

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

March 2024 NEWSLETTER



The Mission of Middle Octorara Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is to provide a place of fellowship where a community of believers comes together to be spiritually renewed and enabled to effectively witness for Christ through service to others.

PASTOR JOHN'S THOUGHTS

J. I. Packer (1926-2020), Anglican priest, theologian, author and professor, was best known for his best-selling book, Knowing God, published in 1973. In it he urged all Christians to know the Triune God personally, by experience, in relationship, instead of only knowing about God, second-hand. Here is a quote from Dr. Packer, about the Holy Trinity, which I find helpful: "God is triune; there are within the Godhead three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and the work of salvation is one in which all three act together, the Father purposing redemption, the Son securing it, and the Spirit applying it."

Dr. Packer's words apply to right where we are on this third Sunday of Lent, building toward Holy Week, Easter, and Ascension Day, forty days after March 31. Our Heavenly Father purposed our redemption in the plan of salvation, which he established even before he created the world and the universe and all living things. Ephesians 1:3ff. says, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight." Before we humans had the opportunity to choose sin and self over relationship with God, he had decided to buy us back from sin and death at the staggering cost of his one and only Son's death in our place. Our Old Testament is a record of the preparation and prophecies for the incarnation and saving work of the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. He became the last Adam, who took our place on the cross, paid our penalty, and secured our salvation. Through faith in him, we are reconciled to God as adopted children of God for all eternity through the free gift of his grace. In Holy Week, we will mark and celebrate again what Jesus has done for each of us who come to him with empty hands and trust wholly in his provision. Then with Easter and Ascension, we enter the time of the Holy Spirit, where he applies the salvation the Father has purposed, and the Son has secured, to each of us, individually, personally, as we trust in Jesus and his finished work. Speaking of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Jesus says in his farewell discourse to his disciples in John 16:7, "It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor (the Holy Spirit) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." We are living in that time, the age of the Holy Spirit. It is based on the Father's purposing of redemption, and the Son's securing of it, his finished work for us on the cross.

May these days, as all our days, be touched by the grace of our loving Triune God, as we look to him, receive from him, trust and praise him, for all he so freely gives us. Thank you for being a church that lives this Gospel. As the Psalmist says, "the lines have fallen for me in pleasant places," that I should have the privilege of being your pastor.

CHURCH LIFE

CHOIR

We have been busy practicing songs for Lent and Easter. We want to convey Christ's Journey to the cross and His Resurrection. We are also going to participate in the Good Friday Service at Little Britain Church where the choirs will sing together, so there is more music to learn.

Good Friday

On March 29 (Good Friday) at 7 PM at Little Britain Presbyterian Church, there will be a combined Tennebrae service with Union, Little Britain and us. The choirs will join together to sing a couple of numbers to commemorate the Lord's death on the cross. And there will be readings by members of each congregation. Won't you come to experience this solemn occasion?

DEACONS

The work of Deacons often involves the keeping of confidences and the safeguarding of people's dignity. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is more blessed to be able to give, than to need to receive. It's not easy to ask for help, and we sure don't want the whole world to know about our situation. But we do want to care for one another within and beyond the Body of Christ.

Amy Carmichael (1867-1951), Christian missionary to India for 55 years, founded and supervised a mission and orphanage in Dohnavur, one of the poorest areas of that poor country. She offers the following helpful guidance when it comes to anything any of us might say in reference to another person: "Let nothing be said about anyone unless it passes three sieves: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?" It reminds me of Paul's words in Ephesians 4:29, "Let no unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Part of our caring for others in Jesus' name, may be in what we say, and what we don't say. Thank you, our faithful Deacons, and everyone in our church family, for living according to these kind and loving words.

LIBRARY

Work is continuing on updating our church library. Items have been removed that are duplicated, a table of some of these church historical booklets etc. have been in the social hall for anyone who would like a copy. Next is sorting through books that have not been checked out lately and they will be available for purchase at our yard sale in April and if they don't sell, will be donated elsewhere. For the month of March, we will highlight books pertaining to Easter.

