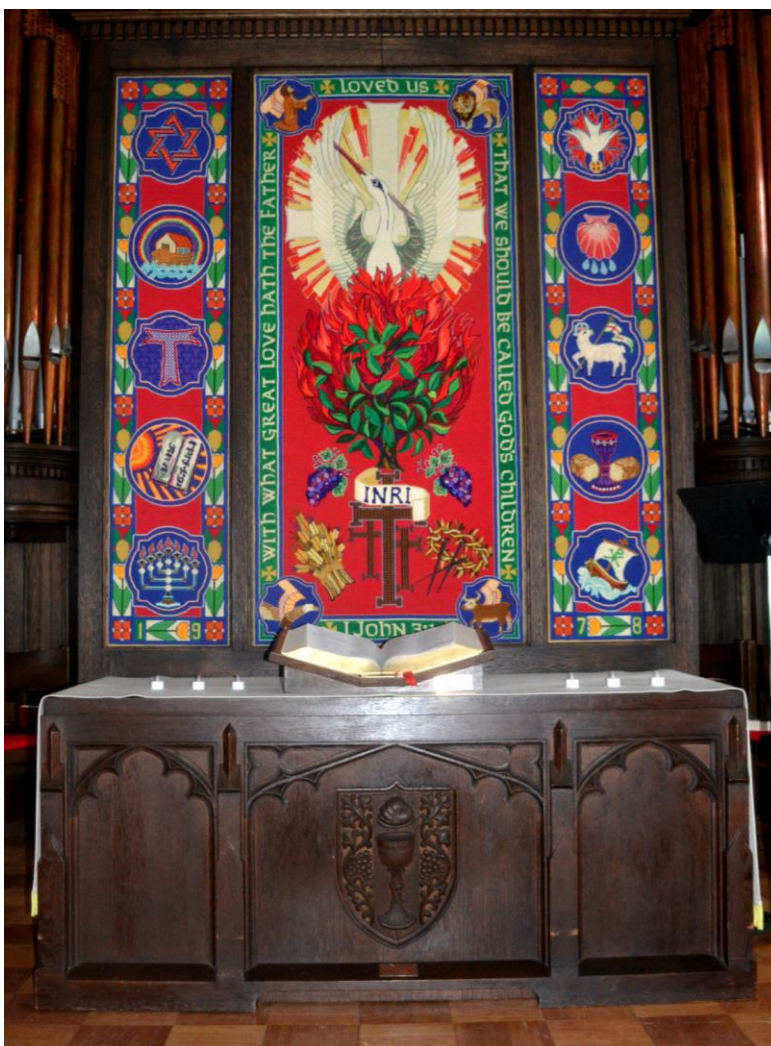


Olivet Congregational Church, UCC

St. Paul, Minnesota Local Church Profile

Seeking a ¾ - time Designated Term Pastor

Validated 6/1/23



Statement of Consent

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the Committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Individuals responsible for the contents of the Local Church Profile:

Kathryn Lamp, Chair of the Pastoral Search Committee
Art Kaemmer, Committee member
Johnell Kusler, Committee member
Connie Nelson, Committee member

The Local Church Profile was reviewed and approved by the Olivet Church Council.

Signed *Kathryn Lamp* Committee Chair, May 1, 2023

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Position to be filled

¾ time Designated –Term Pastor, the term to be negotiated.

Please note that we hope this can become a Settled position.

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Reflection

A Day of Sunday Worship at Olivet



Walking to church on this Sunday morning, I marvel at God's creation: the air is filled with the fragrances of spring. Color radiates from many gardens in our neighborhood, creating a veritable feast of color.

Up a few steps and through the wrought iron arch, our courtyard offers a serene, meditative, sacred space thanks to Clarence Johnston's awe-inspiring architecture. This courtyard has embraced countless summer readings, support groups, wedding receptions, reunions, memorial services and other gatherings.

Michael Price's bronze triptych punctuates one side of the courtyard. The late Professor Price, himself an active member of the Olivet community while maintaining his Jewish faith, created sculptures, many of them religious, throughout Minnesota, including the statue of F. Scott Fitzgerald in Rice Park in downtown St. Paul. The Olivet triptych illustrates "The Healing of the Paralytic," "The Prodigal Son," and "The Clothing of the Naked" – Biblical texts of righteous acts made possible by faith.

Crossing the threshold and entering the Sanctuary, the visitor delights in the sounds of voices and musical instruments. The Music Director pushes air through the organ pipes, warming them up as sacred music emerges. On some Sundays, the majestic organ, hand built by Lynn A. Dobson, is supplemented by

other instruments, including piano, harpsichord, brass, strings, and a bell choir. Music is truly an integral part of our Olivet church tradition and identity.

I take my place in the tenor section as the choir's voices fill the sanctuary, an enduring tradition from our founding: music that's inspiring, empowering, and healing. Music shapes our lives.



Our minister rises, approaches the pulpit and calls us to worship. A children's sermon, sacred stories and hymns follow and then a sermon that, with grace and humility, connects the scripture with our lives. After the sermon comes a shared hymn, an offertory, and prayers. A deacon offers individual prayers from the congregation each Sunday, followed by a silent prayer, a pastoral prayer and the Lord's

Prayer. A closing hymn is followed by the pastoral Benediction. I feel an inner peace and affirmation during the postlude and momentary silence.

