

MOUNT OLIVET

MESSENGER

SPECIAL CENTENNIAL EDITION



mtolivet.org

Grateful for the Year that Was

Off to an exciting start on Rally Sunday in September of 2019, our Centennial year turned out much different than we had imagined! On January 12, 2020, we had a wonderful celebration of the 100th anniversary of the first time nineteen adults and fourteen children gathered together to worship as the community that would soon become Mount Olivet Lutheran Church. The commemoration continued with an outreach project where we packed 100,000 meals to help feed the poorest among God's children. That was March 7, 2020. A week later, we had to suspend in-person worship for the first time in the history of Mount Olivet and would not gather again until 53 Sundays later. No, it was not the year we imagined. Not by a long shot.

And yet... And yet what a year it was, filled by God's grace and promises during what may be the most challenging of Mount Olivet's 100 years as a church. It was a year of learning new skills, of reaching people in new ways, of coming together as a congregation to support each other and the broader community, and of growing in nearly every way. Consider these few statistics:

- Bible studies via videos and Zoom small groups grew from 200 to 600 participants.
- The number of persons engaging in worship doubled to include 6,000 people weekly.
- A video-based Sunday School program, *Going God's Way*, received 300 views a week (and now continues to support our in-person Sunday program)
- Our community meals, which had grown to support nearly 150 people a week prior to the pandemic, expanded to the degree that during the peak need of the summer and fall of 2020 we were sharing 2000 meals a week.
- Even our Stewardship meatballs meals – transformed to a drive-through event – saw a 20% increase in participants.

Then there were all the donation drives; online confirmation classes and drive-through celebrations; an Advent drive-through (we got very good at drive-throughs!) with lights and candy canes; new member orientations by Zoom and the reception of nearly a 100 new members (including people who had not yet entered one of our sanctuaries!); original video-based projects like "Gospel Unplugged;" digital Day Advent and Day Lenten Journeys;

Zoom-facilitated youth gatherings; a tremendous outpouring of support for our elders by phone, cards, and standing outside the windows of Mount Olivet Homes with signs reminding them of our love; and more.

It was not the year we had imagined, but it was a year anchored by God's promises and overflowing with God's grace. And even amid all the effort of coming together as a congregation throughout a global pandemic, the projects planned for our Centennial and overseen by our marvelous Centennial Committee and church staff continued. We prepared monthly "Centennial Moments" as part of our online worship and wrote *Centennial Messenger* articles to highlight the variety and impact of Mount Olivet's ministries. Several pieces of choral music were commissioned in honor of our commitment to worship and the arts. We took advantage of empty sanctuaries to refurbish woodwork and repair and restore stained glass windows, along with remodeling several parts of our campuses that needed attention. And we planned for new endeavors to start a second century of Mount Olivet's ministry with strength and confidence.

This special Centennial Edition of the *Messenger* is dedicated to celebrating the year that was, filled with challenges to be sure, but also filled with gratitude and grace, outreach, and growth. I hope that, as you look at the photos from the year past and take in the story they tell, you will be inspired by the faith, generosity, and courage that characterized this congregation and be renewed in your confidence in God's all-encompassing grace. I am grateful for your faithfulness, for the vision of our Centennial Committee, for the support of our Congregation Council, and for the exemplary work of our fantastic pastoral and lay staff.

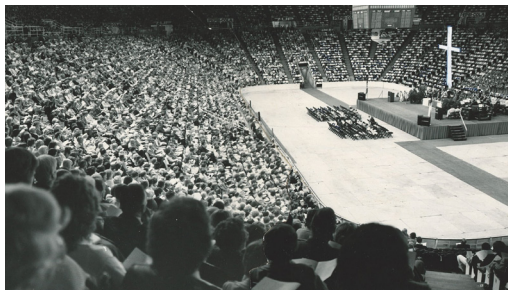
I will close this letter as I closed each of the all-congregational letters I wrote across 2020-2021, but with a gratitude-inspired twist, "We did get through this together, dear Mount Olivet family, and by God's grace, we came out stronger on the other side." Thanks be to God!



