



The Olive Branch

August 2025 Newsletter



THE OLIVET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

13575 Olivet Road, Lusby, Maryland 20657

Rejoice in Jesus, Grow our faith, Pass it on!



From the Desk of Rev. Dr. Johnsie W. Cogman, Interim Pastor
Theme: “Growing Our Garden, Bearing Good Fruit”
Scripture Focus: John 15:1-8

Dear Olivet Family,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

As we move through this season of growth and reflection, I invite us to gather around a powerful image from scripture: The Garden. In John 15:1-8, Jesus offers a deeply personal and organic metaphor for discipleship. He says, *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself...”* These words are not only poetic, but they are also instructive for our spiritual walk and our work together as a church family.

We are God’s Garden. Each of us is a branch, growing from the true Vine that is Christ. Our life, our strength, and our fruitfulness are all rooted in staying connected to Him. Just like a healthy garden requires time, attention, water, pruning, and patience, so too does our spiritual life and our community life.

Growing our Garden means tending to the soil of our souls through prayer, worship, study, and service. It means making space for God’s Spirit to water us with wisdom and to prune us with purpose. Sometimes pruning can feel painful—it might mean letting go of old habits, shifting perspectives, and stepping out in faith. Pruning is also a sign that growth is happening, and that God sees potential in us to bear more fruit.

Bearing Good Fruit means living lives that reflect the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control that are the marks of Christ in us. Fruit is not just for show; it is meant to nourish others. So, when we bear good fruit, we don’t just grow personally—we bless others: our families, our neighbors, and the world around us.

This is a sacred season at Olivet. We are in a special season of growth. New ideas are sprouting. New energy is bubbling up. New possibilities are emerging. New leadership is on the horizon. As we prepare the soil for what God is about to do, I encourage us to remain *deeply rooted* in Christ and *intentionally connected* to one another. Let us not grow weary in well-doing. Let us cultivate a church that is alive with faith, rich in love, and bursting with the fruit of the Spirit. We want to grow, spiritually first then we will grow numerically.

And as we grow, we must commit ourselves to working *together*—not in competition or criticism, but in collaboration and love. It can be tempting to compare our branch to another’s or to undercut others when things aren’t done our way. But Jesus reminds us: *“No branch can bear fruit by itself.”* If one branch is suffering, the whole vine feels it. If one part of the garden is neglected, the harvest is less than what it could be. We are stronger, richer, and more fruitful when we lift each other up rather than tear each other down.

So, I encourage us to check the *health of our own branch*. Are we staying connected to the Vine—through personal prayer, individual worship, solo scripture reading, and self-less service? Are we allowing God to prune away pride, unforgiveness or fear so that we might grow stronger and more fruitful?

“Continued”

Self-Reflection: What Kind of Fruit Are You Bearing?

Take a moment this week to reflect. What kind of fruit is your life producing? Is it love or resentment? Joy or criticism? Peace or anxiety? Patience or frustration? The fruit we bear reveals the condition of our spiritual lives. Let the Holy Spirit guide you in honest self-examination. Ask God to remove what hinders growth and to cultivate in you the fruit that blesses others.

Remember, fruit is not for the benefit of the branch—it's for the nourishment of others. A kind word, a helping hand, a forgiving heart—these are the fruits that feed a hungry world and testify to the power of Christ in us.

Let's commit to being good gardeners of God's vineyard—watering each other with encouragement, planting seeds of joy and peace, pulling weeds of division or discouragement, burning old branches that are self-centered and self-serving, and celebrating every bud and bloom that appears along the way, symbolizing new life. Let's prepare the ground for a harvest that will bless this church and community for generations to come because when we grow together, we *bear good fruit together*.

Abiding in the Vine,

Rev. Dr. Johnsie W. Cogman

Interim Pastor

Olivet United Methodist Church

"... that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." – John 15:8 (NIV)

For Appointments with Rev. Dr. Johnsie W. Cogman

Call (410) 326-8400 or Email: olivetumcoffice@comcast.net

For Pastoral Care or Prayer:

contact Rev. Dr. Johnsie W. Cogman @ 410-326-8400,

@ 202 365-4994 or @ jcogman@bwcumc.org



OLIVET LEADERSHIP BOARD

Chair, 2025

Peggy Wilson

Lay Leader/Lay Rep to Annual Conference through 2027

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Rev. Dr. Johnsie W. Cogman,

Interim Pastor

Garrett Loy, 2027

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A Message From Jeannette Findley, Lay Leader

Hello! Have we been formally introduced? As I look over the Olivet Directory, it is clear to me that there are too many of you that I have not had the pleasure of meeting or getting to know!