MEMBER ADDRESS CHANGES – Please update your church address lists.

John Caskey Jr. – Oak Leaf Manor South, 2101 Wabank Rd., Room D-20, Millersville, PA 17551

Linda Caskey – 410 Spencer Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603

Barry & Shirley Girvin - 533 Park Avenue, Apt. B106, Quarryville, PA 17566

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Lenten Tea March 9th 2:00 p.m. Entertainment provided by "**Perfect Harmony**" a dynamic vocal trio specializing in storytelling through music and based out of Lancaster.

The tea will follow after their program. Reservations are requested by March 4th to the following: Church: 717-786-3402 or mopc_sec@comcast.net. Contact Person: Boni Henry at 717-405-1113 or bohphen@outlook.com *Feel free to bring your own teacup!*

SESSION

Easter Sunday March 31 7:00 am Sunrise Service

Donuts and coffee following the service. Anyone interested in giving the message contact Dan Henry.

SILVER SISTERS

We had 16 Silver Sisters lunch together at Dienners Family Restaurant in February. We all enjoyed being together. Our next lunch is at Millers Smorgasbord on Wednesday March 6 at 11:30. All widows are welcome!! I have coupons to get a meal at reduced prices.

TRUSTEES

Please notice the bushes that form the cross in the cemetery. They've been trimmed back. Now you can see the sidewalk in the middle and the tombstones at the side.

Work day has been scheduled for Saturday March 23 beginning around 8 AM. There will be brunch for the workers. Come even if it only suits to help for a short time. Many hands make light work. Raindate is March 30.

MISSION MUSINGS

We are part way into Lent for the year 2024. Lent is the season to remember the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert following His baptism by John the Baptist. While in the desert for 40 days Jesus was tempted by Satan to disobey God. Of course we know Jesus resisted every temptation to remain sinless and absolutely faithful and obedient to His Father. Jesus knew His mission and remained committed to that mission all throughout His earthly life.

Do we each know our mission and are we committed to that mission? We each have tasks to do and God calls us to be faithful to those tasks as well as give us the gifts to complete those tasks. This life is not always easy and we also feel like we are in the desert at times struggling to get by day to day. We have all been in the desert at times. Maybe it's financial difficulties or sickness or the death of a loved one. It's during these times that Satan attempts to infiltrate our minds and hearts and plant thoughts that are contrary to God's word and will for our lives. Sometimes these struggles can make a person turn away from God but often with perseverance and faithfulness lessons are learned and we become a better person because of these struggles.

Often people give up something for Lent, it might be a particular food or a bad habit. Also it can be a time to commit to starting a good habit such as reading the Bible more, visiting shut ins or reaching out to help someone in need.

My prayer for this Lenten season and beyond is that our mission will be to commit to focusing on doing God's will and work here in the Solanco area and throughout the world.

Our Monthly Mission Focus for February was Orphan Assistance Foundation and we were notified that Audrey and Jesus Santiago will be heading to Germany today to visit some refugees from the Ukraine and then on to Odessa to visit and encourage the folks involved in the ministry in Ukraine. Please keep Audrey, Jesus and this ministry outreach in your prayers.

Our March Mission Focus is Lightshine Ministry. This ministry has been helping folks and spreading the gospel in Alaska for over 20 years. With much effort and God's blessings they now have a year round "home base " in Palmer, Alaska. This will help to expand their outreach to many more people in the coming years. Please continue to keep this ministry in your prayers.

Acts 20:35

Blessings
Dan Henry

REFLECTIONS

by Barry Girvin

What's Up – Up on the Hill?

The Honor Wall at the Museum is an ongoing project. The centerpiece is the large photo of Rev. George H. Shea, D.D. and the attached plaque. With his keen interest in history, Dr. Shea was the heart and soul of the restorations of the Covenant Church in 1939 and 1960 done by the Trustees of the Church. Today's Foundation evolved from the Board of Trustees. Rev. Shea had many connections and great influence within the Presbytery and Denomination. A study of his correspondence, pecked out on an old typewriter, reveals how the friends that he made helped bring recognition of the wonderful history of the Covenant Church and helped raise the money needed for the restorations. It was my privilege to know Rev. Shea. He baptized Shirley and me, performed our wedding ceremony, and baptized two of our children.

