The first week of October, five members of Olivet and a pastor from Oklahoma will leave for Central Asia for ten days of outreach among a people group who are 99.9% Muslim. We will connect with friends, many of whom are not believers, encourage friends who are followers of Jesus, and seek to build relationships with men and women who are far from God. The people we will be serving have never heard the true story of God’s love and grace.

Members of Olivet began traveling to this country in 1999, building relationships and seeking to be a blessing to people who are created in God’s image but have never heard the story of His love for them. We as a church body are able, through the Cooperative Program, to help support people who are investing their lives among this people group. Your additional giving to missions enables us to help support a pastor and his family who live there. Some of our members also support individuals who live and work among this people group.

Please pray for the members of this Team: Pastor Ron and Cindy, Dennis and Leslie Jones, Don Langenegger and Peggy Beery. Additionally, a pastor from Oklahoma, Terrell Romberg, will be part of our Team. He hopes to lead the church he pastors to connect with this people group. You are part of our Team as well as you pray and give. Thank you to the many who have given to specifically support this trip.

We are hoping to video skype with Olivet during the worship service on October 7. Hope you are able to “talk” with us then!
DISCIPLESHIP WITH A MISSIONARY FOCUS

Six years as Discipleship and Outreach pastor at Olivet has taught me more than a few things that Bible College and Seminary really had not prepared me for. One of those things is how disciplehip actually works. This is of course something we have been talking about here at Olivet for a long time.

Most people often assume that the right information alone has the power to change us. In equation form it looks something like: information = transformation. Admittedly, this is the approach I took to ministry. My thinking went along these lines: If we could just get solid biblical curriculum in our small groups and talk about application and pray for each other, we will all become disciples starting to live just like Jesus. We would see both personal and spiritual growth in ministry. I fully embraced this and began to practice it myself even in the way I lead groups...I wrote curriculum for several of our sermon series--all of which I poured my heart and soul into. Yet, what I found out after experience and reflection is this is only part of the equation--albeit a very important part! This is where we were at that time and tried to embrace it fully.

However, just getting Christians together to talk and think about the Bible doesn’t automatically translate into a transformed life. Jesus didn’t make disciples out of twelve ordinary, yet very different men the way most have tried for years. Something very important has been lost over the years. Some say would, it was a different culture and time altogether. Agreed; there are things that occupy our time and attention in a far more intensive way than the way it was then. Nevertheless, the most glaring and critical difference between the way that Jesus discipled the apostles and the way we attempt to make disciples today is in one word: mission. Now, my word mission will for most conjure up ideas of going to places somewhere in the world where there is no church presence and trying to reach people. While that is a definitely a form of mission, it is not the totality of what I’m talking about.

Jesus began His ministry on mission. He then invited the twelve to join Him and they were made into disciples along the way. Many today begin with programs aimed at gathering people in order to talk about how we can live like Jesus. The programs hardly ever get to mission. In response, church leaders would say that this is individual’s responsibility as a follower of Jesus and assume just giving information about this responsibility is enough. However, as Jesus did with the twelve and as the book of Acts demonstrates, mission is best done in community. The truth is, we don’t actually go on mission together very often. If and when we do mission, we “shoot at” at 150 different targets. And we usually only “shoot at” the target once or twice over the course of a year. Like special operations units, we drop in and do our thing then we are gone--never to return.

Please understand, I don’t intend to sound harsh and negative if I do. I am just coming to a realization that discipleship devoid of regularly engaged mission in community, is missing the most important component that Jesus’ life and ministry centered on. So, how do we begin to change this? Do we in our groupings (i.e. SMBS, Community Groups, Triads, etc) start scheduling a once a month event where we go feed the homeless or build a home with Habitat for Humanity? Maybe...but probably not. Service can be a form of mission but all service does not equal mission. Mission needs to be intentionally centered on the Gospel--this is the purpose of mission. It needs to be intentionally building bridges for the Gospel of Jesus to be demonstrated in both deed and word! Here’s a few calibrating questions:

1. Is what I am doing in this “mission project” aimed at really loving this person so that he/she may become a fully devoted follower of Christ?
2. Am I willing to continually “love on” them even if I am misunderstood or persecuted for doing it so that they may become a Jesus lover?
3. Am I willing to disciple them as a young believer so they may mature and make disciples as well?

If the answer to any of those questions is “no,” then what we are doing is not mission, it’s service. Let’s call it what it is. Jesus didn’t give the task of simply serving the world. He gave us the mission to make disciples. If in our discipleship, we fail to include mission, we are not doing discipleship the way Jesus did and commanded us to do so. Jesus said He would be with us by His Spirit always (Matt 28:19-20). May we recognize the joy and responsibility of being on mission with Jesus and at the same time see the power of God flow through us (Acts 1:8)! Watch for next month for some practical ways to do mission together!

We announced last month that we were doing something different than the Festival to which we had grown accustomed. By now you’ve seen the fliers for Trunk or Treat. Like Festival, the purpose of this event is to spend time with our community and get to know them.

We need you! Here’s how you can help: decorate your car, dress up, and pass out candy. There are no restrictions on decorating your car, other than the obvious: no bloody, scary, demonic themes! However, as a way to plant “seeds of the Gospel,” we would like you to consider the following as you decorate your car:

*Decorate according to a Bible story like Noah’s Ark, Jonah and the Whale, The Manger Scene, etc.
*Decorate according to a Bible verse and include the verse in your decorating. Some examples are as follows:

- Bees and beehives...Your words are sweeter than honey...Psalm 119:103
- Bears – Love bears all things...I Corinthians 13:7
*Decorate with a game theme. Come up with your own or borrow from us!
*Decorate with a fun, kid-friendly theme!

