

Thoughts from Rev. Mary

Two million people crowded Times Square on Dec.31 to watch the Waterford crystal ball drop and signal the start of 2019. Braving the cold, standing for hours and risking terrorist attacks, they still spend hundreds of dollars to come. Why?

Perhaps for bragging rights, or the excitement of being with a crowd which is fixated on one defining moment. But why all the cheering and confetti? Maybe it's because we have survived for one more year, and look forward to a new start, a blank page waiting to be filled with significant accomplishments, deeper relationships, and a lasting personal make-over.

We resolve to turn a new corner, and make New Year's resolutions to cast aside binding old habits and embrace life-giving new ones. Making New Year's resolutions began with the Romans who dedicated the first day of the year to the god Janus. As the god of gates, doors and beginnings, he had one face looking forward and the other backward.

Puritans, however, while rejecting its pagan origin, still practiced the tradition. Puritans believed all time belonged to God and commitment to Him, which meant self-examination and resolve to live their lives with increasing self-discipline of character.

By the 1700s, educated men of the Enlightenment period, often wrote out a personal code of conduct. Both Benjamin Franklin, founding father and co-author of the Declaration of Independence and Jonathan Edwards, the well-known pastor, theologian and missionary to Native Americans, followed the practice.

Directing his life to honor God, remain steadfast in his life's mission, discipline himself through time-management, and suffering, Jonathan Edwards wrote 75 resolutions which he re-read to himself each week. They included:

4. Resolved, never to do any manner of thing ...but only what tends to the glory of God.

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.

6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.

7. Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.

25. Resolved, to examine carefully, and constantly, what that one thing in me is, which causes me in the least to doubt of the love of God; and to direct all my forces against it.

40. Resolved, to inquire every night, before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the best way I possibly could, with respect to eating and drinking.

53. Resolved, to improve every opportunity, when I am in the best and happiest frame of mind, to cast and venture my soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, to trust and confide in him, and consecrate myself wholly to him; that from this I may have assurance of my safety, knowing that I confide in my Redeemer. *Jan. 5, 1737, July 8, 1738*

God blessed his efforts. Edwards preached at two New England churches. His love for God, his faithful and godly character became the heart of two great spiritual revivals [1733; 1741] in New England. Hundreds came to know Christ; and thousands have been influenced by the writings, theology and personal example of Jonathan Edwards. His descendants deeply affected American life. Scores of clergymen, 13 presidents of higher learning, 65 professors and many others of distinction claim him as their ancestor.

How did his faith stay alive and influence so many? Certainly, persistently trying harder by clutching at self-condemning religion would have smothered the flame his faith rather sustained it! In resolution #25 Edwards speaks of steadfastly removing “that one thing” which causes the least doubt of *the love of God*. Like an infestation of fleas, small doubts and fears eat away at faith in God’s love, prevent trust, and block out God’s love in our lives.

If he were living today, Jonathan Edwards would not be in Times Square. Instead he might be reflecting on Jesus’ command to his disciples in John 15. “Abide in Me for apart from Me you can do nothing.” Resolution #25 is Edward’s practical application of that verse. Jude 1:21 encourages Christians to ‘Keep yourself in the love of God.’ But how do we do that? Rejecting evil practices, replacing them acts of kindness, resolving to discipline our time.

What might some of these be at Middle Octorara? Some suggestions: committing ourselves to find a prayer partner, or attend Sunday morning prayer at 10:10 in our office or join us to pray at the front of the sanctuary after the service. To pray each day for the new pastor, to visit or call a shut-in each week, to read the New Testament three times this year.

Abiding is confident trust in God’s love and ‘resolving’ is living with faithful perseverance and absolute trust. Most of all, when we slip, trying yet again, trusting in God’s ever-present love. If we aim at nothing, if we have no resolutions...we reach the mark every time.

Jonathan Edwards started somewhere on an ordinary day, and kept plodding. I think that’s an excellent idea. For me, I’m adding Edward’s resolution #25 to my list.