Folks then gather in the Fellowship Hall for a social hour over coffee. This, too, is a sacred time where ideas, visions, passions, thoughts and emotions are shared within our church family. Laughter, chatter, and the playful energy of children fill the space.

Doors open to the bright sun, radiating a warmth like so many of the conversations over the life of this church.

The sounds gradually fade, as people drift away. Exiting the courtyard, I look up at the newly restored cupola and spire pointing toward the heavens. Heading for home through the neighborhood, I once again appreciate previous generations who have strolled along this same path.

Energized, I inhale the spring and hum the hymns "Be Thou My Vision" and "Be Still My Soul," and marvel at the calm I feel. Feeling alive to hope and love, I find renewed strength in God's promise.

- *Gordon Deane, Senior Deacon*

Olivet's Mission

The Triune God who brought Israel out of Egypt, and who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, is our "Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend."

Olivet Congregational Church is a community in Jesus Christ dedicated to the service of God. Enlivened and guided by the Holy Spirit, we seek to grow in faith, fellowship, and service as well.

- Gather regularly to worship God in word and sacrament, with liturgy rich in the language and music of our living Christian heritage.
- Fulfill our baptismal vows by steeping ourselves and our children in the biblical tradition through prayer and study, reading and meditation, teaching and example.
- Care for one another, serving our community, and reaching out to those in need.
- Rejoice in the splendid variety of the human family; seeking to understand with respect and reverence the insights of those whose convictions differ from our own.
- Welcome all who wish to worship.
- Pledge to be faithful stewards of God's abundant gifts.

Membership Information

	Membership Information		
	Total	Active	Inactive
As of January 1, 2022	120	58	72
As of January 1, 2023	127	60	67

Olivet is an older church within a vibrant and changing neighborhood of St. Paul. We have changed from a "neighborhood church" to a church within a neighborhood. St. Paul is a city of neighborhoods and approximately half of the congregation's members live within the three or four neighborhoods surrounding the Union Park neighborhood of Olivet. Other active members live primarily in adjacent suburbs within Ramsey County. Our membership is white and older. Most members are over age 60 and 87.5% have been members of Olivet for 20 years or more. 70% of the congregation is retired from responsible positions in education, business, law, healthcare, and government.

Attendance at Sunday services since COVID restrictions lifted is fairly stable at 40 persons. Usually 5 or 6 persons are always on zoom.

Reverend Kristen Nelson is an ordained UCC minister and currently a member of Olivet. Kristen is our Interim Minister.

Data from the congregational survey in Fall 2022:

Gender			
Female	Male	Other	Prefer Not to Identify
64%	26%	3%	7%

Membership Age		
55 - 64	65 - 74	+75
17%	54%	29%

Marital Status					
Single	Living in a Committed Relationship	Married	Widowed	Separated or Divorced	Prefer Not to Answer
5%	10%	55%	19%	2%	9%

Education Level of Adults			
High School	Some College or Training	College	Graduate School
7%	2%	17%	74%

Employment Status		
Employed Full Time	Employed Part Time	Retired
13%	17%	70%

Occupation of Adults				
Clerical Work	Sales Work	Proprietor, Manager or Public Official	Professional, Technical	Other
7%	3%	7%	77%	6%

Ethnicity		
White	Mixed	Prefer Not to Identify
90%	3%	7%

Olivet's History

Olivet Congregational Church has been a community within St. Paul's Merriam Park neighborhood since 1888. Like many churches, we have grown and shrunk over the years, reflecting social change, yet constantly striving to provide a safe place for people to share spiritual needs, rituals, and ideas through good times and bad. Through it all, Olivet has taken an active part in the life of the Merriam Park neighborhood. Olivet's Fellowship Hall/gym serves as a reminder of the days when churches had sports teams in friendly competition.

The Olivet Congregational Church building was designed by Clarence H. Johnston (1859-1936) in the Merriam Park neighborhood of St. Paul, Minnesota. Olivet has a Lynn Dobson organ, one of Dobson's earliest designs, which was dedicated on January 23, 1977.



Bronze sculptures created by the late Dr. Michael Price illustrate the "Olivet Triptych": "The Healing of the Paralytic," "The Prodigal Son," and "The Clothing of the Naked" which stand in the courtyard. Olivet's sculptures are renderings of Biblical texts. In Professor Price's words at their dedication for the upcoming Centennial in 1988: "These stories (take)...the form of righteous acts made possible by faith." These words and sculptures describe the church's history. This art speaks to Olivet's historical connection to the community and our efforts to keep the record of this history alive.

Olivet's *Centennial* book states that the Rev. Herbert Macy of New England looked to St. Paul as a place to organize a Congregational Church, and the Olivet Congregational Church and Society was organized on January 15, 1888. In 1905, through loans and fundraising by the newly formed church, two lots were purchased for a church site at the corner of Iglehart and Dewey.

The cornerstone was laid on September 28, 1907, and Dr. Cyrus Northrop, president of the University of Minnesota, addressed the congregation. Before the church building was erected at 1850 Iglehart Avenue, the Olivet Congregation met in a small wood frame building on Prior Avenue. The first historical record of Olivet's fellowship work for the church and the St. Paul community was in 1901.

