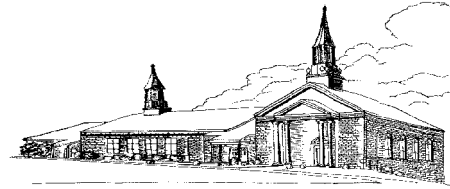


# The Olivet Observer



*"The little church with a big heart"*

**Olivet Presbyterian Church**  
1019 Richmond Avenue  
Staunton, VA 24401  
The Rev. Lee Thomas, Pastor  
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## The 138<sup>th</sup> Letter of Lee to the Olivet Church

Have you ever been surprised by a new interest? I mean, is there something that you once thought would never concern you and now you find yourself intrigued by it? For example, now in his late 20's Hunter has taken up golf as has his older brother and cousins. They spent countless days, weeks, and months in their grandmother's house when they were growing up. Their grandmother's house is on hole number 8 of the golf course in Kings Mountain. Yet the only real interest they seemed to have as children with regard to the golf course was sledding on it when there was snow in the winter. These days they are on a golf course every chance they get. I recently heard Austin lamenting about how he wasted the opportunity to play golf all the time growing up. The same kind of thing has happened for me in the past couple of years with horticulture. I have become mystified by a shrub that was planted at our house years before we ever moved in, and it has led me to research more about hydrangeas. I think what initially caught my attention was that it bloomed beautifully in the summer of 2021 but remained completely green in 2022 and 2023 without a single bloom to be found. So I've gone online and learned about hydrangeas that bloom on old wood versus hydrangeas that bloom on new growth. Then there are varieties like the Endless Summer hydrangea that bloom on both. Apparently, how the shrub is pruned greatly impacts the blooming of the plant. I'm challenged now because back in 2021 I didn't really care enough to look to see if it was blooming on new wood or old wood, and so now I'm left guessing as to what variety we have. We were excited last week to find that at the very bottom of the shrub there is ONE single bloom, and I'm going to share a picture of it here. We are wondering if it will be the only bloom of the season though. We'll take any tips from any of you who might be experienced hydrangea growers. I have come to really like the blooms on hydrangeas and have spent way more time reading about them than I would have ever imagined.



It's fascinating to me how we grow and change as people. The older I get the more I see that it's all part of God's plan for His chosen and beloved that we do grow and change. It amazes me all the more as a believer and child of God that He never changes. He was and is and will always be the same. He faithfully stands by and watches as we learn and grow and become more and more the people He intends for us to be. And as we become those people He means for us to be, we grow more grateful for words such as these from the third chapter of Lamentations. *Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

I hope you are enjoying the warmer weather and all of the things that make this time of year so great. And seriously, if you want to come by and try to identify the hydrangea in our back yard, we'd love to have your input.

Grace and Peace,