

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER NEWSLETTER



Pastor's Letter

Dear Beloved Mt. Olivet family,

We have had a full summer at Mt. Olivet. From May-August we have celebrated three baptisms, six new members, the confirmation of three of our young men, and recognized one college graduate. We have mourned the loss of two of our long-time members, Gerrie Clay and Karen Taylor. We have reached out to our community to share the love and joy present at Mt. Olivet by participating in the 4th of July parade and back to school night at the Farmers Market. Our youth participated in Vacation Bible School, brought their backpacks to church for a blessing, and assembled 36 school kits for Lutheran World Relief with school supplies donated by the congregation. Our seniors gathered for monthly Bread Breakers lunches. We had a family movie night complete with popcorn and root beer or orange floats. We participated in a beautiful worship service at Swede Valley with a choir of Mt. Olivet and Immanuel members and we did a Christmas in July lessons and carols service. If you're feeling tired at the end of the summer, this all might be why! Doing all of this would not be possible without the leadership of our council and the support of our congregation. Thank you for your donations of time, talent, and treasure to make all of these ministries possible. Thank you especially to our evangelism, social concerns, and faith formation folks for stepping in to help lead or organize many of the things we did this summer. You are greatly appreciated!

As we transition into fall and another school year, we will resume many things like Sunday School and confirmation. We are also hoping to begin organizing a youth group (or Luther League as it was called in the past) for our middle school and high school youth. If this is something you would be interested in helping with, please talk with me.

A colleague of mine share that every fall, as the new school and program year begins, the church faces the challenge of believing that God is going to do something new with us. For some of us, the idea that God is might do something new with us is scary and we quickly become defensive because we like things just the way they are. Sure, we would love say, more people in worship, but not at the cost of having to give up our favorite pew to sit in, compromise beloved traditions, or change our worship and music.

Over the past few months, our council has been reading the book “Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive” by Thom S. Rainer. In it we have learned that the majority of churches that hold too tightly to the way things have always been, refuse to reach out to their community, and/or will not take risks, will slowly erode and die. While it can be tempting to chase a vision of a past time when more of our friends were here and believe that if we just get them back, things will be fine, Rainer’s research and ministry experienced has shown that the vast majority of the time, that does not work.

What works is different for each community and congregation. But central to it is deep trust and sincere prayers that God will make a way forward and use us as a congregation to share the good news of Christ. To borrow some words from my colleague who shared about the challenge of believing God is going to do something new with us,

We need to all risk to believe that Jesus is coming again to walk alongside us, to listen to us in ways that open us up, to place a fire within us to share, not just what we have received, but to share our very selves... with each other... with others... with “the” other. May we all risk to believe that God longs for each of us to be nurtured in our faith, so that, we notice our neighbor and the strangers in our community in new ways.

May we also be open the idea that if we are to share of our very selves for “the other,” that we need to first receive. May we long to be nurtured in the gifts of our community of faith: vulnerable, accompanying relationships; worship that dis-engages and re-engages us with the world; faith formation that connects our deepest beliefs with our real day-to-day lives; and daily rhythms that help us to do the inner work of creating a holding space within ourselves, a space where we can “stand still... with Jesus.

(Rev. Al Duminy)

I think this is a great prescription for any church and all church members, but especially those of us here at Mt. Olivet where we already have a wonderful family feeling and community to build our faith and outreach on. To help us do this in the coming year, our council voted to participate in something called the Jordan Project through Grandview University. This program specifically serves congregations with women clergy located in small towns and rural areas across the Midwest. It provides a coach and materials to guide the congregation in articulating its mission and values and then building on those things to risk that God can and will do something new in us to grow in faith and community.

The Jordan Project then asks that the congregation take these mission and values that it has articulated and use them to do something for or in the community. By grounding our conversations and discernment in the mission and values of our church, whatever “new” we come up with should fit with who we are and what our priorities are.

What this something is, is left entirely up to the congregation but in order to accomplish it, the Jordan Project provides a \$750 grant for funding. Your council has felt like this is a good opportunity for our congregation and we are thankful for the small team of 4 or 5 members who have agreed to be the Jordan Project crew and help lead the congregation through this process. I have participated in other projects through Grandview like this one and know that it has good leadership and will be responsive to our wants and needs, so I am excited to share in this with you.