I am Jeannette Findley. Since the beginning of June, I have been serving as your Lay Leader at Olivet United Methodist Church. I grew up on a small dairy farm in Indiana and was active in an E.U.B. church all those years. Between church camping experiences, a saintly grandma, and asking Jesus to live in my heart around the age of 12, I have been and continue to be on a faith journey for these many years.

I would love to talk with you about your formative years and how you came to know Jesus. Or we could talk about the many paths of adulthood and life experiences (marriage, children, careers, volunteer work, passions, challenges etc.,...) as we continue “pressing on” in faith. As for me, that would be about Dick Findley, two sons, two grandchildren, teaching 4th & 5th graders, being a school librarian, being active in 5 different United Methodist Churches, serving as a pastor of congregational care, gardening, reading, volunteer work, and just trying to walk with Jesus all along the way. We could certainly share many stories about our lives as they have unfolded. So, let’s meet and get to know one another! OK?

In Philippians 3:12-14, Paul talks about perseverance and “pressing on” in faith. Please turn to this passage and take it in as an “I” statement. Then read it again and turn it into a “we” statement, as an Olivet United Methodist Church statement.

Together let us embrace Paul’s soul-commitment“Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I (we) press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me (us) heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Shall we? Let’s!!!



A Message From Peggy Wilson, Board Chair

“We Are Olivet”

Please take a moment to celebrate the rebirth of The Olive Branch, our newsletter! With renewed energy and a positive outlook for our future, church members and leaders have been asked to share news and perspectives as we wait for a new pastor. We, the people of Olivet, are our church. This waiting time can be an opportunity to come together and make Olivet as strong as it ever was!

As I thought about what I could say in this article, I asked myself what brought me to Olivet. My journey to Olivet began during the pandemic and my introduction to the warmth of Olivet came via church services and Bible study sessions on Zoom. Despite the technical distance, it was clear that the people of Olivet had a strong faith, were eager to share their beliefs and experiences, and were willing to listen and support this newcomer as I stumbled along in my faith journey. The people of Olivet were committed to their church and their community. They were connected to each other even if they couldn't worship in their lovely Olivet sanctuary.

Thankfully, those days of required distance are over and we can be together again in our sanctuary and at the Good News Center. Perhaps this waiting period is an opportunity for the people of Olivet to re-connect and re-commit to our church, to each other, and to the expectations that Jesus set for us during His time on earth. Through the words of scripture, the lessons from the pulpit, our support for each other, the prayers we share and our reliance on the guidance and grace of God, we can once again become a strong and vibrant Olivet community.

Connection and commitment could mean that whenever possible, we come back to the sanctuary for our Sunday services. It could mean spending time catching up with each other or introducing ourselves to someone new during fellowship hour. It could mean calling members who used to come for service, but who have not been here for a while. Why not invite them back to Olivet? Connecting could mean joining our Bible study planned for early this fall. It could mean offering to serve as a greeter or liturgist or preparing a meal for Project Echo. There are many ways to BE Olivet. Yes, we are waiting for a new pastor to be our guide, but through connection and commitment to our ministries and to each other we already know the way to **BE Olivet**.

In peace,

Peggy Wilson, Board Chair

TREASURER'S CORNER

Greetings my Olivet UMC Family.

Thank you to everyone who so generously donates financially to support our local outreaches. On July 8th, I was able to cut checks to Smile (\$638.50), The Solomons Mission Center (\$1,601.50), Project Echo (\$120), UMCOR (\$1,000) and GCFA (\$600). These funds represent what you donated for the first 6 months of 2025. Your generosity is a great blessing to many!

Thank you to everyone who tithes financially to Olivet UMC. If you are unsure of how to give your tithe financially, you may write a check, set up an automatic distribution with your financial institution, or go to our website, which is:
<https://www.olivetumc-lusby.org/give> and follow the secure online link.

Your financial tithes are appreciated and needed to expand our Outreach, Discipleship, as well as pay our operational needs.

