"WE can do all things through Christ who strengthens US."

– Philippians 4:13 (P.T.T. Pastor Tiffany Translation changing the singular I/me to We/Us)

Love, grace, and generosity accompanied us into 2020 and shepherded us through it. None of us expected to encounter such a year as this one in our lifetimes. But here we are, having a story to tell the next generations. We learned about flexibility, adaptability, resilience, and faith that God would see us through together what we could never survive apart.

Remarkably, some highlights from 2020 include a women's retreat with 43 people. Quilters quilted, Bible studies happened in person, and even Chili and Chocolate was celebrated in-person.

And then we shifted to keep an unseen virus at bay and watch out for our neighbors. We are still doing this.

We are learning about:

Masking and 6 feet of physical distance.

Zooming and Go to Meeting for Bible Studies, conference calls, confirmation and school!

Taking temperatures and quarantining and flattening the curve.

Yearning for hugs and working from home.

Having drive-through parades for a newly ordained Pastor Grant and Stewardship Sunday complete with donuts!

Washing our hands, saying our prayers, dealing with furloughs and deaths that still grieve our souls.

We are growing in:

Patience and appreciation for teachers, healthcare workers and so many essential workers who put their lives at risk to serve the greater good.

Having more family time and learning to cook and bake.

Reflection and prayer.

How we found new ways to do things.

Finishing projects, playing games, spending more time outside.

Extending more concern for one another, reconnecting with old friends.

Less rushing and more listening.

Spending this time wisely.

As we begin 2021, we have a firm foundation in Jesus Christ and a story to tell. I thank God for you and pray for God's blessings upon us as we minister together in the grace and love of God.

Peace,
Pastor Tiffany

PASTOR REPORT

P A R I S H H E A L T H

PARISH HEALTH REPORT

By Brenda Bauer, RN, Parish Health Ministry Coordinator

John 1:5 “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.”

This has been a year of darkness. We have seen how COVID-19 spread affecting us with illness, death, and grief. We had to make so many changes. But as Pastor Bill reminded us the first Sunday in the New Year, the darkness does not overcome the light.

We have seen the darkness of a tomb, through isolation and fear as death and illness impacted our lives. We faced and felt division and unrest. Many programs and ways to provide a healing presence changed. But God breaks through that tomb and death and has brought the light of a resurrection for each of us. God's Resurrection Light has provided hope for us. It is in that hope we are reminded, "To let your light shine before God that all may see the good works and give glory to your Father in Heaven." We hear this message at each baptism.

You, as a congregation brought the healing light therapy of Christ. You touched many members here at Olivet and beyond. This past year there were at least 1,123 contacts/volunteers and programs (950.5 hours reported) impacted by your light shining through programs projects, and visits. I especially give thanks for the persons who took on the task of calling our shut-ins on a regular basis once we were affected by quarantines.

Here listed are the many ways you were lights of God's presence:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Sole to Soul hands on volunteers, callers, hospitality providers | Pandemic Information Dispersed |
| Sole to Soul remodeling project volunteers | Blood drive recruitment/donors |
| Provided visits/telephone calls when no visits could be made | Screeners for "return to worship" |
| Delivery persons for our shut Ins amidst quarantine time | Maintain AED/First Aid Kits |
| Knitters/Crocheters who made prayer squares for our youth | Maintain/Clean the lending closet |
| Making of flags and prayer shawls for military recognition | Deliver overflow items to HERO |
| Assist with Service of Hope and Release of Butterflies | Assist with Healing Service |
| Prayer Shawl Knitters and Crocheters | Mask/PPE Gear Makers |
| Kitchen Crew Workers and Task Group | Creative makers of cards |
| Deliverers of Gifts of Care for Veterans | Birthday Card Senders |
| Military Recognition Task Group | Birthday Callers |
| Assist with influenza immunization | Baby Quilt Makers |
| Volunteer Health Professionals | Health screeners |
| Volunteer Faith Community Nurses | Student Volunteers |
| Organizers of the Parish Health office | |

I could not have done this by myself and I cannot begin to list all who have helped. This is not my ministry, but Olivet's ministry. You are the healing hands of Christ in action. You are a LIGHT and may you CONTINUE TO SHINE!

We also need light for our journey. Many of you are aware that my journey has taken a turn. I do not know where it will exactly lead, but I do know from my baptism that the light of Christ will lead me. It is in the light of a resurrection that I have hope for my future journey. As of January 4, 2021, I have applied for disability due to a progressive neurological condition. It is my hope that you, as a congregation, will continue to be instruments of healing allowing the light of God to shine through you and through this ministry.