Records were kept by Olivet Fellowship groups in leather-bound volumes that chronicled members' participation in fundraising for the building and the welfare of the church members and the neighborhood. Through the years, Olivet members recorded activities to benefit the Merriam Park neighborhood, area churches, Boy and Girl Scouts of America, and people outside the St. Paul area. Records were kept of men's fellowship associations and their outreach work for the church community. The Reverend Marcus Cox who served as our minister for 38 years, wrote in *Centennial*: "...we might well think a bit on what constitutes the history of this congregation...the comings and goings of ministers, of the triumphs and near disasters the congregation has weathered. But a complete history would be the story of each member, in turn, living his or her life before God."

Our church has preserved the artistic and architectural gifts of the Clarence H. Johnston building evident in historic stained-glass windows, along with contemporary windows designed by local artist Joan Cox. The church has hosted community art exhibitions and preserves the folk art of the Dossal Screen and an album quilt of our early church history carefully created by long ago members, which is receiving professional restoration and preservation. We hope to exhibit this fabric record of our early church history to the congregation and neighborhood. The Lynn Dobson organ is used both for worship and community concerts. The architectural infrastructure changes to the building that were made to accommodate the weight of the Dobson have been archived but we need preservation and guidance on how to share this history. The Olivet Council and the Archive Committee envision an exhibit that would feature the original architect's plans, the church school rooms, church offices (designed by Johnston's son in 1915), and the organ archives.

The history of Olivet Congregational Church has been faithfully documented throughout the years and this history reveals the integral nature of the church community, the Merriam Park neighborhood within the city of St. Paul, and Olivet's connections to the world through our outreach. We have institutional memory because of our documentation. Olivet has been awarded a structured Legacy Grant through the Minnesota Historical Society.

The archive project is the first step in a phased project to preserve Olivet's history, our building and grounds, and numerous historical artifacts with the guidance of professional archivists and preservationists. History becomes more vital when it becomes living history. The preservation grant will eventually allow Olivet to exhibit the church history for our members and the community, and to inspire and create new relationships and history with contemporary public awareness.

Neighborhood

Olivet is located in the very heart of St. Paul in an established neighborhood called Union Park. The Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis and surrounding suburbs are home to over 3 million people and offer a high quality of life with many parks and waterways, a well-educated and involved citizenry, a thriving arts, music and theatre scene, good job opportunities and growth, an exciting variety of local and ethnic cuisine, excellent health services, outstanding museums, and a recognized supportive environment for women. The Mississippi River is a very short distance away from Merriam Park for scenic drives, walks, running and cycling. Nearby Summit Avenue is lined with beautiful and historic mansions. Three colleges - Macalester, the University of St. Thomas and the College of St. Catherine are just a short distance away, as is a new soccer stadium in the Midway district. An eclectic collection of businesses, including vintage clothing and antique shops, interesting restaurants, pubs and coffee shops line nearby Marshall, University, Selby, Grand and Cleveland avenues. A light-rail service within walking distance of Olivet, beginning at St. Paul's Capitol and connecting the downtowns of the two cities, also provides access to the Minneapolis campus of the University of Minnesota, the main sports venues for the Minnesota Twins, the Vikings and the Timberwolves, as well as the Mall of America and the airport. While the two cities have a very different vibe, one can easily enjoy and appreciate both with easy access from our neighborhood.

Recent Pastoral Ministry



In 2009, Olivet's pastor of 38 years retired. During the following two years, Olivet was led by an interim pastor who helped us grow and remain a healthy church. She created a pastoral review committee and initiated a pastoral search committee. They generated a Church Profile and began an extensive search for a settled pastor.

From 2010 to 2020 we had one settled minister. During this time, the culture of Olivet changed. Many members left and pledge income declined. In January 2020, financial pressures resulted in a contentious annual meeting and no agreed upon budget. The MN Conference UCC office was asked to send a consulting group to Olivet (to conduct a Situational Support Consultation – SSC). They were tasked to recommend a path to reconciliation. The Associate Conference Minister encouraged our minister to resign and a report with recommendations for change was issued to our congregation.

Today we have invested in an honest assessment of what is possible for our future. With the guidance of two interim pastors, we have begun to restore a healthy congregation and create realistic expectations of the next pastor. With their help, Olivet has reconstituted the pastoral relations committee. We are committed to enhance communication and live together faithfully toward God's mission.

Have any previous pastors left under pressure or were they involuntarily terminated? No

Have any previous pastors been involved in a fitness review? No

Who is God Calling Us to Be?

Under the guidance of our Interim Ministers, we are considering a future that would include 1) retaining and sustaining our current members, 2) making concerted efforts to outreach and gain new members and 3) seek opportunities to merge with and/or partner with other churches. During COVID we welcomed into our building a home-based church of young families. It was a positive experience for both congregations, but the stresses of COVID and busy family lives meant the young church saw membership dwindle and they no longer meet at Olivet. We would like to look for more of these opportunities in the future.



Olivet's commitment to connect our building to our community was a key factor in receiving the Historical Society grant funds for our Archive Project is. We envision a "wellness and arts" space for our neighbors. We have rented space to a thriving yoga group, the St. Paul Conservatory of Music, the Fencing Society, and individuals and musicians who seek office space. The result is income that helps support our building and grounds needs, as well as a connection into the community that has resulted in a few new members.

Our Sanctuary can easily seat 120 people. In the past, we have had a few hundred with additional chairs in the Sanctuary and by opening the wall of doors into the Fellowship Hall. Our Sanctuary is the site of

afternoon concerts now by local musician groups. Our building was recently the venue for a day of Medieval reenactments.