Please register your car and theme so we can reserve a parking spot for you. Contact Tim 942-2246 or tim@olivetwichita.com ASAP with your car registration!

We are already getting fliers in the schools! There will be some games and maybe an inflatable or two. We will have plenty of time to just sit and talk to people and love on their kids with a “Jesus loves you,” and a mini candy bar!

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 27th from 3-5pm!

Operation Christmas Child:
- Is an International project of Samaritan’s Purse since 1993.
- Already has delivered more than 85 million gift-filled shoe boxes in 138 countries;
- Sends shoeboxes filled with clothes, school supplies, hygiene items, toys, and more;
- Includes “The Greatest Journey” book with books, a 12-part discipleship program to help children know Jesus, follow Him every day, and tell others this Good News.

Olivet’s packing party will be November 10. Plan to fill a box of blessings with us! Visit www.samaritanspurse.org for more packing ideas. There you will also find many beautiful photos and stories of children around the world receiving boxes then meeting Jesus as they were discipled through “The Greatest Journey.”

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Olivetter: 3
APPLYING FOR THE SENIOR TRIP

Last month, we asked you to pray for the Senior Trip process, which began with a seniors-only meeting. Similar to last year, the students left the meeting with a healthy mix of excitement and trepidation. Oddly enough, this means that the meeting went as it needed to, so thank you for praying.

One of the things they learned during the meeting is actually something that most people don’t realize about the Senior Trip in general. It is almost a year-long event. They were told that the Lord will use the trip itself to initiate major changes in their lives and in their worldview. But, they were also informed that the process beforehand can be equally as beneficial to their spiritual transformation. It is long and requires sacrifice and commitment. Yet, it is worth every cost.

The next step for those seniors interested in participating in the trip is to complete an application unlike anything they (or their parents) have likely ever seen before. It is a necessary step to prepare them for the experience overseas and the remaining process beforehand. Please pray for them, as this application process can be surprisingly difficult, but also revealing and healing in many ways.

Keith Ferguson

O God, as I read your words today, please show me You! Please reveal to me to also, Lord.

Proverbs 14:2, 15
15:1 “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of fools pours out folly. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but peevishness in it breaks the spirit.”

I see so much emphasis on words in these verses, God! Yesterday as I was reading, one verse stood out to me so much, but I never really understood. The verse was:

Proverbs 14:1-3 “The wise of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down...But the lips of the wise will preserve them.”

Today as I read the next chapter in Proverbs, I hear more of what you began showing me yesterday: my words are very important to you. I can build my house by cleaning, cooking, laundry, my job, praying and loving my family, then tear down all that work with unwise words—A harsh word to my husband, not commending my kids’ new knowledge, simply opening off my foolish, selfish irritations ever spilled drinks or lights left on again.

Today, I again asked you to reveal yourself and myself to me. You’ve shown me that I can DO good things, but destroy their good effects by my tone of voice or by my words. I can break the spirits of those dear to me.

And about you—I see in these verses that You see everything I do. You’re watching me. I could feel scared or resentful of your Presence—you are the Creator of all things and you have all power! But I know from all your Scripture, beginning to end, that you love me and want a relationship with me. So I can be thankful and grateful to you that you see all good and evil in my lives. I’m not unknown to you, nor is my situation. No matter what, you are there and want to help me speak, with the gentle tongue to give life to my loved ones. I can enjoy my day, knowing I’m never alone, because you will never leave me nor forsake me (Hebrews 13:5).

O God, please remind me of these truths today! Please touch my heart when I might say or have already said a harsh or foolish word. Please God, let the words of my mouth and the thoughts in my heart be pleasing to you, God, my Rock and Redeemer! (Psalm 19:14).

A Word from your Elder
Bruce Davison

“So,” you may be asking yourself, “whatever came of all that emphasis on Biblical leadership models and the effort to establish Elders at Olivet?”

In response, I’d like to offer some observations and then to share with you some of what God has laid on my heart, as I endeavor to serve His kingdom and His people who are Olivet Baptist Church.

Allow me to relate some of my impressions regarding the process of transitioning to Elder leadership.

• The men, which the Lord led you to affirm in this role, are humble and, I think, with reverent trepidation, embracing the opportunity to seek His direction and to lead His people.

• We are decidedly resolute in our conviction not to be in a hurry to act for the sake of “doing something.”

• While we are praying fervently for the Lord to direct our paths, time pressures are an ongoing struggle for us all, as we try to be about His business in this new role.

• As we carefully evaluate our current course and seek to define future direction for the church, we are also vigilantly working through a number of necessary procedural and process changes. This has, at times, frustrated our efforts to focus on the seemingly bigger picture issues critical to the church. For one, we are assigned the task of dealing effectively with these issues will provide a smoother path for the church as we move out in His will and according to His call.

• As I write, we are in the midst of formal evaluations of our ordained staff. Please pray for us as we seek to hear their hearts for ministry and to provide some counsel in this rather awkward time of transition for our church.

For the last several weeks the Holy Spirit has constantly prompted me in my prayer time, as I have spoken with our staff, in our time together as Elders, and even as recently as yesterday in response to concerns raised in a conversation with a dear brother-in-Christ discussing challenges in The Church.

My prayer is that Olivet will come to clearly understand, “Who We Are” and “What We Are About,” collectively as a church body. I believe the process begins with allowing the Holy Spirit to help us (re)discover a unified sense of Olivet as a people which God has called to a very specific role in the work of Christ, and for His kingdom. This is a permeating identity arising from a collective purpose facilitated by the exercise of individual gifts as we endeavor to operate as a Church centered on the expression of His exact will for us as a body. Pray that God will so overwhelm Olivet with His manifest love and grace that we will not be able to miss what He is showing us.

Your Elders are fervently asking God to give us the discernment necessary to lead Olivet in this path.