Serving by the hope and peace of Jesus, our Healer;
Deacon Brenda Bauer

CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY MINISTRIES REPORT

By Tyler Wright, Associate Director of Youth Ministry and
Michelle Elness, Director of Children, Youth, & Family Ministries

This has been a year of newness and teamwork in the church. Just like many around the world, student ministry has had to shift our job expectations. Due to COVID protocols, we moved our ministries to online interactive media. Online learning challenged us to creative meaningful worship practices from a distance. We are confident God has been ever-present, guiding our intent for online learning as we continually evaluated what was working and how to best share God's love with our families from a distance.

We worked with our youth to spread the Good News in new ways at Olivet, many of which were centered around technology. Olivet youth helped livestream worship services, participated in zoom calls for confirmation, and recorded scripture readings at home to be used in worship services. They also lead music at confirmation, preached in worship and some even started community outreach programs to the homeless. Our youth are truly amazing.

Confirmation was centered on core Lutheran education. For curriculum, the youth staff and pastors produced four separate five-week courses: "Fear not", "Creation", "Love God, and Love Neighbor", and "Sin and Grace." Extra points to you if you can guess who wrote which lessons! While online confirmation can be challenging, we were able to offer online resources for prayer, mental health, and fun activities to continue spiritual practices. Each week, confirmation starts off with large group time, then breaking into small group zoom meetings where the focus is on relationship building, how the lessons connect with their lives, and weekly highs and lows. Confirmation continues because of the gracious support of our small group leaders and their willingness to adapt to teaching online. We put a lot of thought into how God is speaking to us, and our returning number of students support that mission.

Confirmation Sunday was a blast having confirmants recognized and supported in front of loved ones while maintaining distance in pews and livestreaming the service for all we could not accommodate in-house due to social distancing constraints. We celebrated the time and effort these dedicated young adults have put into their faith.

Sunday/Wednesday School also had to be revamped due to COVID. The pastors graciously offered to help with lessons via video each week, highlighting the gospel readings and how to keep an active faith, followed with song clips from our Celebrate! band, Jenica, Marlys on piano, and Tyler on guitar at times. Sunday/Wednesday School students also had the opportunity to do crafts and activities that were provided with their email lessons. Family Home-Time resources are filled with ideas, prayers, and family togetherness pursuits. Our pre-K-5th grade students were also offered the option of HelloBible; a subscription faith box service with Bible stories and crafts that is mailed to their home monthly.

Events we have still been able to celebrate during this time:

Palm Sunday/Easter kits	Senior high graduate recognition and quilt pickup
Virtual Vacation Bible School	"Can I ask that" high school program
Outdoor movie night	Sunday / Wednesday School Advent kits
Blessing of the backpacks	Youth Gingerbread house kits
3rd grade bible presentation	Production of a Children's Christmas worship service
Confirmation Sunday	

We are grateful for your continued support, prayers, and love. God will continue to hold us and keep us as we travel this new path and we will continue to spread God's message of Hope.

MUSIC MINISTRIES REPORT

By Marlys Herring, Director of Music,
on behalf of: Patti Hall (Cherub Choir), Carole Skalsky (Joy Choir), Celebrate Band/Singers

We were two and a half months into calendar year 2020 with our music for Olivet when the pandemic was acknowledged and all gatherings at Olivet were ceased. Between January 1 and March 15, the final Sunday when we all were gathered for worship, we had already experienced:

An Epiphany Event, right on the heels of our Christmas services, showcasing every music group at Olivet in an evening of beautiful, relaxing music, followed by a Taste of the World in the Atrium

2-1/2 months of anthems by the Olivet Choir

2-1/2 months of music led by the Celebrate Band and Singers

Three appearances by the Bell Choir

Music from the Sunday School children

A Sunday of Jazz with Bill Law

Since then, none of the Olivet Choirs have met. Sunday/Wednesday School children have not met nor sung. We quickly figured out how to live-stream our services, and have continued to hone those skills. Olivet has provided a traditional service and a service led by our Celebrate folks for you to find online. We even had a couple of months with limited attendance and meticulous screening for our worship, until the COVID numbers made that unwise.

For Christmas 2020, we wanted to do something special for you, so we ventured into new territory, and produced two different services, recording many, many small clips of people and music, and splicing those clips together to make a service. Great care was given to set a recording schedule for everyone involved so that individuals came and did their gig, and then left. There was no gathering of people. We think it turned out very well, and were glad we took the leap to try this. We were encouraged greatly by having the multi-talented Russ Peterson bring his expertise and equipment to our endeavor. Thanks to Russ, Michelle, Brady Herring, Tyler Wright, and Eric Heyer.