Our current Interim Minister is leading us to renew and strengthen our Covenant with each other and with the UCC. We are exploring new ministry ideas and deepening our knowledge of the progressive Christian theology we share with other UCC churches. The UCC Minnesota Conference has been a rich resource for us as we build our organization infrastructure and strengthen our Covenant with the UCC and within our congregation. We are investing in and improving our technology in order to better serve our current members and reach new members. We are experimenting with new meeting formats. We are investing in building improvements, like signage that could make our building more accessible to visitors. We want our new pastor to help us build upon these efforts.

Governance

We are preparing for a new minister with newly revised and reviewed By-laws, an updated Operations Manual and updated performance reviews of all staff. The Church Council is comprised of seven At-Large members and a Moderator elected by the Congregation. The Treasurer and a Secretary also attend. The monthly meetings are now Zoomed and the agenda is published ahead of time so we can welcome members of the Congregation to attend as they are able and interested.

Currently we have six Committees and a Diaconate. The Committee Chairs are not required to serve on the Council but Council members may serve on Committees. Current Committees are: Building and Grounds with 6 members, Community Works/Peace and Justice with 11 members, Finance/Stewardship with 11 members, Human Resources with 4 members, Pastoral Relations with 4 members and Worship/Music with 16 members. The Diaconate is comprised of 9 members.



We have one Sunday service at 10 a.m. The Pastor, the Music Director, and Faith Formation Director, with input and assistance from the Worship Committee, plan the service. Children attend the Children's Sermon and then are excused to the nursery and class. Wednesday evenings are available for fellowship activities such as meals together, adult education and special services. The choir also meets on Wednesday evening for choir practice.

The Diaconate

The Diaconate at Olivet represents the heart of the lay ministry of the church: praying for families and individuals and their concerns, assisting the minister with pastoral care and visits, presenting prayer requests each Sunday during worship, and assisting with communion. Currently we have eight Deacons plus the Senior Deacon who serves on the church council. Deacons focus on creating and maintaining a social connection with members assigned to them – typically eight families.

Music



The importance and deep love of music in the ministry at Olivet cannot be overstated. The splendid Tucker organ designed and built by Lynn Dobson, his fourth of nearly one hundred acclaimed instruments installed in twenty-nine United States, Oxford, England, and Sydney, Australia, has beckoned many fine musicians, including organists Michael Barone (“Pipe Dreams” on NPR), Philip Brunelle (VocalEssence), Bruce Jacobs (Bach Society and Rose Ensemble), and Stephen Cleobury, of King’s College, London. The chimes and the three-octave set of bells from Whitechapel, and our lovely harpsichord are all enjoyed with wonderful effect.

Olivet has attracted fine music directors, organists, and choral conductors who have introduced a depth and breadth of sacred offerings from medieval chant to Bach, Buxtehude, and Distler cantatas to world music sung in Zulu from South Africa, Mayan from Mexico, as well as more accessible languages such as Swedish, Spanish, German, and French. Fred Steele of the Steele Family gospel group has conducted the Olivet choir;

Tony Holt, a former King’s Singer has sung in our choir; and Garrison Keillor has conducted an evening hymn sing for our congregation. Special services have occasioned the commissioning of dedicatory music by noteworthy composers Libby Larson, Stephen Paulus, Bob Chilcott, Ian Kellam, and Abbie Betinis, most of whom have conducted the Olivet choir in rehearsal or a performance of their creations.

Finally, Olivet purchased new hymnals in 2021. After years of reflection and search for a hymnal that combined traditional Protestant hymns with classical, world, contemporary, traditional, and gospel hymns, using inclusive language, *Glory to God*, from the Presbyterian Press, was selected. This choice reflects Olivet Church’s dedication to the open and affirming expression of Olivet’s foundational Christian beliefs and our welcome of other faith experiences and practices.



Community Works

The Community Works Committee (CWC) changed its focus during the pandemic from in-person volunteer activities to one of providing financial support to community organizations that serve our community. The committee now meets twice a year to designate the expenditure of its annual budget, which in 2022 was \$11,000.

The committee's Zoom meetings are attended typically by five to six people. The CWC has made consistent efforts over the years to help the Native American community, both in the Cities (through Interfaith Action) and at the Crow Creek Indian Reservation in Fort Thompson, South Dakota (through Dacotah Tipis - Habitat for Humanity). Up until COVID, a team of adults (and sometimes youth) would spend a week in August at the Reservation working on building or maintaining housing. We have not attempted to travel to Crow Creek since COVID. Members, however, have stayed in touch with the Reservation and two people join Reservation members in Mankato, MN, at the end of the annual Long Ride.

Members of the CWC have also been active in Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative that develops and advocates legislatively for affordable and supportive housing. CWC is strongly interested in focusing its support on community efforts to end homelessness, believing that people cannot survive, much less thrive, without stable housing. To further these efforts, Olivet is a member of the Beacon Interfaith Collaborative, an organization of more than 100 congregations in the Twin Cities that advocate for housing for all and develops supported housing for the lowest income families and individuals, men leaving prison, and homeless teens. A team of 4 members form the core Beacon Leadership Team. The participation emails include several more members. This team is active in advocacy efforts and education. One member of our congregation recently campaigned successfully for a city council position on a platform that specifically called for more affordable housing in a contentious local development project.