A photo and plaque honoring Rev. Robert W. Tanguy also appear on the Honor Wall. Rev. Tanguy served on the Board of Trustees from 1966 to 1994. His interest in history and his background in United Presbyterian tradition made him a perfect fit for the work going on at the Covenant Church.

Also on the Wall, Fred A. Williams, who was President of the Board of Trustees from the early 1960s to 1989. Mr. Williams was a strong leader who, along with Rev. Shea, brought many men of wealth and prestige to the Board. In fact, at one time, he held the Trustees meeting at the Hamilton Club in Lancaster.

There are three new faces that will soon appear on the Wall: Madison E. McElwain, Hiram G. Troop, and Abram J. Rhoads. Their photos and plaques seen here speak of their achievements.

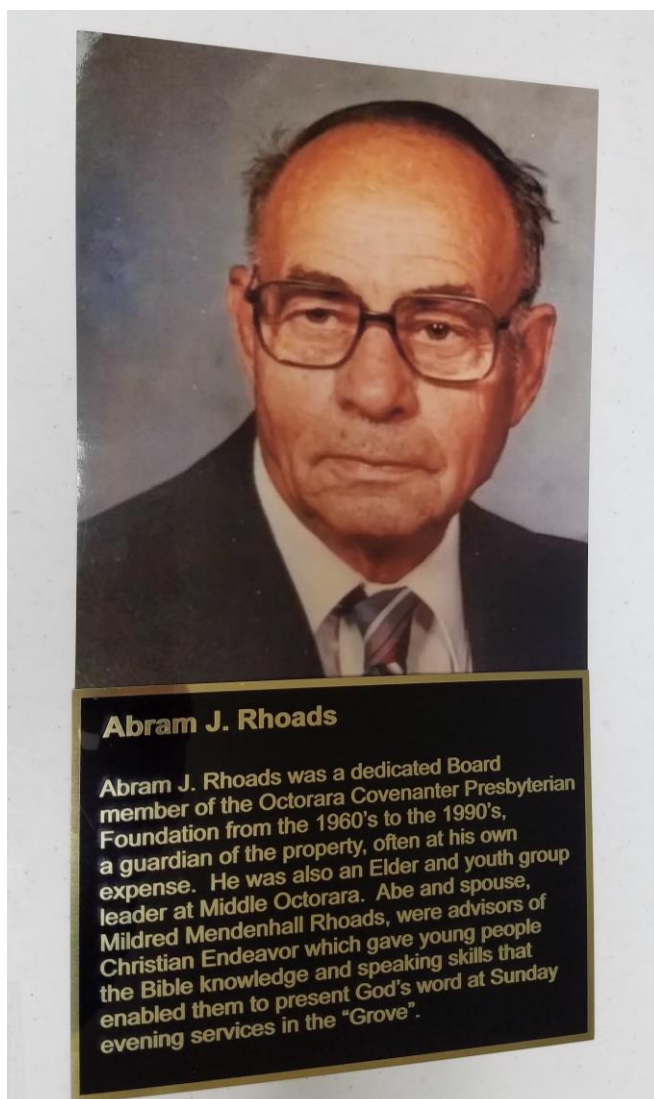
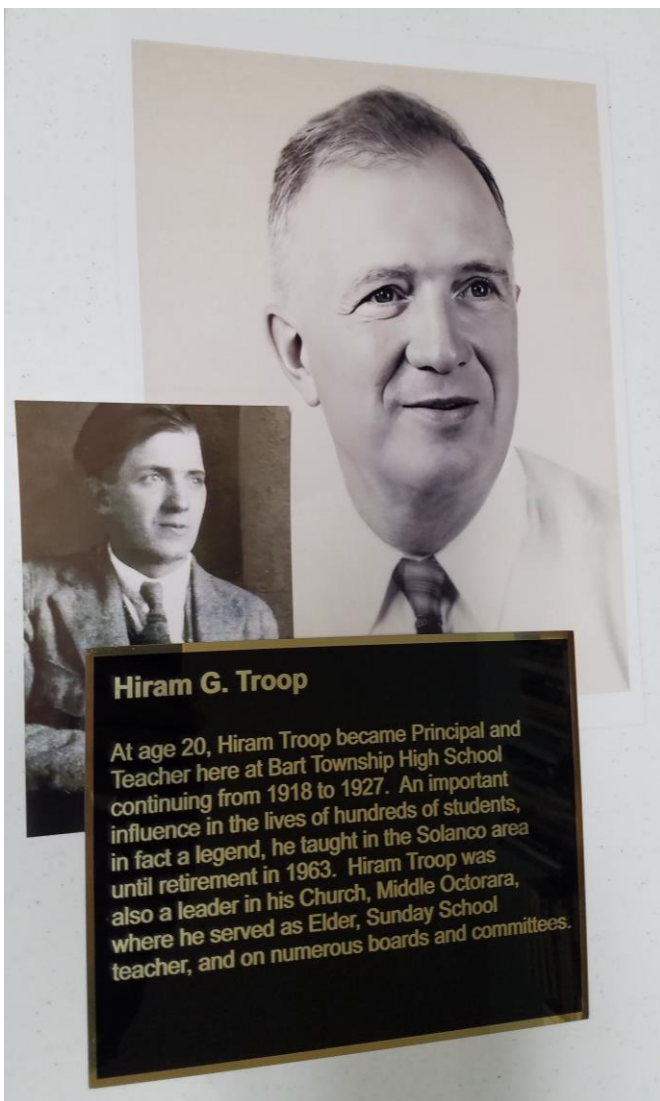
There are many things about the Covenant Church and Schoolroom Museum that are currently "up in the air." Our application to be listed on the National Registry of Historic Places, filed three years ago, is still fighting its way through an unbelievable bureaucracy whose officials seem to come and go like a revolving door. Rob McCullough and I recently responded to six questions they finally sent us after two years of prodding. A promised response has not arrived.