CHURCH EVENTS

CHOIR

We still have empty chairs in the choir loft!! Hurry and claim one where YOU wish to sit!! We'd LOVE to have more seats filled!! Let 2019 be the year for YOU to join!!

DEACONS

We met on Saturday, December 8th to prepare 35 fruit baskets and set up the Advent candles in the church. We prepared 111 Christmas cards, 12 birthday cards and one anniversary blessing for a total of 124 cards for December.

I would like to thank Skip Mimm, Sharon Mowery and Dottie Garver for you serving as Deacons. It was a true blessing to serve with you.

I would like to welcome Sandra Shenk, Nancy Harnish and Kathy Harvey to the Deacons. I look forward to serving our church and God together.

Next Deacon Meeting is Sunday, January 6th, 2019 right after church.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, Dale Phillips

GROUPS

ROMEO (Real Old Men Eating Out) Club. Beginning January 9, the ROMEO men's group will be meeting on **Wednesday** mornings at 9 a.m. at the Quarryville Family Restaurant! **New day**, same time, same great guys! Come join us! Pastor Richard.

Women's Bible Study starts Jan. 14th and continues on Monday's from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. We will be studying Hebrews. All women and friends are invited Chris and Rose will be back!

Our Widows Group has begun. So far we have played games, gone to breakfast, gone to dinner, and gone to brunch and a show at Bird In Hand Restaurant. (You probably noticed that we like to eat!!) There were 11 of us that day.

Our next get together is Wednesday, January 16, at the church for game time at 2:00 followed by an early dinner at a local restaurant. For those that don't drive, transportation can be provided. See Rose Griest for information.

MEMBER ADDRESS CHANGES

We need updated addresses for the following:

Mrs. John Winters (incorrect address is 1578 Beaver Valley Pike
Eva Bishop

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN – Long History

The women of Middle Octorara have been a vibrant group as long as I can remember. The ladies who were active in the kitchen back in the '50's and '60's prepared chicken/waffle dinners, made pies for special events and were part of the kitchen staff whenever needed. They prepared the food for my wedding reception in 1972. The food was great and it the fact that they prepared it, cut down on the cost of the meal. There were also ladies who made quilts and did other sewing projects. I remember working in the dining room at the age of 12 as a server under the guidance of dining room coordinator, Marcy Frutchey. I remember watching so many role models in the kitchen: women like Blanche Prange, Jenny Groff, Miriam Crouse, Vesta Shea, Frances Keene, Ruth Fox, Blanche Mimm, and Julia Mowrer. They called themselves the Women's Association. I'm sure I omitted some special ladies from this group and I apologize for doing so. Even though my grandmother, Lillian seemed to know everyone, I did not. I was so shy that I tried to meld into the background. But, Grandmom tried to include me wherever she could.

When beginning this article, I had no intention of getting so nostalgic. But, upon taking time to review what our women's group accomplished in 2018, I began to think about our women's long history of serving at MO.

The 'Women's Association' of today now calls themselves MOPW – Middle Octorara Presbyterian Women. Under the guidance of our officers: Cathy Miller -and Sue Ressel (co-team coordinators); Secretary – Annie Frackman and Treasurer – Steph Frackman, we, as a group, are always finding ways to help and serve. This is part of what we do to serve as Jesus taught us. It is fun and very rewarding.

So, let's recap MOPW's activities of 2018: Provided Christmas Gifts to Ware Presbyterian Village; the needle-workers made dozens of lap robes which were given to the Gap VFW for delivery to the Veterans Hospital; held 2 soup/sub sale fund raisers; provided funeral luncheons as needed for grieving family members; sponsored the Lenten Tea on March 10; sponsored the Celebration of Mothers Banquet in May; coordinated the Clothing Give-Away in August; sponsor a Women's Bible Study and Retreat; provided food at Estate Sales for the families and buyers; prepared and sold hundreds of meals for the Turkey Supper; sponsored the Holiday Bazaar in November; with the help of Rev. Mary Brondyke the women conducted the Thanksgiving Church service in November; financially supported the Boy Scouts, the Food Bank, local families in need and other ministries.