We look forward to the time when we can once again all come together to worship, and the lay musicians of Olivet can once again joyfully make music. It will be a joyous occasion! And we will never take that privilege for granted.

Thank you to Patti Hall, Carole Skalsky, and Jenica Boelter for leading the children in music, for Sarah Morrau, Bill Law, Jim Knudson, and Tom Eide for providing the backbone to the Celebrate band, and for Eric Heyer who makes us all sound good as he manages the sound system.

LIFELONG LEARNING COMMISSION REPORT

The Lifelong Learning commission is responsible for program planning and for the management of ministries related to learnings, service, and youth.

2020 Commission Members: Lori Askew, Amy Aasen, Nancy Hagglund-Morgan, Pastor Bill Boelter, Michelle Elness, Tyler Wright, Kaia Hassel, Jessica Larson, Maren Jystad-Spar

Due to COVID-19, the Lifelong Learning Commission was unable to meet on a monthly basis but we were able to have several virtual meetings to discuss ideas and give direction for learning opportunities for all ages at Olivet Lutheran Church. Despite a pandemic, here is a snapshot of what we accomplished during 2020:

YOUTH:

Sunday/Wednesday School is being conducted virtually this program year, we finished out the spring semester of 2020 this way as well. A video is sent to students on Sunday morning along with activities for students/parents to discuss and complete together.

Quarterly kits are sent to all Sun/Wed school students; Lent/ Easter, fall, Christmas, etc. each with special activities, treats and keepsake of the season.

A monthly subscription craft box is also sent to those Sun/Wed school families who opted into that program.

Virtual Vacation Bible School was our option for the summer, and many took part in the fun.

Before COVID shut us down again this fall, the third-grade Bible class was able to take place as a hybrid class and students received their Bibles in worship.

Confirmation preserved as a hybrid model until shut down and now in spite of connection problems and Zoom overloaded students, we connect each week with Pastors, small group leaders and students.

Drive-by events including handing out Olivet quilts to graduating seniors and blessing of the backpacks this fall are good ways to connect with some of our youth.

Even during COVID, our youth program was able to carry on due to the dedicated staff and leaders here at Olivet. Further proof of the talent and fun can be found by going to YouTube and watching the Youth Christmas Program that aired on television on Christmas Eve – a true representation of the wonderful programs and dedicated people here at Olivet.

ADULT LEARNING:

Adult education did suffer somewhat from the pandemic with the loss of our Learning and Sharing time between services. The Thursday morning Bible Study, Women of the Bible, and Soul Sisters did manage to plan Zoom meetings. We rejoice in the technology that allows us to connect.

Lifelong Learning remains committed to help support the growth of all learning opportunities at Olivet for all ages. We are looking forward to being able to meet at the Church more often and worship and learn together in 2021.

PARISH LIFE & SOCIAL OUTREACH COMMISSION REPORT

The Parish Life and Social Outreach Commission is responsible for program planning and for management of ministries related to the congregation's smaller groups engaged in service, care of members, outreach, and mission beyond the congregation.

2020 Commission Members: Denise Eide, Tim Rensch, Dan Hansen, Pastor Tiffany Sundein, Deacon Brenda Bauer, Bev Gravdahl

This year brought eye opening opportunities to look at life and ministry in a different way. Parish Life and Social Outreach continues to build community within the walls of Olivet as well as reach out both locally and globally.

Our year began with parish health ministry's regular health alternative snacks, blood pressures, grief groups, a blood drive, over 90 birthday mission, and more. The Health Cabinet also recognized Vietnam Vets over Memorial Day this year with special tokens of care. We are grateful for Deaconess Brenda Bauer's leadership in this area as well as many volunteers who make the various ministries possible.

As a partner church of Churches United for the Homeless, now Micah's Missions, we commit to raising \$5,000 each year. Chili and Chocolate is one event that helps support this goal and we were able to hold it in 2020 before taking measures for the pandemic.

The Fill the Cup Lenten offering also went to area missions that were greatly in need this year. We can assure you that every dollar donated goes directly to the charities. Ministries supported through this commission include YWCA, New Life Center, Great Plains Food Bank, Emergency Food Pantry, NDSU Campus Ministry, Hero, Habitat for Humanity, Bethany Homes, Oak Grove, a missionary team in Cameroon, LPGM, Cooper House, Gladys Ray, fabric for masks, quilts by the Olivet quilters, and so much more. When there is a need in the community, Olivet is called upon and answers the call over and over again.

The hospitality ministry brought drive through parades, donuts of care delivered to people's door, staff Christmas caroling to some homebound people, and more expressions such as cards and phone calls. Our goal this year was to help people feel connected.