Also, up in the air, literally, is the ceiling of the Schoolroom. It may need to be replaced with drywall. This may mean closing the Museum for some time and moving furniture and many of the artifacts into the Church.

Also, we wait for the rewiring job in the Church to be completed. The earlier work was suspended because of bats and guano, a problem that has been eliminated at great expense.

Thanks to our fund raisers and donations, we have the money to move forward with maintenance and restoration efforts. If you are not yet familiar with the history of the Covenant Church, please pick up a brochure, available at both the Covenant Church and Middle Octorara, and consider becoming a patron.





BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

March birthday's starting with the 3rd

- 6 – Harold Probst–
- 10 – Heaven Miller
- 13 – Mary Dalmás
- 21 – Douglas Hileman
- 22 – Judy Bleacher
- 24 – Kim Barlow
- 25 – Shyanne Moore
- 27 – Cody Ressel
- 30 – Betty Trout
- 31 – Jeff Frackman

April birthday's through the 7th

- 4- Cayla Sallander, Gwen Lefever

Anniversaries

- 20 – Barry & Shirley Girvin



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|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| | | | | Middle Octorara Presbyterian Church | |
| | | | | Income and Expense Statement | |
| | | | | GENERAL FUND 01, February 2024 | |
| | | | | | |
| BEGINNING BALANCE, February 1, 2024 | | | | | 18,418.28 |
| INCOME | | | | | |
| Offerings | | | | \$13,764.00 | |
| Per Capita | | | | 890.00 | |
| Initial Offering | | | | 50.00 | |
| Manse Rent | | | | 1,269.45 | |
| Benevolence | | | | 920.00 | |
| TOTAL INCOME | | | | 16,893.45 | |
| | | | | | |
| TOTAL CASH & INCOME | | | | | 35,311.73 |
| EXPENSES | | | | | |
| Pastoral Salary | | | | \$5,851.21 | |
| Pastoral Mileage | | | | 651.24 | |
| Pastoral Pension | | | | 2,189.93 | |
| Pastoral Technology | | | | 50.00 | |
| Secretary-Treasurer | | | | 1,135.00 | |
| Accountant Fees | | | | 90.00 | |
| Payroll Taxes | | | | 52.66 | |
| Advertising | | | | 38.75 | |
| Office Supplies | | | | 244.94 | |
| Church Supplies | | | | 67.81 | |
| Printing Exp/Supplies | | | | 229.16 | |
| Copier Lease | | | | 120.32 | |
| Choir Music- Senior | | | | 30.48 | |
| Electricity | | | | 384.04 | |
| Propane Gas | | | | 785.32 | |
| Insurance | | | | 520.00 | |
| Burner Repairs/maint. | | | | 1,023.00 | |
| Misc. Repairs/Mainten. | | | | 86.89 | |
| Telephone/internet | | | | 93.93 | |
| Cleaning Service | | | | 187.50 | |
| Snow Removal | | | | 627.50 | |
| Guest Minister/Speaker | | | | 159.38 | |
| Per Capita Payment | | | | 890.00 | |
| Tsfr. Session Benev. Fund | | | | 920.00 | |
| Burner Repairs-Manse | | | | 522.00 | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | | | | 16,951.06 | |
| | | | | | |
| ENDING BALANCE, February 29, 2024 | | | | | 18,360.67 |

GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES FEBRUARY 2024

The following is the individual weekly breakdown of offerings:

| | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------|-------------|--------|
| February 4- | General Fund | 3,134.00 | Benevolence | 165.00 |
| February 11 - | General Fund | 4,050.00 | Benevolence | 225.00 |
| February 18- | General Fund | 2,598.00 | Benevolence | 220.00 |
| February 25 - | General Fund | 1,422.00 | Benevolence | 270.00 |

An additional \$4,769.45 General Fund money and \$40.00 Benevolence money was received by mail etc.

YTD GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES

| | Monthly Budget | YTD Budget | Monthly Received | YTD Received | YTD Expenses |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| General Fund | 13,910.32 | 27,820.64 | 15,973.45 | 29,015.12 | 41,659.92 |
| Benevolence | 953.84 | 1,907.68 | 920.00 | 1,849.00 | |



Good Friday - Tenebrae Service Tenebrae means “darkness or shadows.” This is the time we recall the passion of our Lord, the pain, the suffering and the grief which he bore for our sake. It is through the cross that our freedom was gained by Christ. We light candles which symbolize the last hours of Christ's life. As each candle is extinguished, we walk with Christ on his journey to the Cross until finally, only the Christ Candle remains. Finally, that candle too, will be extinguished symbolizing our Lord's death on the cross. As the bell tolls for each year of Christ's life, we wait in silence and remember. Following the service, we depart in silence and in darkness until we return to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord from the power of sin and death.



The date of Easter Sunday changes each year. This year, in 2024, Easter falls on Sunday, March 31st. How is the date of Easter determined every year? The holiday occurs on the Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox, (first day of spring) in the northern hemisphere.

Good Friday is only honored in some states. While Good Friday is a major holiday for all Catholics, only 12 out of the 50 states consider the Friday before Easter an actual federal holiday. Most of the country will go to work on Good Friday.

Americans will consume more than 16 million jellybeans. That's enough jelly beans to circle the globe not once, not twice, but *three times* — or to fill a plastic egg the size of a nine-story building.

Buying a new outfit for Easter stems from a superstition. Back in the mid-1800s in New York, people believed that buying new clothes to wear on Easter would bring them good luck for the rest of the year. And, lucky for us, the custom continues today.

Decorating eggs comes from a Ukrainian tradition. The ornate eggs were called pysankas, which were made by using wax and dyes. It wasn't until Ukrainian immigrants came to the U.S. that the colorful custom caught on.

The first White House Easter Egg Roll was in 1878. Rutherford B. Hayes was the president at the time. But it was President Nixon who first included a bunny in the festivities with a member of his wife's staff as the lucky person who got to wear the costume.

