



An artist's task

By Reverend William Randall

Some readers are aware of the fact that in addition to Christian ministry activities I am an artist. I have work at the White River Gallery in Montague and the Red Lotus Gallery on Western Avenue in Muskegon. Works can be seen in public buildings such as Hackley Hospital, the Muskegon County Building, and at the Muskegon Community College Library. Creation of art and interaction with other artists is an interesting dimension in my life. The inspiration and challenges to create art lead one in many directions.

God created beautiful scenes that cause one to stand in awe. It need not be the Grand Canyon. A single bloom displays the wisdom and artistic skill of God. I have written the following poem to express the process of creating art. There are scenes and objects one might wish to remember and there are feelings that can be experienced through art or poetry. Sometimes it is fun to work with colors and shapes to create non-objective abstractions.

Olivet Evangelical Free Church celebrates 125 years of ministry

(Submitted by Olivet Evangelical Free Church)

The weekend of October 15 and 16 will be a time of celebration, remembrance, and looking forward for the congregation of Olivet Evangelical Free Church at 6790 Harvey Street in Spring Lake. They mark 125 years of making a difference in Muskegon County and beyond with two days of special guests and events.

In 1886, a small group of Norwegian immigrants voted to purchase property at the corner of Southern and Franklin streets in downtown Muskegon to build their "Bedehuset" (House of Prayer). The building evolved over the next 122 years to accommodate the congregation. In 1920, the ministry transitioned from Norwegian to English and became known as Olivet Evangelical Free Church, reflecting their appreciation for the freedom from government control of religious expression. In 1950 and 1977, a new building and then a substantial addition were completed that allowed the church to expand its children and youth ministries. By the mid '90s, it was clear that the congregation had outgrown the land-locked building in its downtown residential neighborhood. Even so, the decision to leave the location that the church had called home for well over a century was a difficult one for the congregation. Olivet had transitioned from a "neighborhood" church to a regional church, drawing attendees from Whitehall, Montague, Holton, Fremont, Twin Lake, North Muskegon, Fruitport, Spring Lake and Grand Haven.



These children are a part of the "Wonderful Wednesdays" program that takes place during the summer and is hosted by the children's ministry.

The congregation still felt a strong connection to the people of the Southern Avenue neighborhood and the long heritage of the church. Their desire to see a strong gospel ministry continue in the building was realized when "Ecclesia," an intentional inner city outreach of Watermark Church in Grand Haven asked to move into the building and continue the work.

In 2008, Olivet purchased a former bowling alley located on a ten-acre site on Harvey Street in Fruitport Township. After six months of renovation, the modern, barrier-free building was dedicated in March, 2009. The 22,000-square foot facility can accommodate 500 in the worship center and has state-of-the-art technology. Parking area is doubled and almost half the property is undeveloped, which leaves the door open to future growth. The children's ministry wing of the building



The Artist Remembers

Nature's scene is worth remembering,
The colors are bright and crisp.
The shapes are sharp and bold,
The shadows blend while receding,
The scene cries out for an artist.

The artist observes from many angles.
He gives attention to the source of light.
The balance of shapes are questioned.
The focal point must be found.
The decision to paint is made.

Necessary materials are then assembled.
A proper vantage point is found.
A preliminary sketch I quickly made,
A moment to pause is in order.
The time has come to begin.

The easel and canvas are set in place.
The paint begins to freely flow.
The scene develops with life-like hues.
At last the final touches are made.
Nature's scene will be long remembered. •



is bright and attractive, with parent-friendly, easily accessible nursery facilities. The expanded student ministry space has enhanced audio and video technology and large, open areas. The building's central entrance with its large foyer and café is designed to facilitate fellowship and a "warm, welcoming" feel. All the space in the building was designed with maximum flexibility in mind.

Olivet is an evangelical Christian church in which all ages worship and serve together with a warmth and unity that can be difficult to find. Each generation has willingly sacrificed for the generation following them, wanting the church to provide what would benefit those younger and needing more nurture. The congregation has a strong commitment to families and has focused not only on facility, but on gifted staff. In addition to the lead pastor, Olivet also has a children's ministry director, a full-time youth pastor, and a young adult ministries pastor.

The community is warmly invited to participate in the anniversary events.

Saturday, October 15, 6 p.m. catered dinner (reservations required) and program, "125 Years of Music" featuring music and musicians from the previous five decades at Olivet. Adult tickets are \$10; children ages 3-10 are \$6. Reservations can be made through the church office at (231) 798-2900.

Sunday, October 16, 9:30 a.m. "125 Years of Missions." We will celebrate with missionary guests and recorded greetings. Olivet has a rich history of missions giving with more than 20 percent of our annual budget dedicated to local and foreign missions giving. We also send our best to serve, and over the years, dozens of couples and families have been sent from Olivet to serve Jesus Christ around the world.

Sunday, October 16, at 10:45 a.m. "125 Years of Ministry." In our morning worship we celebrate the lives and eternities changed as God has worked through Olivet. Reverend Bill Dondit (Olivet's pastor for 18 years in the '70s and '80s) will talk about seeing God work in the past. Reverend Craig Cramblet (current lead pastor) will remind the congregation to take full advantage of God's work in the present. Reverend Curt Vanderstelt, who grew up at Olivet and is current lead pastor of North Bay Community Church in Superior, Wisconsin, will challenge the church to have a God-sized vision for the future. •

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