In 2022, Olivet joined forces with Trinity Lutheran Church and Dar-Al-Hijrah Mosque to sponsor the resettlement (in Minnesota) of an Afghan family fleeing the Taliban. In February of 2022, the family— a father and mother and six children with a baby on the way - arrived in St Paul. The challenges facing the family are enormous. Olivet members have helped with rent, furnished the home, bought winter clothing, provided transportation, and helped with medical and immigration issues. Supporting the family in their transition to American life will be a multi-year endeavor.

Every November, the CWC co-ordinates the Heffron Fund. Started many years ago by Harvey Heffron, a long- time Olivet member, the fund buys groceries for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. The fund is accrued through individual donations given in response to a CWC appeal in November. This year we will be providing groceries to Little Sisters of the Poor, a not-for-profit nursing home. Congregation members also join with Trinity Lutheran to participate with Feed My Starving Children multiple times a year.

Olivet, through its CWC, is currently donating to the following organizations:

- Crow Creek Dacotah Tipis
- Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative
- Brush with Kindness (Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity – St Paul projects only)

- Provincial Place (through Interfaith Action)
- Department of Indian Works after-school programs
- Department of Indian Works food shelf
- Women's Advocates
- Ujamaa Place
- Alight (formerly American Refugee Committee) – for support of Ukraine/Afghan refugees
- Keystone food shelf

Historically, our Minister has not been active in these volunteer activities but their participation would be most welcome in any activity.

Faith Formation



Olivet has a rich tradition of Christian Education for all ages. Within this heritage of learning we encourage members to seek a deeper understanding of God's grace. In addition to our commitment to children's education, we welcome discovery and solicit a variety of teachers to engage in our adult education program. We are grateful for the talented and committed Faith Formation Directors who have served within our congregation over the years, some of whom have gone on to ordained ministry.

Our Faith Formation Director holds a degree in child development and a minor in family systems from Concordia University. As a child of Olivet, she brings a deep commitment to the mission and ministry of our congregation. She continues to offer insight and fresh ideas for the future of this ministry.

We recently shifted our Sunday school/children's education program into a One Room Schoolhouse model. The Director is trained in the methods of "Godly Play" and child development which she uses weekly to prepare us for growth as we welcome new families. With an updated curriculum and this format of multi-age learning, we feel well equipped for growth.

The current One Room Schoolhouse structure begins with children in worship and then provides children's activities that directly relate to the church season and lessons for each Sunday. Our curriculum fuses the Children's Bible, Godly Play, Children's Ministry, and UCC Faith Formation. For crafts and activities, we use Faith Formation curriculum plans, Pinterest Online, and adult creativity. We are enthusiastic about the possibilities for children's Christian Education going forward as our faith community continues to change and the Holy Spirit calls us into deeper learning.

We've recently added a fully staffed nursery and Sunday school with paid, background checked, child care workers so parents can bring their small children and infants to church and attend the adult service without concern or interruption. In 2021 we implemented a Safe Church Policy to assure safety protocols for children and vulnerable adults. These guidelines and reporting protocols are visible in our restrooms and other public areas.

In the fall of 2022, we started recreating an Adult Education Program post-COVID. This is an area in which we would like our pastor to be involved. Through a survey we learned that people preferred Adult Education about twice a month and many people were eager to be back at church in person. We are reviving an old Olivet tradition: shared meals on the second Wednesday of most months. We are working to assemble a slate of speakers and teachers from various disciplines. Our goal is education and fellowship one to two Wednesdays a month 9 months of the year. Ideally, Adult Education will be a hybrid of zoom and in person learning. Again, this is a goal for our technology upgrades.

Who Do We Want to Minister to Us

In preparation for this Local Church Profile, we administered a congregational survey using a tool from the Hartford Institute. We were very pleased with the results and the participation of 54 members. Some responses highlight areas that are opportunities for action now. For example, most of us have not invited anyone to join us in church services or activities. We need to be more intentional and highlight our special occasions. We also need to strengthen our internal relationships through increased opportunities for social engagement.

Who do we want as our next minister? Our responses were pretty consistent: an extrovert who can “preach, teach, and visit the sick.” In general, we are not interested in a “street preacher” or evangelist. We are interested in learning but not so interested in being told what to believe. We want a minister who will visit and care about the sick and bereaved. We value communication, music and spiritual growth. We know that members will help each other in times of trouble. We value our time of worship on Sunday mornings, and we want sermons that are intellectually challenging, thought-provoking, skillfully delivered and that touch on our daily lives.

- Three quarters of the respondents have been members at Olivet for more than 20 years.
- Eighty-two percent agreed that being at “this church has made a difference in my spiritual life.” Eighty percent said they “feel comfortable” with the church’s identity; 77 percent “have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation,” and 73 percent said they have “a clear understanding of what our church stands for.”
- Every respondent said a minister should be effective in planning and leading worship. Nearly all (95 percent) said a minister should help people develop their spiritual lives, encourage people to “relate their faith to their daily lives,” and maintain confidentiality. Everyone (42 people) who answered the question said it is essential or important for the minister to be an effective preacher/speaker; a strong majority of 83 percent said the minister should continue to develop their own theological and biblical skills.
- Most respondents also said it was essential or important for the minister to:
 - Be a compassionate and caring person (97.5 percent)
 - Able to deal effectively with conflict (97 percent)
 - Be a person of faith (97 percent)
 - Accept people with divergent views (97 percent)
 - Help people work together in solving problems (95 percent)
 - Encourage people to relate their faith to their daily lives (95 percent)
 - Be a good leader (95 percent)

