

THE OLIVE BRANCH

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
OLIVE CREST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

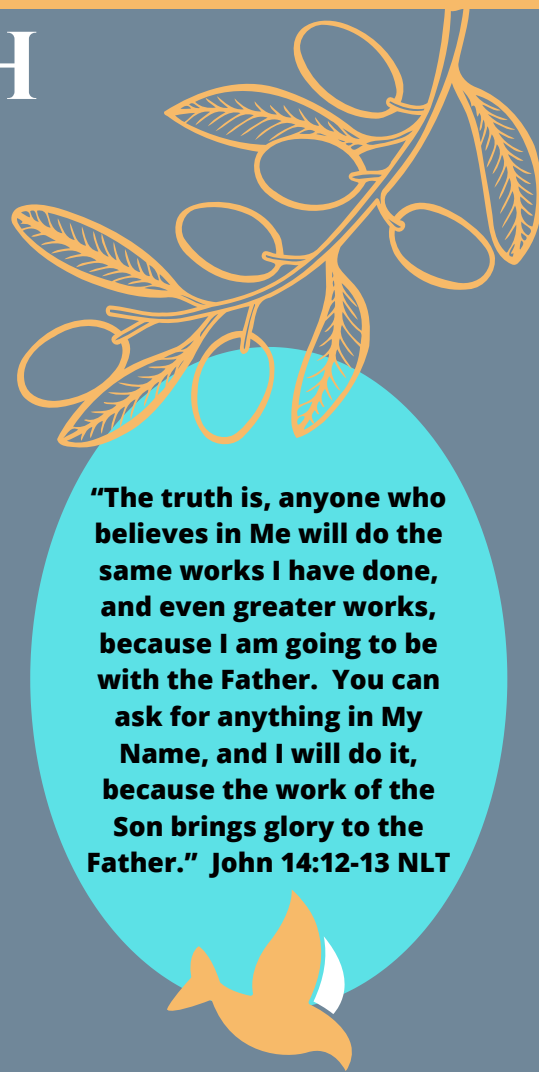
ONE HEART TO YOURS ☞ PARSON RANDY DILTS

Jesus spoke in very expansive terms! I am not using this to engage in a discussion of what is meant by the greater works. That would take a while and would make a good sermon series! I use it today to ask all of us to think big, bigger than we have in a while, and even bigger after that. I heard a very simple statement the other day that has stayed with me and I want to share it. The speaker simply said lets finish 2020 stronger than how we entered into it.

I know, not really earth-shaking until one begins to wrap themselves around what it might mean to actually do! For this space I will simply say lets' end this year stronger in our giving, our living, and our forgiving. Lifestyle changes may have constrained contact points to be able to give what we would like or normally do. By concrete action take the steps to catch up on where you would like your giving to be by now. The events of the time we are in may have affected your means so now is a prime time to sow a seed for the author of miracles so that the Healer may touch and bless.

We were not meant to only be some sort of "ATM" for the church, there has to be more and there is! The very term "social distancing" has a negative sound to it. Stay away, don't come close, don't engage, don't be in community one with another, stay out of one another's space. Lets' close out the year by actually LIVING! Do something with the family, camp in the yard, cook outside in the backyard. Put on some masks and go to a museum if they are open. Take some short "road trips" to see some of Nebraska; this is an interesting and varied state. Gather up some friends and check out some of the eating places in any number of small towns within just a few hours. Did you know there actually is a Sacramento, Nebraska with a steak place just waiting to host you? Here's another one, come to church!

Finally perhaps a harder one for some, do some forgiving. Isolation has exposed some old wounds that have become blended with some loneliness combined with a sprinkling of anger. Not a tasty recipe. Allow the Holy Spirit entry to do some of the hard work of your own life. Unforgiveness is an acid that effects the holder terribly. It is such a heavy weight to carry, get rid of it! In a nutshell, it is time to "pull a Samson" and shake ourselves loose and get some things done!



"The truth is, anyone who believes in Me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in My Name, and I will do it, because the work of the Son brings glory to the Father." John 14:12-13 NLT

An Act of Faith!

What I would ask you to do is spend some extra time in prayer for YOU!!!

Use this "isolationism" to

take the time needed to look inside of yourselves. Are you OK with everything, what could be done better, different, other?

It just might be a great way to get ready for fall, for harvest, for the changes to come; and ready or not, they are coming!