Please keep your council and Jordan Project team in prayer over the next 8 months as we work for the long-term health and well-being of our beloved family of faith, trusting that God’s Spirit is guiding us. I am thankful for each of you that make up this family of faith and the gifts you share here. May God bless you in all you do and increase in you a great devotion and trust in his love and leading.

In Christ,
Pastor Kimberly

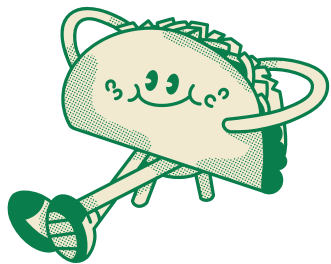
Sunday School Begins!

Sunday School will begin on Sunday, Sept. 20. Kids will receive a new Bible during worship and then Sunday School classes will be held at their normal time that morning.



Intergenerational Service Project

On Sunday, Sept. 27 we will be having doing an intergenerational service project during fellowship time. It won't take long with everyone pitching in so there will still be plenty of time to enjoy your coffee and treats. Our youth will lead us in making bags for the Food Bank of Iowa from old adult sized t-shirts. If you have a few extra adult sized t-shirts that you do not use, please bring them to church that day so they can be transformed into bags that will be used by food pantries across our area. If you have any questions, please talk to Meg Menke.



Bread Breakers

The next Bread Breakers will meet Wednesday, Sept. 16 at noon. We will be having walking tacos so bring a friend and join us for some good fellowship.

Co-Treasurer Announcement

After many years of faithful service as our co-treasurers, Tyler Huntington and Doug Stetzel have announced they will be concluding their positions at the end of this year. We give thanks to them for their faithfulness in carrying out this office and know that they leave behind big shoes to fill. If you would be interested in serving as a treasurer or co-treasurer, please talk to Randy Reuter.



Reformation Potluck

Save the date for the annual Mt. Olivet Reformation Potluck. The potluck will be held on Sunday, October 25 at 5:30pm in the basement at LaPoste. Please bring a German themed dish to share.

Confirmation Parents Meeting

Confirmation parents meeting will be Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 6pm. Confirmation is open to all middle school students so if you have a young person who would like to attend, please plan on having a parent at this meeting.

Thoughts and Prayers

Our thoughts and prayers remain with the families of Gerrie Clay and Karen Taylor who both passed away this summer: Gerri on June 29, 2026 and Karen on August 12. May God's comfort surround and fill the hearts of their families and may their memories be a blessing for all.

Star Words

Do you still have your star word that you received at the beginning of January to guide you through the year? If you do, here are some reflection prompts for this fall as you continue on your journey.

- Who have you shared your star word with? What have you shared? Have they given you any outside insight on how you interact with your star word?
- How could you use your star word and your journey with it to teach someone about faith?
- Are there any actions, habits, etc. that you've decided need to fall by the wayside as you've reflected on your star word?



Worship Leaders

Sept 6: Van Kirk Family

Sept 13: Niemeyer Family

Sept 20: Menke Family

Sept 27: Nelson Family

Oct 4: Golay Family

Oct 8: Burgett Family

Oct 25: Huntington and Kingsley Families

Altar Guild

Sept 6: Claire Drizness

Sept 13: Teresa Painter

Sept 20: Marlene Johnson

Sept 27:

Oct 4: Teresa Painter

Oct 11: Marlene Johnson

Oct 18:

Oct 25:

Fellowship Hosts

Sept 6: Becky Reuter

Sept 13: Sandy Seeman

Sept 20: Claire Drizness, Bev Koob, Liz Eastman

Sept 27:

Oct 4: Wanitta Ramsey and Deb Rose

Oct 11: Darlene Lyons and Harley Weyer

Oct 18:

Oct 25: Teresa Painter and Elaine Rains

Mowing

Sept 3-5: Mike Ramsey

Sept 10-12: Ned Menke

Sept 17-19:

Sept 24-26:

Oct 1-3:

Oct 8-10:

Oct 15-17:

Oct 22-24:

SUMMER 2026

Mt Olivet Lutheran Church

Baptisms



Beau Dardanes: May 17



Deb Rose: June 7



Luca Kingsley: July 19

New Members



Welcome Carol Johnson, Deb Rose, Clay Surom, Amber, Chris, and Beau Dardanes



Worship at Swede Valley



4th of July Parade



Farmer's Market



Vacation Bible School



Backpack Blessing and Lutheran World Relief School Kits



Family Movie Night

Thank you for a great summer!