Pastor Lose

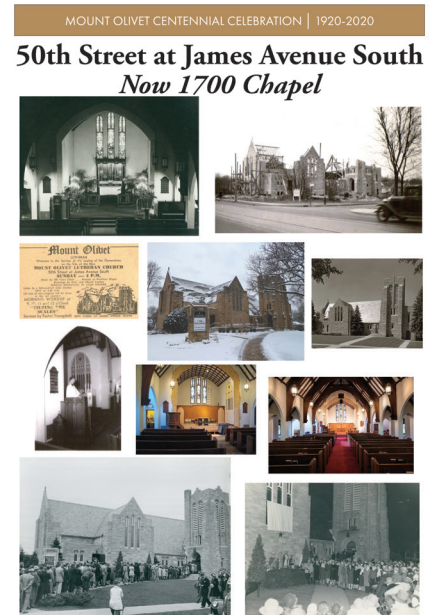
DAVID J. LOSE, SENIOR PASTOR

A history worthy of celebration!



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT: Mount Olivet's first service at Iverson Farmhouse; Pastor Reuben Youngdahl with Mr. Olaf Serley; the Celebration of the 60th Anniversary Worship at Met Indoor Sports Center; Traffic on 50th Street with the now Mpls Campus Mount Olivet Church; Pastor H.A. Noren and Pastor Paul Youngdahl with 50th Anniversary Celebration Cake; 25th Anniversary Dinner at Nicollet Hotel; Mount Olivet members worshipping at the Municipal Auditorium on May 27, 1951.

We got off to a wonderful start...



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Mark Herman print of the West Campus; Kitchen volunteers cooking up a festive meal on Rally Sunday September 2019; Mount Olivet kids enjoying the photo booth on Rally Sunday to kick off our Centennial Celebration; a spectacular doughnut wall from our Centennial worship service on January 12, 2020; Centennial Posters that featured Ministry Highlights throughout the months; and packing 100,000 meals through Feed My Starving Children at the West Campus in March of 2020.

And then the world changed!



2020 suddenly became a year when creativity, adaptability, and resilience were not “nice,” but rather “essential”!



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Pastor Freeman being filmed at the Mpls Campus; Pastor Hammersten being filmed at the West Campus; and the Mount Olivet pastoral staff during the recorded Easter Sunday worship

*Some things
were almost the
same...*



...and some were totally new.



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Christmas for All store at the West Campus; Pastor Hammersten and family ringing bells for The Salvation Army; and Pastor Lose and Pastor Freeman filming *Going God's Way*.

It was a time to learn new skills...



...and try new things!



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Principal Organist, Richard Owen, Director of Music and Worship, Beverly Claffin, and Director of Communications, Jackie Enestvedt, reviewing video content; Mount Olivet Junior High Alive members participating in virtual Christmas BINGO; and Theresa Latini, Executive Director of the Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center, leading Day Advent Journey via live Zoom and recorded video.

It was a year of learning to be Mount



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

A socially distanced Hi-League event; outdoor Midweek Worship at the Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center; the Congregation Care team visiting the Mount Olivet Home and Careview Home; Drive-Through Confirmation reception; *Hope at Mount Olivet* video provided by the Mount Olivet staff; and Pastor Kalland welcoming members to a Stewardship Drive-Through event at the West Campus.

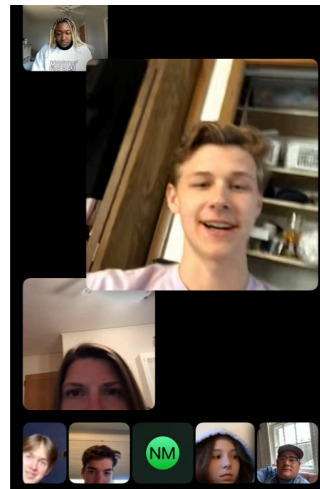
Olivet in new and different ways!



PHOTOS

Pastor Freeman welcoming a Mount Olivet member to the Stewardship Drive-Through meal at the Mpls Campus; line of cars waiting for a Stewardship meal at the Mpls Campus; and the Mount Olivet pastors and staff participating in our Advent Drive-Through event.

In almost every way, 2020 was “one for the books.”



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Collecting donations at an Advent Drive-Through event; Mount Olivet staff helping at a Stewardship Drive-Through; Recorded Christmas Eve Worship; Pastor Hammersten with Santa at an Advent Drive-Through; *The Gospel Unplugged* logo; and Youth joining in on Hi-League FaceTime calls to catch up with their church friends.