- Able to deal effectively with conflict (97.57 percent)
 - An effective teacher (87 percent)
 - Effective in working with adults (95 percent)
 - Effective in working with youth (79 percent)
 - Effective in working with children (79.49 percent)
 - Effective with committees and officers (90 percent)
 - Encourage others to assume and carryout leadership (97.44 percent)
 - Inspire a sense of confidence (92 percent)
 - An effective administrator (74 percent)
 - Have strong commitment and loyalty (90 percent)
 - Reach out to inactive members (79 percent)
 - Work regularly to bring new members into the church (84 percent)
- More than half of the respondents agreed that sermons should “touch directly on my everyday life,” contain scholarly or literary illustrations, be biblically based and illustrated, “be comforting and reassuring,” be “carefully composed and skillfully delivered” and “spiritually moving and inspirational.” In addition, about half of the respondents said sermons should “reflect on issues and events that go beyond my personal life and local community,” be “challenging and thought-provoking,” and set forth “various sides of an issue without advocating one position as the only Christian position.”

Thirty people wrote answers to an open-ended question about the church’s future. They often called for more self-reflection with attention to diversity, especially youth, racial, ethnic and class diversity.

Ways of Gathering

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	12	Pastor and Church Members
Baptisms (number last year)	1	Pastor and Families
Children’s Groups or Classes	3 or 4	Nursery and Congregation
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	40-50	Pastor, Music Director and Worship
Church-Wide Meals	40-50	Men’s group,
Choirs and Music Groups	Adult choir	Congregation members,
Church-based Bible Study	10	Pastor and members
Communion (served how often?)	At least 1 per month	Pastor and Worship

Olivet's Finances

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES: 2019-2022 Actuals, 2023 Budget	2019 ACTUAL	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL	2023 Budget
OPERATING REVENUE*					
Pledges and General Contributions	224,420	195,946	169,799	185,024	180,967 *
Endowment Income	39,400	40,000	40,000	43,000	43,908
Program Revenue	4,750	2,185	--	--	--
Facility Use Revenue	5,905	1,635	3,190	9,517	18,000
Prior Year Adjustment & Transfers	<u>-2,915</u>	<u>-5,317</u>	--	<u>6,683</u>	<u>18,627</u>
	271,560	234,449	212,989	244,224	261,502
OPERATING EXPENSES					
Pastor and Pulpit	97,733	85,832	81,375	60,553	73,216
Church Staff	100,495	71,681	61,371	87,239	102,275
Benevolence	13,283	12,677	14,325	15,350	16,350
Building & Grounds	38,521	35,134	33,320	41,962	41,763
Administrative	16,254	12,167	12,253	14,517	15,200
Programming	<u>10,591</u>	<u>3,333</u>	<u>3,662</u>	<u>3,224</u>	<u>12,698</u>
	276,877	220,824	206,306	222,845	261,502
NET OPERATING SURPLUS/(LOSS)	(5,317)	13,625	6,683	21,379	TBD

*Notes: For budget purposes we track past year's surpluses and deficits and apply them to the following year, if necessary. We have substantial endowment balances and have a policy to budget five percent each year to support the operating budget. We have a separate endowment that is to be directed to building improvements and maintenance. Budget estimates for pledges and general contributions revenue are conservative resulting in 2023 budget less than 2022 actual.

We are fortunate in that we have always been able to meet our financial obligations. Our last Capital Campaign was more than 15 years ago. Our church building is 138 years old so it is always in need of some repair and upgrade. We have a new roof since 2021 and a commercial grade kitchen. Our building is accessible from two outer doors but it is not fully accessible inside between the upper and lower floors.

We have not begun a new Capital Campaign but we have seeded a Campaign fund with \$13,000 for building upgrades.

Job Description

We anticipate this position to be three-quarter time (30 hours per week.) The Minister of Olivet Congregational Church will be called by the congregation to:

- preach, teach and plan worship
- administer the church operations and manage staff, currently four people
- provide ministerial care
- represent the church in wider church relationships, both ecumenical and denominational

These duties include but are not limited to:

- Regularly preach and administer the Sacraments to the congregation
- Plan and lead worship in conjunction with the Music Director, Faith and Formation Director all and the Worship Committee
- Lead Adult Education programming on at least two Wednesdays each month September-May
- Officiate at weddings
- Officiate at funerals for members
- Visit members who are unable to attend services because they are homebound or hospitalized
- Serve as an ex officio member of the committees, assist them in determining and carrying out their responsibilities and program. It is not necessary or expected that the pastor will attend committee meetings, but the pastor must attend the monthly Council meetings and the quarterly Pastoral Relations Committee meetings.
- Supervise 4 church employees and address staffing issues as they arise; help staff members reach their goals and maximize their potential. The employees are: Custodian (10 hours/wk), Faith Formation (1/2 time), Music Director (15 hours/week) and Church Administrator (3/4 time).
- Counsel members who seek advice on personal matters, provide referrals when necessary
- Help members with their spiritual growth; this includes leading instructional classes, including confirmation
- Assist with the recruitment and assimilation of new members
- Take allocated vacation time to refresh oneself
- Work with the moderator and Pastoral Relations Committee to resolve any areas of conflict as they arise
- Be in tune with the community in which we reside and explore ways we can engage with it.