Letters from Lily

United Methodist Global Mission Fellow
in Portrush Northern Ireland

So whether you eat or drink, or
whatever you do, do it all
for the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31

Wow, I can't believe it has almost been a full year since I set forth on this amazing adventure in Northern Ireland. A lot has happened in a year and it has absolutely flown by. I updated you last fall that we were in full swing with residential events each weekend and I was finding my place as event coordinator and cook. It was an exciting time, and I thought that my time at the Surf Project would continue to look that way. However, as we all have discovered this year, the world no longer looks how we expected. I have been adjusting to the curve-balls that Corona-virus has thrown my way, just like all of you have been as well. Here we are just trying to do the best with what we have been given. The Bible tells us that, in all things and in all times, we should give glory to God. So that is what I try to do, no matter what I am dealt, no matter what, because God deserves the glory. God's goodness is always there, His love, His grace and His glory are always present in our lives, sometimes we just have to work to uncover and reveal it to others. God's glory still has shown in my life this year, I have no doubt.

So, here is an update about what God has been up to in my life, so far this year. I started off getting to have an amazing experience in Senegal Africa, where the Surf Project put together a camp for missionary kids who were just on fire for surfing and for God. Then in February everyone at the Surf Project was getting ready to start a new year. We hired another staff member and were making big plans for what was supposed to be our busiest year yet. Then, Corona-virus hit. and we went from working at home, to lock-down, to even briefly closing the Surf Project. Most of the staff was furloughed and I, the event coordinator, had no events to plan. It was hard, I worked on some side projects and tired to prepare for the day things would start to look normal again. Even in that time God was working to bring about good. Our team met on zoom for devotionals every week, and dug into God's word, this was something we had never been able to do consistently amongst the typical busyness of events. Then on July 1st all of the staff came off furlough and we started a new chapter at the Surf Project. We are now running a townhouse that I live in and our summer started off with a bang! We have just finished four weeks of Kids Club, which is like VBS on steroids. We were teaching for kids aged from 6-14 about God and how to surf and I absolutely loved every minute. And even in that craziness the last two months our team has been able to continue meeting for devotionals every week. Also, in the last month we have started a fresh expression of church on Sunday nights that is really just the beginning of where God is taking us. These last two things only happened because of habits and conversations that started during lock-down and they wouldn't be happening if we hadn't been giving God the glory even in those tough times.

Autumn is just around the corner and we don't know exactly what it will look like this year, because regulations are always changing here, but we have hopes and dreams of how we can serve this community and God in this upcoming season. In all things give God the glory. No matter where you are, I hope you just take whatever is in front of you and work so that it reveals God's glory, because His hands are always working for good in our lives! I pray for every one of us to see His glory each day. Know that you are always in my heart and in my prayers. Thank you for your undying support for me, and for teaching me that God's goodness is always shining, even if we need to clean the windows off to see it. You let me see God in each of you, long before I knew him personally and I know that I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for each of you. I hope to encourage you today by just reminding you that God's goodness and love didn't go anywhere, He is still at work in your life and that is Good News! To God be the Glory!

Fridge Friendly INFO

CALENDAR

Worship Service returns to the Sanctuary on September 6th. Mask required, every other pew and 6 ft social distancing guidelines in place.

***Worship Service Sundays at 10:00 AM**

Sanctuary and on Facebook Live

*Trustee Meeting 9/1 at 6 pm (Lounge)

*Leadership Meeting 9/10 at 1 pm (Lounge)

*Simon Says Mission @ Completely KIDS 9/14 at 5:30 pm

*Simon Says Mission @ Ronald McDonald House 9/22 at 5:30 pm

*Pups with a Purpose (Hall Rental) 9/5 & 9/12 at 10 am

*God's Closet and More open on 9/12 & 9/26 from 9-12
COVID-19 restrictions in place



Office Hours:
Tuesdays from 1-4
Thursdays 10-4

Contact Information:

Olive Crest United Methodist Church
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*Parson Randy Dilts: 531-200-3051
email: mendingspirit@juno.com

*Outreach/Building Manager: Brenda Jones: 402-740-6550
email: simonsays.foundation@gmail.com

Contact CARE Team for Rides, Meals
or 'Essentials' Pick-ups
402-571-7468



Newsletter / calendar submissions due by 3rd Friday of each month.

MISSIONS AT HOME AND AROUND THE WORLD

SIMON SAYS; "Live a Better Life"

Support Simon Says: "Live a Better Life" Mission with toy donations. Our biggest need is for boys ages 8-12 and teenage girls. We also need Gift Cards for teens... Retail, Fast Food, Entertainment Venues. Toys and gift cards can be sent to Simon Says / Olive Crest UMC 7180 North 60th St. Omaha NE. 69152

God's Closet and MORE

God's Closet Open on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 9-12.

Excellent quality for an amazing price.