As you can see, MOPW doesn't let any moss grow under its feet. The group is very active and happy to be of help. We do not list all the activities above to boast, but to show all the various ways we take seriously our mission to serve others. All are invited to join MOPW as we have learned so well how *many hands make light work*. We are thankful that Jesus has shown us so many ways to serve Him and His Church.

TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees has approved a new company for our grounds maintenance. The man we had this year felt it was just too much for him to keep maintained.

The manse is now unoccupied, so we can decide what needs updated. We want to have it ready in case the potential pastor wants to live there. And we are working on keeping things repaired and in working order in the church. If you are a homeowner, you realize there is always something that needs fixed. We try to keep ahead of things but sometimes we are not fast enough.

We have been looking at repairing/replacing the cement semi-circle in front of the church and the steps that go to the kitchen in the rear. It's always important to keep donating to the building fund, to help pay for some of these necessary repairs.

THANK YOU

Thank you for such a generous Christmas surprise gift. We are truly thankful and blessed to be here with such a kind and welcoming congregation!

Richard and Mary

MISSIONS

LOCAL

New Hope is in need of volunteers for their thrift store. Many amazing blessings and benefits for those who become **Community Closet Thrift Store Volunteers**. Any amount of time you give will be a big help.

*When we give our time and effort to the Lord, to be a blessing to our community, we are blessed.

*Everything that we do at the store is for others!

*No task is too small, we are well-trained, never a boring moment and a big plus: lots of laughter.

*Team work and problem solving help "get 'r' done"- so all of us finish up every time we volunteer, with the great feeling of a job well done.

*Volunteers really get to know our customers and take time to share and to enjoy each other.

*There are "perks" all year long: Birthday gifts and recognition, gift certificates for Thanksgiving and Christmas, free Volunteer Breakfast and Fall Banquet, with a 50% discount every day we work!

*We are a "family" that truly cares for one another!

Call us today at 717-786-2034. Volunteers are awesome!

MISSION MUSINGS

As I write this Mission Musings I am reflecting on the past year. I think of the Middle Octorara saints that have run the race, fought the good fight and are now part of the church triumphant.

Paul, Ernie, Julia, Carl, Glady, Jean, Ethel, Louise, Patsy, Joe and Bob are all now spending eternity in the presence of our heavenly Father. Among them they served as elders, trustees, deacons, Sunday School teachers and more. They were friends, mentors and church family to many of us. Some I knew just a few years, others knew me before I could even walk.

I have been blessed by having known them and I know many of you have been as well. They have served Middle Octorara as well as their families, friends, community and world by striving to live as Jesus did while He walked on this earth.

They each took their mission as followers of Jesus Christ seriously to help orphans, widows and those less fortunate and to share the love of Jesus with others.

We have and can continue to learn a lot from these folks who have gone ahead of us. Just as God had work for them to do He has work for each of us.

Luke 10:2 tells us " the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few". God has given each of us gifts to use to help others and to do our part to share His love and life changing, life saving message with others. I again challenge myself and each of you to seek to know and do His will in 2019.

Do you know someone in your family, workplace or neighborhood who is unchurched? Get to know them, their needs, hopes and dreams. Invite them to come to church with you. They may not come the first time you invite them but continue to reach out to them, serve their needs and love them. If we do our part God will certainly do His!!!
Revelation 3:20

Our Mission Information Form has been approved.

Please pray every day for our Pastor Nominating Committee. Their work now starts in earnest as they seek with God's guidance every step of the way for our next Pastor. May God bless each of them as they undertake this most important mission.