Easter is the second biggest candy-consuming holiday. It comes in second only to Halloween, respectively. Americans spent approximately \$1.9 billion on Easter candy last year.

Most Americans bite off the ears of a chocolate bunny first. In fact, a whopping 76% say that's where they take their first mouthful, followed by 5% who eat the feet first, and 4% who eat the tail first. (*This newsletter editor bites the ears off first and whoever tells her that you read this will receive your own little chocolate bunny*)



Saint Patrick's Day Word Scramble


Race to see how fast you can unscramble the letters of the following words, all of which have something to do with St. Patrick's Day.

1. Pleachurne _____
2. Kroamsch _____
3. Brownia _____
4. Top fo Dogl _____
5. Trapkic _____
6. Dinerai _____
7. Cyklu _____
8. March _____
9. Loverc _____
10. Slebgins _____
11. Seretaur _____
12. Sneaks _____
13. Libbe _____
14. Yodlhai _____
15. Draape _____
16. Sappegib _____
17. Negre _____
18. Pets Cande _____
19. Gij _____
20. Roosheshe _____



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Subject to change)

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|----------|---------------------------------------|---|----------|---|--|
| March 3 | March 4 | March 5 Session Mtg. 6:45 p.m. | March 6 Romeo Club 9:00 a.m. Silver Sisters 11:30 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 pm. | March 7 | March 8 | March 9 Lenten Tea 2:00 p.m. |
| March 10 | March 11 | March 12 Trustee Mtg. 7:00 p.m. | March 13 Romeo Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 pm. | March 14 | March 15 | March 16 |
| March 17  | March 18 | March 19 | March 20 Romeo Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 pm. | March 21 | March 22 | March 23 Spring workday 8:00 a.m. |
| March 24 | March 25 | March 26 | March 27 Romeo Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 pm. | March 28 | March 29 Tennebrae service 7:00 p.m. Little Britain Church | March 30 Raindate workday 8:00 a.m. |
| March 31 Easter Sunrise Svc. 7:00 p.m. | April 1 | April 2 | April 3 Romeo Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 pm. | April 4 | April 5 | April 6 |

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR REV. JOHN BARLOW

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Myerstown, PA 17067

Cellphone: 717-377-4570
Email: barlowjohn604@gmail.com

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 68, Bart, PA 17503
Physical/Shipping Address: 1199 Valley Road, Quarryville, PA 17566
Phone: 717-786-3402 or 717-786-8284
Email: mopc_sec@comcast.net
Website: middleoctorara.org
Facebook: middle octorara

Church Secretary/Treasurer Debbie Hoover
Phone: 717-786-8284
Email: thehoovers@comcast.net or mopc_sec@comcast.net
Address: 2115 Mine Road, Paradise, PA 17562

Senior Choir Director Rose Griest
Accompanists Boni Henry, Shirley Girvin, Sue Herr

Technology Team Leader Mike Hoover
Email: mopc_av@comcast.net

Superintendent of Cemeteries James Williams
Phone: 717-517-6968

CHURCH BOARDS

Session

Clerk of Session: Dan Henry
Phone: 717-381-9947
Email: danlhenry55@aol.com
2022-2024-J. Barry Girvin, Dan Henry, Vivian Caldwell
2023-2025-Joan Probst, Sue Ressel, Brenda Roark
2024-2026-Shirley Girvin, Richard Keene, Jonathan Welch

Deacons

Administrator: Pastor John Barlow
Phone: 717-377-4570
mail: barlowjohn604@gmail.com
2022-2024-Nancy Cox, Andy Keene, Sandra Shenk, Val Keene
2023-2025-Annie Frackman, Dottie Garver, Kathy Harvey, Cathy Miller
2024-2026-Kim Barlow, Dixie Clark, Linda Farmer, Sue Herr

Trustees

President: Jeff Frackman
Phone: 717-989-6896
2022-2024-Doug Henry, Lloyd Miller, Dale Phillips
2023-2025-Rose Griest, Boni Henry, Sam Reinhart
2024-2026-Jeff Frackman, Herb Girvin, Nancy Minchoff