If you should have any questions, I am available Tuesday and Wednesday, 9am to 2pm, in the Church office or you may email me at olivetumcfinance@comcast.net

*Thank you,
Annette Schneider, Treasurer
Olivet United Methodist Church
13575 Olivet Rd
Lusby, MD 20657
410-326-8400
"Rejoice in Jesus, Grow our Faith, Pass it On"t On"*



OLIVET NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

As the saying goes, many hands make light work. Olivet could use more hands to help with the various tasks that make our Sunday service and our weekly activities, and ministries run smoothly. Please look over the list of “opportunities” below and consider volunteering on a weekly, monthly, or occasional basis.

- ♦ Altar guild: Set up for communion on the first Sunday of the month and clean up after the service.
- ♦ Prayer Warrior Team; Extending ministry through prayer, visits, cards, or letters under the leadership of the Pastor
- ♦ Hospitality committee: Arrive early on Sunday mornings to help set up refreshments for fellowship hour and help with cleaning up afterwards.
- ♦ Serve as a Greeter or a Liturgist for Sunday service.
- ♦ Participate in the Project Echo meal by making a monthly donation.
- ♦ Music Ministry: If your talents include choir directing, singing, playing an instrument, or leading a praise band, please consider sharing your musical gifts at Olivet.

If you are willing to volunteer, please call the office and share with our Administrative Assistant, Esedra Bishop, which area or areas you wish to serve.

THE RIPPLE CENTER (St. Mary's Adult Medical Day Care Center) is located 24400 Mervell Dean Rd, Hollywood, MD 20636. We worship there with the residents every Thursday at 10:30 AM with Holy Communion and lots of energetic singing. There is a Blessing with every Worship experience.



PROJECT ECHO — For many years, Olivet has supported Project Echo, a homeless shelter for men, women, and families in Prince Frederick. The Olivet family donates a meal for 40 people on the first Sunday of each month. Our 3 volunteer coordinators (Peggy Wilson, Sue Schubert, and Betty Ellis) are happy to share the vision of Project Echo with you.



SMILE Service Makes Individual Lives Exciting — Olivet is one of the founding members of SMILE.

Olivet provides financial assistance from the donations offered on Communion Sundays. There are always fun volunteer opportunities in the food pantry and thrift shop! Thank you **Kate Wilson** for accepting the appointment as Olivet's new SMILE representative



A United Methodist Mission Center

"A place to go for food & clothes"

Volunteers are needed and always appreciated!

Open Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday

10:00 AM—1:00 PM

or by appointment

14454 Solomons Island Rd. S., Solomons, MD 20688

solomonsmissioncenter@gmail.com, (410) 326-3278

2025-2026 Calvert County Public School Supply Lists
Patuxent Appeal Elementary Campus
11655 H.G. Trueman Road Lusby MD 20657

Pre-Kindergarten

- ◆ Safety Scissors (blunt tip)
- ◆ 6 glue sticks
- ◆ Box of 8 crayons
- ◆ 1 pocket folder (with brads)

Kindergarten

- ◆ Safety scissors (blunt tip)
- ◆ 6 glue sticks
- ◆ 12 #2 pencils, not mechanical
- ◆ 1 large eraser
- ◆ Box of 24 crayons
- ◆ 4 primary composition books
- ◆ 3 pocket folders with brads
(1 red, 1 blue, 1 green)

Olivet's Back To School Drive

Please support the students of the Patuxent Appeal Campus. Supplies and monetary donations will be accepted until Sunday August 24th.

**Blessings of the School Supplies on Sunday
August 24th during Worship.**

Donations can be brought to the Church office during the week and Sundays

Please see Annette Schneider and Peggy Wilson for more information

1st—2nd Grade

- ◆ Safety scissors (blunt tip)
- ◆ 6 glue sticks
- ◆ 12 #2 pencils
- ◆ 1 large eraser
- ◆ Sticky notes (3x3 in)
- ◆ Highlighter
- ◆ Box of 24 crayons
- ◆ 4 composition notebooks – wide ruled
- ◆ 3 pocket folders with brads (1 red, 1 blue, 1 green)

3rd—5th Grade

- ◆ Scissors
- ◆ 6 glue sticks
- ◆ 12 #2 pencils
- ◆ 1 large eraser
- ◆ Sticky notes (3x3 in)
- ◆ Box of 12 colored pencils
- ◆ Highlighter
- ◆ 5 composition books
- ◆ 3 pocket folders with brads
(1 red, 1 blue, 1 green)