Our biggest opportunity was the Christmas Eve dinner. The generosity of Olivet was incredible! We partnered with Golden Drive Ministry to provide toys for all homeless children. We also provided gift cards and meals at Churches United, Share House, Heart and Soul Café, New Life Center, Youth Works, Fargo Public School kids at risk and more given away at church.

Overall, Olivet Lutheran Church...you are incredible and generous. We look forward to more face to face connections in 2021 and continuing to share the Good News in Jesus Christ.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REPORT

The Resource Development Commission is responsible for program planning and for the management of ministries related to the resources of time, talent, property, and money and for the publicizing and communicating the work of the congregation.

2020 Commission Members: Tracy Lyson, Jill Christopher, Michael Raum, Senior Pastor Kris Gorden, Sarah Lundblad

2020 brought many challenges in these unprecedented and challenging times, but through it all, we continue to see God's blessings. A big THANK YOU to our members for your steadfast financial and other support to Olivet Lutheran Church throughout the challenges that 2020 brought. We've missed gathering for most of the year in person, and thank you all for your continued support for the mission we share.

GOOD NEWS:

Through the end of the year, our pledged dollars exceeded budget by \$53,858.64. That overage amount made up a portion of the budget shortfall we saw for unpledged dollars and what has been historically recorded for plate offerings. The "I Love My Church" campaign raised \$105,253.13, which was amazing, and we continue to be humbled by the generosity of our members. We also ended the year \$40,337.26 under our expense budget.

Olivet applied for and received a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan in 2020. We have already filed the SBA's PPP Loan Forgiveness application and are hopeful that we will receive forgiveness from the SBA for the loan amount. Those funds were crucial to balancing the budget for 2020. We also applied for and were granted \$9,799.11 in Economic Resiliency Grant funds to assist with certain COVID specific related expenses that were incurred. Additionally, a portion of the memorial funds which were received as gifts in previous years were allocated to balance the 2020 budget.

MORE GOOD NEWS:

2020 brought unique challenges with COVID closures and required us to find new way to reach our members and the community through worship online. That required us to purchase additional camera and sound equipment in order to more efficiently and effectively live-stream worship services. A portion of the funds necessary for the additional equipment was paid through memorial gifts, with the balance funded through a special appeal and the generosity of our members to meet the needs of the church. Again, we are thankful for your support.

We continue to be mindful of being good stewards of the gifts we receive. As in previous years, one of the challenges we face is trying to understand and forecast giving from our membership. Over the years we've seen changes in giving trends. Although total contributions to Olivet have not dropped significantly, our percentage of members pledging has. This makes it difficult to make a year-long budget. We continue to focus on appealing to our members and families to become involved and reminding of the importance of annual pledges to ensure that we can successfully fulfill our mission. We need everyone's help. Every contribution has an impact.

Despite the challenges of 2020, we continue to be reminded of God's goodness and grace. We continue to trust that God will provide for our church and are truly humbled by the generosity and giving spirit of our members. Thank you for your continued support in Olivet's mission and ministry.

WORSHIP & WITNESS COMMISSION REPORT

The Worship and Witness Commission is responsible for program planning and for the management of ministries related to large gatherings for worship and praise, nurturing of members, and for witness and outreach to the unchurched of the community.

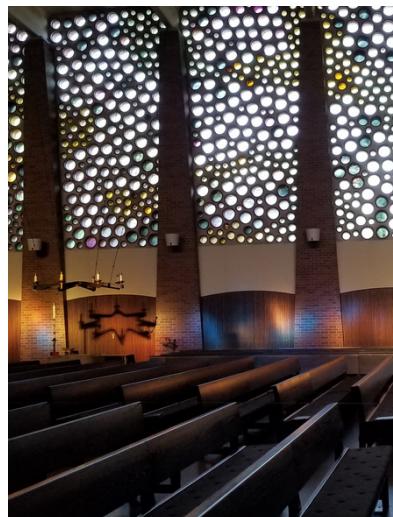
2020 Commission Members: DeNae Millar, Nola Storm, Steve Wood, Bev Gravdahl and Senior Pastor Kris Gorden.

By the time the 2020 Worship and Witness commission was able to meet for their first meeting of the year, the building was already closed and services had gone online. Our first meeting was to discuss how the new broadcasting was operating. The pastors, staff, as well as help from the congregation had quickly implemented a way to get our services broadcasted on Youtube.

Throughout the spring and early summer we planned for what the church would look like once the doors were opened; what precautions needed to be in place and what factors in the community were needed before we could open. In June, we started with a weekly outdoor worship service with contemporary music. In July we were having services again within the building.