Expectations for a New Pastor

The Pastoral Search Committee looked at the results of the congregation survey to better determine the qualities we desire in the minister who will lead us forward in our journey. In general, we want a minister to preach, teach and provide pastoral care. The UCC Marks of Ministry offers guidance for our members to assess candidates. We will prioritize candidates who are emotionally mature, who have social skills and will truly like our members, and candidates who are spiritually alive and authentic in their love of God.

In no particular order, we pray our new pastor will:

- Be a person of faith
- Be an effective preacher and leader of worship
- Minister to congregants in crisis
- Make pastoral visits to people who are sick, in long term care or homebound
- Contribute to building fellowship among the staff and the congregation
- Welcome visitors and assist regularly to bring in new members
- Encourage members to relate their faith to their daily lives
- Have a strong commitment to the educational ministry of the church
- Encourage members to assume leadership and foster leadership abilities
- Be accepting of divergent views and manage conflict
- Be compassionate, caring and emotionally mature
- Be a leader we can trust as we navigate the opportunities for growth and change

Financial Support

Olivet has always fulfilled its financial obligations to our pastor. We will offer a salary-and-benefit package commensurate with UCC Minnesota Conference guidelines.

The salary-and-benefits package will include:

- Salary, pro-rated for ¾ time
- Housing allowance*
- Four weeks of paid vacation annually
- Maternity/paternity leave
- UCC Retirement Annuity
- UCC Life and Disability Insurance Benefits
- UCC Family Health Benefits
- UCC Family Dental Benefits
- Social Security/Medicare Offset
- Continuing education funds - \$300 per year
- Continuing education time
- Meeting expense reimbursement
- Books and periodicals
- Reimbursement of fee for criminal background check
- Moving expenses
- Travel reimbursement at the current IRS rate

Additionally, our church supports the idea of a three-month sabbatical after a period of at least 7 years. Previous pastors have been supported through grant-writing and other fundraising activities, and our church has arranged for coverage by a sabbatical supply pastor.

*Olivet does not have a parsonage. We also do not have requirements as to where the pastor may choose to live. Previous pastors have chosen to live in St. Paul.

Olivet 2023 Annual Meeting Closing Prayer

Holy One,

We offer you our gratitude
for your generous gifts--
for the gift of your presence, today and always;
for the multiplicity of visions
and voices of ministry
that have crossed our threshold this last year;
for the different life and soul perspectives
brought to our table;
for all of the people who have come to Olivet
and shared some of their life in this house.

Opening the door to our own mortality,
may we see clearly the revealing legacies of love and grace.
As we continue on our journey to you--
may we know tolerance, acceptance, and forgiveness.

May we find peace and comfort in our life
in your patience with us
as your works in progress and part of your Creation--
bringing us renewed energy and healing;
as we forge ahead with love and faith,
may our imagination take flight
in your Spirit
inspiring new visions,
bringing us ever closer to the church
that we are meant to be
for you, doing your will.

As we slip away into the sacred light
of this afternoon,
on our continued journey towards you,
with many more miles ahead--
may we come to see more of the elusive mystery of the heart;
seeing the world in a different way.
May we know and act on the love of our shepherd,
looking out and caring for one another,
radiating your love and your light--
and bringing more healing into the world--
with peace, justice, grace, joy, hope, and mercy--
And as we do so, hold us close in your Blessing.

--Amen



References:

Rev. Michael Fritz
 Former interim pastor
 612-481-2891 - cell
 1003 High St.
 Alexandria, MN 56308
mfritz@iliff.edu

Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry.

Many of Olivet's members have known each other for decades and have already supported one another through major life changes. They are willing to be there for each other in difficult times and to be vulnerable with each other. In many ways, Olivet has the resources that come with being an urban setting but also the close-knit culture that one would expect from a rural church.

Olivetians can handle a lot of intellectual rigor in their theology and are conscious of our day's social justice issues.

Olivet has impressive financial stewardship.

Olivet's building is a work of art and they genuinely want to share it with the community.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church's ministry.

Olivet utilizes a classically-Congregationalist robust committee structure. But now most of the work is being done by folks over 70 years-old who would like to see their responsibilities reduced, but are instead frequently asked to do more. Olivet needs guidance on either

restructuring how the work of the congregation gets done, or deciding which tasks they are willing to let go of.

In early 2020, Olivet went through a time of intense conflict. The tensions were widespread and very personal. Olivet has in many ways come through to the other side, but has also been left with little tolerance for disagreement. The members willingly share their opinions, but sometimes become overwhelmed when disagreement becomes apparent, in part due to the church's past experiences. I worry that this will make congregation-wide decisions more difficult for some time.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry.

While I was Olivet's interim minister, a small house church met in Olivet's chapel for a period of time. The partnership did not last forever because the house church turned out to be unsustainable and closed. But for a time Olivetians were generous and gracious towards this group of mostly young adults and children who did church in a very different way. Bonds were formed and genuine good will was displayed.

Anything else you wish to share.

Olivet's next settled pastor should be someone who can offer a strong and realistic vision for where the church is being called but also possesses the communication skills to get the members excited about that vision. The vision need not be "get young families to join the church" as Olivetians are open to examining a different future path. This church would benefit from a reassuring pastoral presence who is also in touch with the ways the landscape of church is changing.