Share & reflect on Sunday's message

Every Sunday in the Fellowship Hall

Following Worship

&

Every Monday @ 6pm via Zoom

Zoom Connections

Video: ID: 216-168-3604, PW: 181188

Or Call: 1-253-215-8782, Enter 216-168-3604#,

PW: 181188

Olivet United Methodist Church

13575 Olivet Road ~ Lusby, Maryland 20657

410-326-8400 – www.olivetumc-lusby.org

Rev. Dr. Johnsie W. Cogman, Interim Pastor



14454 Solomons Island Rd, South
Solomons, MD 20688

Invitation to Interfaith Open House

Dear Church Leaders and Lay Leaders,

We warmly invite you to an Interfaith Open House at the Solomons Mission Center on **Thursday, August 21st, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM.**

Solomons Mission Center is a Food Pantry & Clothing Bank in the heart of Solomons established in October of 2021.

We are excited to offer you a tour of our facilities and provide an overview of the various services and programs we offer to the community. This open house is a wonderful opportunity to explore ways we can collaborate and partner as neighbors to better serve our shared community.

We look forward to connecting with you and fostering stronger interfaith relationships. Please respond to this invitation via email at SolomonsmissioncenterED@gmail.com by August 15th.

Sincerely,

Kelly Ward
Executive Director &
The Solomons Mission Center Team

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren
to dwell together in unity!” Psalm 135:1

Join
Olivet United Methodist Church
&
St. Paul United Methodist Church



Olivet UMC



St. Paul UMC

for
Worship & Fellowship

Sunday August 31, 2025
9:15 am

at the

St. Paul United Methodist Church
11000 HG Trueman Road ~ Lusby, Maryland 20657

****There will be a “Potluck” immediately following Worship, and you
are encouraged to bring your favorite dish.****

Rev. Dr. Johnsie W. Cogman, Interim Pastor
Olivet United Methodist Church

Rev. Dr. Angela Kittrell, Pastor
St. Paul United Methodist Church



ANNUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE 2025

Saturday November 1, 2025

1pm

At The Trinity United Methodist Church



90 Church Street ~ Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678

All Leaders and Members are encouraged to attend

“Happy Birthday!”

The Olivet Church Celebrates the Gift of You

“I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.” Psalm 139:14

Aug

04 Nick Pallotta
05 Johnathan Glover
09 Samantha Bruce
09 Sandy Woomer
11 Pastor Ruth Dixon
11 Teddy Foote
12 Joan Fratantuono
13 Kim Blackistone
15 Janet Cort
16 Chalice Fike
16 Todd Schmidt
18 Garrett Loy
19 Rachel Dean
21 Debbie Bernhardt
22 Ryleigh Goss
23 Jerry Williford
24 Ken Wease
25 Betty Ellis
31 Sonya Jenskins

Sept

08 Ellen Curren
17 James Foote, Jr.
17 Doug Hood
22 Kathy Heil
23 Marie Sidleck
24 Phil Thom
26 Michele Seabaugh
28 Charlie Barnes

Did we miss your birthday? We
apologize. Help us make it
right. Please call the church
office 410-326-8400
or email us—
olivetumcoffice@comcast.net



Olivet Family,

We hope you are enjoying the August edition of “The Olive Branch.” Your input is invaluable to us, and we welcome your suggestions for items you would like to see featured in our newsletter. Additionally, having your up-to-date contact information is essential for us to maintain a strong connection with you. This ensures you remain informed about the exciting events at Olivet United Methodist Church while also allowing us to celebrate the important milestones in your lives.

We kindly ask you to email the office with your current mailing address, phone numbers, and email addresses. Additionally, providing this information will greatly assist us as we prepare for the upcoming Church Conference on November 1, 2025, at 1 PM, at Trinity United Methodist Church in Prince Frederick, Maryland.

Thank you for being an integral part of our Olivet Family and for your ongoing support of this ministry! Your engagement makes a difference!



SOUTHERN MARYLAND'S



Weekly Featured

HOT JOBS



<https://tccsmd.news/wklyhotjobs>



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Global Ministries

The United Methodist Church



Multiethnic Ministries

<https://umcmission.org/multiethnic-ministries/>