All proceeds fund outreach missions in the community.

Covid-19 restriction in place.



UMCOR

Compelled by Christ

As the humanitarian relief and development arm of The United Methodist Church, the United Methodist Committee on Relief assists United Methodists and churches to become involved globally in direct ministry to persons in need.

**For more information go to:
<https://www.umcmmission.org/umcor>**



Global Ministries Missionaries

From everywhere to everywhere, United Methodist missionaries come from many nations and backgrounds and witness and serve in dramatically different locales and cultures. They serve in more than 60 countries around the world in a range of activities and professions including pastors, educators, congregational and leadership developers, agriculturalists, health coordinators and doctors.

To support Lily Jones go to:
<https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-1956-jones-lillian.aspx>

Birthdays Don't Quarantine

Simon Says: "Live a Better Life" Mission has continued to provide birthday gifts to the children of the Open Door Mission and the Ronald McDonald House throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic. Since April we have delivered over 300 birthday gifts. We provide each birthday child with 5 birthday gifts. They each receive a fun toy, a learning toy, an active toy, a book and a surprise. Our annual toy drive in April provides these items along with our supporters who donate their own or loved one's birthdays each year.

Starting this month, we will be able to once again provide a Birthday Party along with the gifts at the Ronald McDonald House and Completely KIDS Shelter Program. We have missed the interaction with the children and look forward to seeing their happy faces once again. If you would like to donate gifts or would like to volunteer please contact Brenda Jones @ 402-571-7468.

Simon Says is a mission of Olive Crest United Methodist Church, but we could not provide these important programs without our **Community Birthday Partners**.

***Physicians Mutual Insurance Company** provides the meals and volunteers for the Ronald McDonald House party each month. They make sure we provide a quality meal and cupcakes for all the guests of the house and organize wonderful volunteers to help us throw an awesome Birthday Party on the **4th Tuesday of each month**.

***Johnny and Kristin with Werner Trucking** have dedicated themselves to providing all the food, fun and entertainment to the children we celebrate with the Completely KIDS Shelter Program on every **2nd Monday of the month**. They put so much energy and time into the parties and it is a blessing to have them in mission with us.

***The Birthday Party Project** (a nationwide non-profit) and **Oriental Trading** are our partners for the Open Door Mission Party (ODM). We provide the gifts and they provide the fun! We are patiently waiting for the green light to begin in person parties with the children of the ODM in the future on the **3rd Tuesdays of each month**.

We also work with amazing clowns from the **Faith Christian Clown Ministry** who donate their time and talents to our parties and **Mr. Tim** who is an incredible Balloon Artist and a pediatric nurse with Nebraska Medicine.

Our Birthday Blessings Program continues year-round at Children's Hospital. Children who are inpatient on or near their birthday will have their room decorated by the Child Life Department and receive a book and birthday card. Our annual Book and Decoration Drive in December provides these items to Children's Hospital and Medical Center.

#LiveaBetterLife #CreatingJoyDuringHardships

PEARL FOOD PANTRY

The Pearl Food Pantry needs your help...

With school closings due to the Coronavirus pandemic, a community effort lead by retired UMC clergy Rev. Fred Richart and others to do what we can to make sure children who depend on the free or reduced breakfast and lunch have food to eat during this time.

One way to insure this can happen, we are asking all churches and individuals in our District to support the Pearl Food Pantry with food. We still can use the food that churches, and individuals normally donate, but because of children we can use more of the following foods:

Mac and Cheese, Ramen Noodles, Cereal, Milk, Bread, Jelly or, any foods that are easy for children to prepare if there is not an adult around to prepare it for them.

You can drop food items off at the Food Pantry located in Living Hope UMC next to Harold's Restaurant.

We are located at: 8323 N 30th street Omaha, NE 68112 (This address is the front entrance to the church. To drop off food items you need to go to the rear of the building. The entrance to the parking lot in the rear is between 29th & 30th State Street off State Street)

The Pantry is open from 10:00am - 1:00pm and then from 1:00pm - 4:00pm Monday through Friday. Ms Barbara Gresham is the Pantry Director. You can give her a call at (402) 614-7452 Monday - Friday and let her know you have a donation to bring. Your help at this time will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,
Pastor Ralph Elwyn Gaines
Living Hope UMC, Mission Church
8323 N 30th Street
Omaha, NE 68112
Cell: 402-598-1125
revralphgaines@hotmail.com

September Food Drive

Mac & Cheese
Ramen Noodles
Cereal
Bread
Jelly
Kid Friendly/Easily Prepared foods

Bring to Olive Crest and we will deliver to the pantry!!!

