

# The Olivet Observer



*"The little church with a big heart"*



## DECEMBER

2024

Olivet Presbyterian Church  
1019 Richmond Avenue  
Staunton, VA 24401  
The Rev. Lee Thomas, Pastor  
olivetpres.org

### The 144<sup>th</sup> Letter of Lee to the Olivet Church

I was trying to come up with a list of the things that we usually associate with Christmas, and the list came really fast. The celebration of the birth of Jesus and also things like bells, angels, shepherds, wise men, nativity scenes, carols, reindeer, Santa Clause, trees, lights, cards, food (especially desserts), candy canes, snow men, festive colors, peppermint, Christmas movies, and so many other things quickly come to mind. And for sure, we often refer to Christmas as the season of giving.

When I think of the generosity of this congregation, my mind is truly blown. You all seem to always come through in amazing ways. Once again, I want to say thank you to the Men's Fellowship and to all who had a part in the extraordinary fund drive to help the survivors of Hurricane Helene in Western, North Carolina. That you all raised such a very generous amount of money in such a short time is truly incredible. I think it is hard for us to imagine just how much of a difference your generosity will make for some families who are really struggling right now. Only yesterday I heard a troubling report about people in Western NC who are having an extra difficult time now because of recent freezing temperatures. I was so grateful to know that our church has lovingly sent many thousands of dollars to help those. You can be sure that you have made an unforgettable difference for good in the lives of people who have felt deep desperation.

Last week I sent a text message to my friend who is a teacher in Marion, North Carolina and told her that the office staff at her school could to be on the lookout for a check that was coming from Olivet. When I told her the amount to expect she responded immediately:

"Lee—that is incredibly generous!!! Thank you all so very much!! Please pass along our sincere thanks and gratitude. We will definitely put it to good use for our families. The hurricane is something you pray never happens again, but there has been so much beauty, generosity, love, compassion, care, and glimpses of God in the days that followed. Thank you all again for the incredible donation, such love and care. What a blessing!"

So again, thank you for your loving response and generosity. As we go through this "season of giving" again this year, look for the many ways you can give to those around you. Give a hug, a smile, a laugh, and as He taught us to do, share the love of our Savior to make Christmas better for your neighbors, and for yourself. Thanks again Olivet. Merry Christmas!

Grace and Peace,