



## Newsletter

# 2024

### Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church

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### ***From Pastor Kimberly:***

The synod assembly for Southeastern Iowa synod was held May 17 and 18 in Coralville. We did not have any delegates from Mt. Olivet this year, so I thought I would use this month's newsletter to give you a brief update from the assembly.

The theme of the assembly was "Listen, God is Calling." We had absolutely amazing music both during worship and as a concert the first night. The music was led by Jon Ailabouni who is a Palestinian American trumpet player and jazz musician. He also led a workshop on what jazz can teach us for ministry and life together in the Christian community. Good jazz can happen only when each individual player cares about the whole and tries to make the other artists they are playing with "sound good". By focusing on how their contribution to the music can enhance other's contribution, beautiful music happens. We can carry this same kind of mind set into our faith lives as we focus on ways to make the world better for our neighbors which has the effect of making it better for us. This kind of jazz living creates a beautiful interdependence that mirrors the life Jesus calls his followers to.

The second educational session at synod assembly was a brief introduction to the Shrink Smart initiative out of Iowa State University. This initiative looks at the decline of rural communities in our country and focuses on what communities can do to continue to thrive. They acknowledge that communities may not be able to "get back" the younger generations that have moved to more urban areas for employment and education opportunities, but they believe that small communities still have much to offer their residents. The presenters theorized that much of what they studied in rural communities could also apply to small churches. Small churches may not be able to get back members that they lost to larger churches or who quit going to church all together, but they can do things that help current members thrive and grow in their faith. They stressed the importance of creating a vision that is not focused on increasing numbers or getting people back, but instead on how a faith community can thrive in life together. By growing in our faith and our community, we can grow closer to Jesus. It was an interesting theory and they plan to host some workshops for faith communities in the future where they can spend more time on their researches connection to and take aways for faith communities.

The final piece from synod assembly that I want to highlight is the update from the Commission For a Renewed Lutheran Church. This commission was formed to look at the governance and structures of the ELCA to determine whether the way the denomination has been organized for the last forty years is the best way for us moving forward. They have found in their research that there are things that aren't working the way that we had hoped and they are in the process of crafting recommendations for moving forward. Included in their work is a deliberate effort to create systems that are free from bias against race, gender, sexuality, etc. They want to find ways to address inequalities so that the gifts of all people and all congregations can be realized.

The commission is also looking to see if we still need 65 synods and 9 regions or if there is another way of organizing that makes more sense in light of the changing place for churches in our larger society. Their work is scheduled to be completed in 2025 with their results being shared and recommendations voted upon at the church wide assembly in July of that year.

There was a lot packed into our short assembly this year. I look forward to hearing more on both the Shrink Smart initiative out of Iowa State and from the Commission For a Renewed Lutheran Church. There is so much good churches like Mt. Olivet can do in their community and I hope that the denomination is able to find ways to support that work to the fullest extent possible.

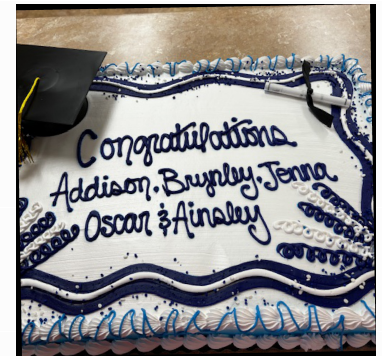
**With love in Christ,  
Pastor Kimberly**

## Honoring our Graduates



**On May 19** during worship we honored our graduates. During Fellowship we celebrated with a beautiful cake.

Our graduates included Brynley Hayes, Addison Huntington, Jenna Nelson, Oscar Acuna and Ainsley Marburger



Here is a note from Brynley: *Thank you all so much for taking time to celebrate the seniors and I. It was so thoughtful and I love my new bible! It was so fun to be able to celebrate with all of you.*



**Congregational outing** to an Iowa Cubs Game on Sunday, Aug 4. Game time is 1:08pm. Cost of tickets will depend on how large of a group we get. We will need a sign up sheet and maybe have sign ups by the end of June.

## Prayer List

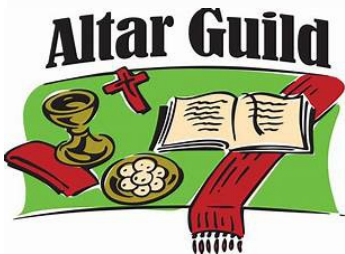
Prayers are powerful and as a church we want to be sure that whenever anyone in our family is hurting we are lifting them up in prayer. So please feel free to contact any of our church council members with any prayer concerns you may have. These may be for yourself or for people you care about, members or not.





**Walking Together Report** – this is a pilot program with Immanuel Lutheran and Dan from the Synod office, along with members of Mt. Olivet, to discuss how things are going with Pastor Kim and the sharing agreement.

**Quarter Tube:** Bring your quarters in to fill the Quarter Tube to benefit the Perry Ministerial group.



**Altar Guild:** All those interested in helping out with the Altar Guild, please talk with Darlene Lyons to learn about procedures and showing you where the documentation is for all procedures and the calendar for parament colors.

### **Worship Leaders & Greeters - June**

June 2: Burns/Weyer

June 9 : Niemeyers

June 16: Menkes

June 23: Reuters

*June 30: no one listed*

### **Fellowship for June**

June 2 : Smiths

June 9 : Burgetts

June 16 :

June 23 : Lamms

June 30 : Normans

**36th Annual Convention and Gathering of the Southeastern Iowa Synod Women** of the ELCA will be June 14th and 15th at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clinton, Iowa. For more information or registration materials, please see the community event bulletin board.



### **Mowing Schedule**

Week of June 3 and June 10 Darek VanKirk

Week of June 17 Claire Drizness

Week of June 24 Nick Gregory

Week of June 30 Randy Reuter