



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OLNEY

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Dear Friends,

May the grace and peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be upon you all as we begin the new programming year at Olney Presbyterian Church.

As you are aware, the last two years have been very challenging as we have struggled to maintain this ministry during a deadly pandemic. Certainly, as a congregation, we have a lot to be thankful for as we look back over the last two years. We are thankful for the leadership of this church that had to make some very difficult decisions about how to proceed during the pandemic. We are thankful for the dedication and support of many of you who have helped to sustain us during this difficult period. And of course, we are thankful for the loving and gracious presence of God who has seen us through it all.

However, serious challenges are before us as we struggle to make our way in a post-pandemic world. While we have been conducting in-person worship services for over a year now, our numbers are half of what they were before the pandemic. And as our Trustees indicated in a letter sent out last week, our giving is down significantly from last year. Unfortunately, this is not a situation that can sustain this ministry in its current configuration.

Throughout the past several decades, Olney Presbyterian Church has brought the light and love of our Lord Jesus Christ to the surrounding community and beyond. We have supported the endeavors of missionaries around the world. We have been a beacon of light and hope for children who have gathered here for Vacation Bible School and other youth activities. We have been a place of welcome and hospitality for those in need. And last, but certainly not least, we have been here for each other during good times and bad, comforting one another, encouraging one another, praying for one another, supporting one another. In other words, we have been and continue to be the Body of Christ in our community.

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, we will kick off our programming season by hosting our fall festival. We will be featuring a "Taste of Olney" to learn more about the many different cultures in the Olney community. If you have been away, this will be a wonderful opportunity to reconnect both with the church and with our mission to the surrounding community. Until then, may the love and peace of the Lord Jesus Christ continue to abound in your hearts.

Blessings and Peace!

*Randy*