Rev. Molly Cox

Former Faith
Formation Staff
person

mollymcox@aol.com

4920 Morningside Rd.

Sr. Louis Pk, MN 55416

952-564-7847 – cell

I had never heard of Olivet Church back in 1985 when I interviewed there for the position of Director of Christian Education. What I found there was a hidden gem of a church! The beautiful courtyard led to a unique and charming building. The people were friendly, with a real sense of community. There was a fine music program, with organ, choir and bells. The church building was enriched by the work of its member artists. A beautiful dossil screen graced the chancel, designed and executed in needlework by church members. It was truly a unique place! I loved the committee that interviewed me - and I guess they loved me, too. I became their Director of Christian Education, and remained with them for eight years. It was my Seminary Internship through my four years at United theological Seminary. I was ordained there to that position in January of 1990.

I need to clarify that I am not related to Marcus Cox, the pastor I served with for eight years. Marc and I were only related as colleagues, and also as friends. Marc was a fine pastor, who served Olivet for over thirty years. His vision of what a church should be shaped Olivet. He envisioned a place of beauty and inspiration - featuring art, music, prayer and fine preaching. That influence is still felt, even years later.

Olivet has a history of renewal - of "rising from the ashes"! When Marc was hired as a young pastor, it was for a one-year term. At the end of that year they were to close! But instead, they were inspired to continue. They would not give up on the church and its beautiful building. That was some 50 years ago - but it's part of their story. Olivet suffers from the same problems that most of our congregations have - demographics and finances. But given their history and uniqueness, the right pastor could help them experience another Renaissance.

Olivet would not be a good fit for a pastor who is heavily into social or political issues. It is a church with a big heart. They have always supported local charities. Early on they supported the first wave of Hmong immigrants who settled in Minnesota. But social action has never been a big priority.

I most recently visited Olivet last summer, when I filled the pulpit for four summers. Many changes - but still the same welcoming community, beautiful traditional service, and prayerful care for one another and the world. They are in my prayers for the right pastor and the renaissance to come!

Blessings!

Rev. Molly Cox

Ann Cimperman

Acimperman@gmail.com

651-206-2138

Ann attends a support group at Olivet and was married in our church.

Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry: I became aware of Olivet after attending an AA recovery meeting there. I certainly appreciate the ministry that has allowed groups such as this to be able to hold these important meetings in your beautiful and comfortable space. As a result of those meetings, I did attend a handful of Sunday services a few years ago. The Open and welcoming atmosphere makes it a peaceful place to worship.

Describe some area of improvement in this church's ministry: I don't have a sufficient amount of information to have any suggestions for improvement. The only reason I don't attend more frequently is due to the distance from my home.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry: I was married (2nd marriage for us both) at Olivette back in 2014. The office staff who helped with the arrangements and the ladies who helped with the catering (and where everything is located in the kitchen!) were so critical!! We were welcomed and encouraged even though we were not members.

Anything else you wish to share: You have such a quaint little church. I hope you are able to find the right fit and enjoy a vibrant church community!

Warm Regards,

Ann Cimperman

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the MN conference UCC.

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *Cindy Mueller*

Rev. Cindy Mueller, Minister for Congregations in Transition for the MN Conference UCC

Email: cindym@uccmn.org

Phone: 612/871-0359

Date: June 1, 2023



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC
 YEARBOOKS

Church#: 361470

Assoc: 434

Schedule: 0 Olivet Congregational UCC

Saint Paul

MN

55104

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2012	287	130	75	0	0	0	0	0	0
2013	287	130	75	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	287	130	75	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	287	130	75	0	0	0	0	0	0
2016	286	70	22	1	0	4	6	0	-1
2017	290	70	22	2	0	3	2	0	3
2018	290	70	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	290	70	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	252	30	0	0	0	0	38	0	-38
2021	120	20	8	0	0	0	6	0	-6
2022	127	40	9	0	0	8	1	0	7

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT UCC GIVING	OTHER OCMW	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPPLY CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2012	\$278,141	\$0	\$10,000	\$6,466	\$16,466	\$0	\$16,466	3.60	\$284,607	\$0
2013	\$278,141	\$0	\$8,401	\$5,518	\$13,919	\$0	\$13,919	3.02	\$282,060	\$0
2014	\$278,141	\$0	\$8,401	\$5,983	\$14,384	\$0	\$14,384	3.02	\$282,525	\$0
2015	\$278,141	\$0	\$3,700	\$2,950	\$6,650	\$0	\$6,650	1.33	\$284,791	\$0
2016	\$268,074	\$0	\$4,200	\$3,091	\$7,291	\$0	\$7,291	1.57	\$275,365	\$212,042
2017	\$271,868	\$0	\$4,200	\$2,809	\$7,009	\$0	\$7,009	1.54	\$278,877	\$215,061
2018	\$271,868	\$0	\$6,750	\$1,202	\$7,952	\$0	\$7,952	2.48	\$278,820	\$0
2019	\$271,868	\$0	\$2,250	\$0	\$2,250	\$0	\$2,250	0.83	\$274,118	\$0
2020	\$271,868	\$0	\$3,750	\$0	\$3,750	\$0	\$3,750	1.38	\$275,618	\$175,764
2021	\$271,868	\$0	\$3,000	\$1,960	\$4,960	\$0	\$4,960	1.10	\$276,828	\$164,000
2022	\$271,868	\$0	\$3,000	\$4,270	\$7,270	\$0	\$7,270	1.10	\$279,138	\$164,253

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCMW	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2017-2022	-56.21	-42.86	-59.09	60.00	-50.00	0.00	3.72	0.09
2012-2022	-55.75	-69.23	-88.00	0.00	0.00	-2.26	-55.85	-5.25

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.