I would be remiss as I write about our mission if I did not thank Rev. Mary and Rev. Richard. We have been so blessed to have them leading us in ministry the past six month and look with great anticipation to all God has planned for us as they continue to lead us until God provides us with our next full time Pastor.

Serving God together.

Dan Henry

Philippians 1:6

REFLECTIONS

by Barry Girvin

A Moment in Time

In one of my rather melancholy moods, I was looking at a photo of my grandfather. Paul Groff was at the beach in the 1920s. He had a farmer's tan up to the elbows and was white as a sheet from there on up. He was sitting on the sand, and a runner could be seen in the background.

It was a moment in time which the passing of generations cannot erase. Paul died of cancer in 1930 at the age of 34. I have spoken to many people who knew him, but those memories will fade away. The photo, however, will be there to allow the living to look into the eyes of a good man whose life was much too short.

As I studied the photo, I could see physical characteristics that have shown up in the next four generations. What would he have thought about his many descendants? What influence would he have had on their lives? This is unknown since he died not even living long enough to raise his two daughters.

Many of us have lived long enough to be featured in years of family albums, and others not so much. Whatever the case, each photo is a precious moment in time. Our last photo freezes us in time, a moment in which we make our last appearance. Those last appearances are a mystery. Those who die young will never know what they would have looked like in later years. We, also, must be content with their last appearance. A young soldier who dies in battle, numerous people who have died in epidemics or natural disasters, they will never grow beyond their final appearance. But, they will live on as each photo preserves a moment in time.

THIS- N-THAT

I think this is fantastic, I just love the guy's answer, and the interpretation for BIBLE.
Enjoy and pass on.
If you're spiritually alive, you're going to love this!
If you're spiritually dead, you won't want to read it.
If you're spiritually curious, there is still hope!

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.
He wrote: "I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, the preachers and priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all".

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column.
Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:
"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals.
But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today.
Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"
When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something!

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible & receives the impossible!
Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN ALL, YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL!

B. I. B. L. E. simply means: Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth!

(submitted by Dick Keene)

EXTEND A BLESSING DONATIONS

\$390.00

Solanco Food Bank + \$40.00
Solanco Neighborhood Ministries
Solanco Neighborhood Ministries + \$5.00
\$10 plus an additional \$10 to Paralyzed Veterans of America
\$10 plus an additional \$10 to Paralyzed Veterans of America
St. Jude's Children's Hospital
\$10.00 + \$20.00...Christmas Care Pack...Voice of the Martyrs
\$10.00 + \$20.00...Special Olympics
\$10.00 + \$10.00...food bank
\$10.00 + \$10.00 Operation Christmas Child
\$10.00 + \$50.00 for total of \$60.00 for a family in need.
Mercy Ships
\$10.00 + \$40.00 to a single mother with two children.
\$10.00 + \$20.00 a needy family
\$10.00 + \$20.00 a needy family
\$10 to \$250 and given to St. Jude Children's Hospital, Samaritan's Purse, and to a local needy military family.
Needy family
Mission Fund
Local teenager needing clothing + added to it.
Local teenager needing clothing + added to it.
Local teenager needing clothing + added to it.
Salvation Army + \$10.00.
Salvation Army + \$10.00.
\$10.00 plus an additional \$90.00 was given to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
Salvation Army bucket
Oaks Ministry in Oxford, a Christian residential environment for women in need plus added to it.
Food bank + \$5.00
American Cancer Society + \$10.00
Caregivers Christmas
A couple in need along with some groceries.
\$10.00 plus \$20.00 family that lost their husband/father
\$10.00 plus \$20.00 family that lost their husband/father
\$10.00 plus \$30.00 family that lost their husband/father
Groceries for a neighbor
Groceries for a neighbor
Donated to 4 year old Ava with AFB illness plus \$40.00
\$50.00 Salvation Army plus \$50.00

An additional \$790.00 plus was added to our \$390.00!!!