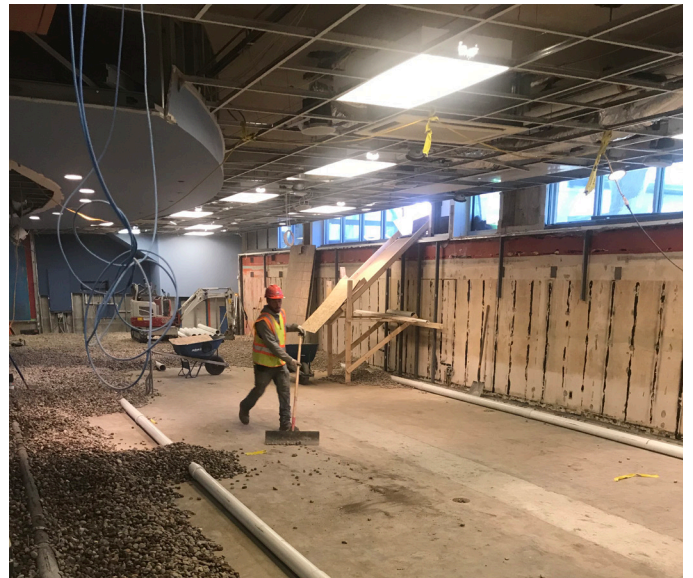
We reached out to the community in new ways.



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Collecting much needed supplies at our regular Greet & Give Donation Drives; Pastor MacLean packing meals for the weekly Community Meals that shared 2,000 meals a week; and Mount Olivet staff and volunteers helping prepare bags for the Mount Olivet Community Meals prepared by our wonderful kitchen staff led by Sally McNamee.

We made good use of the in-between time...



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

The Mpls Campus stained glass windows out for repair and cleaning; the West Campus Columbarium construction and parking lot resurfacing; the Mpls Campus youth center being remodeled after flooding; and the Mpls Campus Holy Communion rail and altar chairs being refurbished.

*...looking forward to
worshiping together
again.*



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Pastor Freeman assisting accompanist Shelley Ohnsorg at an outdoor choir event; Mount Olivet staff checking in people for worship at the West Campus; Senior Choir offering music to incoming worshipers at the Mpls Campus; Mount Olivet staff welcoming members to worship at the Mpls Campus; West Campus service with social distancing.

Through the generosity of our members, we



PHOTOS

Photos from our full-day, all-week Mount Olivet Preschool, our new Mount Olivet Summer Day Camps, and art classes in a new art studio and facilitated by the Mount Olivet School of Music and the Arts, as well as a filming of *The Gospel Unplugged* series that began in 2021. Gifts from the Centennial Fund made these new initiatives possible.

launched new initiatives for our second century.



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT

Singers participating in the Messiah Sing-A-Long at the Mpls Campus, and members of the Minneapolis community join us for the Christmas Tree Lighting, two new post-pandemic initiatives connecting us more deeply with the communities we serve.

Gratitude and Grace

No, 2020 was not the year we had imagined or hoped for. But it was still a year of gratitude and grace, learning to trust God and each other as we weathered one of the most significant challenges in Mount Olivet's 100-year history, and came out stronger on the other end. We accomplished much by God's grace and through the generosity, support, encouragement, and steadfast faith of our congregation members and staff. We are excited to conclude the celebration of our Centennial on Sunday, January 22, at both campuses and hope that you will attend. We look forward to hearing some of the music commissioned for our Centennial that we could not hear earlier because of the pandemic. It will be a joyful day on which we give thanks for Mount Olivet's history and look forward in hope to all that is to come.

As we come to the close of this important celebration, I want to offer my thanks for our remarkably dedicated Mount Olivet Centennial Committee. They began planning our celebration in the fall of 2018; continued working up to and through the onset of the pandemic; and provided encouragement, counsel, and support of our ongoing, if also very different, celebrations throughout. Very little of what we did would have happened without them, and I am incredibly grateful for each of them.

PASTOR DAVID LOSE, *Senior Pastor*

Mount Olivet Centennial Committee: Co-Chairs: Nancy and John Lindahl, Honorary Co-Chairs: Kathy and Charlie Cunningham (d. July 2020), Scott Anderson, Heather Goudy, Jane Gregerson, Pastor Dennis Johnson, Jeannine Rivet, Jo Ellen Saylor, Nathan Slinde, Bill Walter, and Nancy Youngdahl.



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CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2023
9, 10, & 11AM WORSHIP
MPLS & WEST CAMPUSES**