By October, the COVID cases in the community made it necessary to close down the building again and have all of our services online only. Thanksgiving through Christmas had online only services. By not having live Christmas services, we were able to pre-record and edit the services that were broadcasted on Youtube as well as KVRR.

In 2021, we feel the collective fatigue for virtual meetings and while the pandemic is still a factor, we are looking for more opportunities to meet in person while still doing so safely.



OLIVET LUTHERAN FOUNDATION

In December 2019, Olivet received the final installment of a gift from the Olson estate. This gift increased the total endowed funds to approximately \$1 million.

Considering this new fund level and in anticipation of future gifts, it was evident that we should increase the dimension of the Foundation's investment portfolio so as to optimize growth potential. Up to this point, approximately 50% of the Foundation assets had been held in cash bank deposit accounts and 50% in CD-type holdings through the ELCA Mission Investment Fund.

After informally gathering information from two investment management options, it became clear that we needed to expand the search to the wider community and embark on a due diligence process. The activities included issuing a detailed Request for Proposals (RFP) to five additional investment management firms, an objective analysis and review process, followed by in person and virtual interviews with two finalist firms. The Foundation Board selected Heartland Trust to manage investment of the Olivet Foundation funds. The Board informed the Council of our decision as well as providing a documentation of the review and selection process.

The Olivet Foundation has a responsibility to advance the mission of Olivet Lutheran Church and realize endowment growth by encouraging additional gifts. In partnership with Heartland Trust, we intend to provide educational information to assist prospective and current donors concerning gift options and opportunities.

Foundation Transition

Based on the discussions in this review process and additional research, the Board of the Olivet Foundation recommends that steps be initiated to transition the Olivet Foundation from a sub-entity of Olivet Lutheran Church to a standalone 501(c)(3) organization with a unique tax ID. The Foundation will remain a ministry of Olivet Lutheran Church, however, this action will maximize the options for donors to make legacy and outright gifts to the Olivet Foundation. This will involve amendments to the congregation's constitution and the Foundation Board stands ready to partner with the Council in coordinating these efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

The Olivet Foundation Board

Steve Thom, Terri Hedman, Mikkel Pates, Leanne Gronneberg, Steve Strinden, Dale Briest
Tracy Lyson, Steve Wood, Pastor Kris Gorden

FUND BALANCE JANUARY 1, 2020	\$1,183,652.99	
<u>INCOME</u>		
Interest Income.....	\$15,274.14	
Donations/Memorials.....	\$390.00	\$15,664.14
<u>DISBURSEMENTS</u>		
Education Support.....	\$2,532.76	
Scholarships.....	\$1,500.00	
Youth.....	\$1,000.00	
Bank Charges.....	\$20.00	\$5,052.76
FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 31, 2020	\$1,194,264.37	

GET INVOLVED

VOLUNTEER

Do you want to meet people at church? Show your commitment to putting your faith in action? Olivet is always seeking volunteers to fill a wide variety of roles — from coffee servers and ushers to shelter volunteers and audio/visual roles. There is a place for you to get involved no matter your availability or skillset.

Regular opportunities to volunteer include:

- Ushers
- Communion servers
- Communion runners
- Greeters
- Scripture readers
- Audio/visual techs
- Music ministries
- Olivet visitors
- Health ministries
- Confirmation leaders
- Sunday/Wednesday school teachers

SHARE

We are excited to see, share and promote the wonderful things that happen both at Olivet and beyond our walls. We invite you to share your Olivet experience with friends and family, either via word of mouth or social media. We also like to celebrate YOU so we want to hear about all of your amazing achievements. Please let us know the great things you're up to we can share with your Olivet family. Email news@olivet.org or call the church office at 701.235.6603 to share your news.

SUPPORT

When you make financial contributions to Olivet, you are supporting our ministries which seek to support and transform the community around us. Aside from Sunday and Wednesday worship offering, there are several other means in which you can contribute regularly or as you are able.

- Online donations via debit/credit card
- Automatic bank drafts
- Mail donations to the church
- Participate in special appeals or campaigns as needs arise
- Encourage your child or youth to participate in the Sunday / Wednesday school offering that is used to support the children we sponsor through Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry.

To learn more about giving options, please visit www.olivet.org/give or call the church office at 701.235.6603.

SERVE

If you would like to be more engaged and active with the church, we invite you to consider serving on our church council, foundation board, or on a committee. Or, if you are passionate about bringing something new to the church, we'd love to hear your ideas.

To learn where your skills may be best put to use or where volunteer openings may exist, please contact Kelly Heyer at kheyer@olivet.org.

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Sarah Morrau

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