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

January birthdays starting with 6th

- 6 – Curtis Reinhart
- 8 – Austin Evans
- 22 – Ray Wessner
- 28 – Troy Miller
- 29 – Paul Armer, Tammy Mullis, Faith Keene

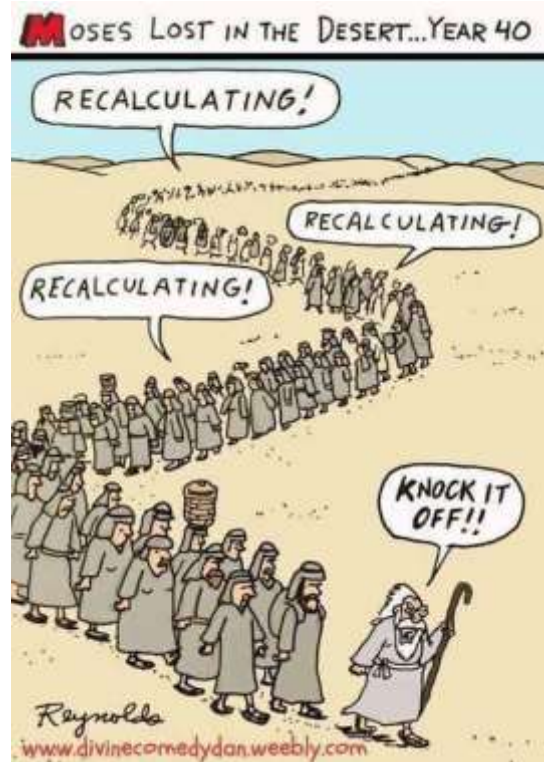
February birthday's through 2nd

- 1 – Mindy Dalmas, Wayne Messick
- 2 – John Ressel

January anniversaries

- 30 – Jim & Kay Bueche

For those who have used GPS



TREASURER'S REPORT

GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES *December 2018*

The following is the individual weekly breakdown of offerings:

Dec. 2 -	General Fund	2,061.00	Benevolence	134.00
Dec. 9-	General Fund	2,352.00	Benevolence	144.00
Dec. 16 -	General Fund	1,755.00	Benevolence	102.00
Dec. 23 -	General Fund	1,631.00	Benevolence	177.00
Dec. 30 -	General Fund	1,096.00	Benevolence	122.00

An additional \$2,081.13 General Fund money, including manse rental and \$95.00 Benevolence money was also received by mail etc.

We ended December and 2018 with a comfortable balance which is a good way to start a new year. Now we will see what God has planned for 2019.

YTD GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES

	Monthly Budget	YTD Budget	Monthly Received	YTD Received	YTD Expenses
General Fund	13,812.85	143,653.63	10,976.13	125,637.08	121,732.47
Benevolence	615.40	6,400.00	774.00	8,192.00	

Debbie Hoover, Secretary-Treasurer



Pennsylvania State Farm Show Jan. 5 - 12

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Subject to change)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan. 6	Jan. 7 Women's Bible Study 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Worship comm. Mtg. 7:00 p.m.	Jan. 8 ROMEO club 9:00 a.m. Trustee Mtg. 7:00 p.m.	Jan. 9	Jan. 10 Session Mtg. 7:00 p.m.	Jan. 11	Jan. 12 Nuts 'N' Bolts Auction 7:00 - 1:00
Jan. 13 Install church officers 10:30	Jan. 14 Women's Bible Study 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Jan. 15 ROMEO club 9:00 a.m.	Jan. 16	Jan. 17	Jan. 18	Jan. 19
Jan. 20	Jan. 21 Women's Bible Study 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Jan. 22 ROMEO club 9:00 a.m.	Jan. 23	Jan. 24	Jan. 25	Jan. 26
Jan. 27 Pot Luck Lunch followed by Congregation Mtg. 12:30	Jan. 28 Women's Bible Study 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Jan. 29 ROMEO club 9:00 a.m.	Jan. 30	Jan. 31	Feb. 1	Feb. 2