

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

March 2025 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

Horatius Bonar (1808-1889) was a Free Church of Scotland pastor and a poet. He wrote the lyrics for several hymns, eight of which appear in the Presbyterian Hymnal of 1933 which was used by MO for much of the 20th Century. I want to draw your attention to one of them, "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say." The three verses of the hymn are based on three verses of the New Testament, all on the lips of Jesus: Matthew 11:28, John 4:14, and John 8:12. The first two lines of the hymn's verses contain Jesus' words of promise and invitation. The third and fourth lines have our answer. The music, composed by Rev. John B. Dykes, powerfully underscores this contrast. The tune for Jesus' words is haunting and in a minor key, reflecting the situation from which our Savior would deliver us. Our response of faith shifts to a triumphant major key that highlights the relief that is granted by our Lord.

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down Thy head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was, Weary and worn and sad,
I found in Him a resting place, And He has made me glad.*

John 4:14 "Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to everlasting life."

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold I freely give
The living water; thirsty one, Stoop down and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, And now I live in Him.*

John 8:12 "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

*I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise, And all thy day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found in Him my Star, my Sun;
And in that Light of life I'll walk, Till traveling days are done.*

I am drawn to Bonar's hymn because it is centered on our Lord Jesus and grounded on his words in the Bible. I was trying to think who that reminds me of. What church in southern Lancaster County fits that bill. I'm sure it will come to me. Oh, I know, it's MO. It's you. Thank you for being laser-focused on Jesus and his Word. It is a pure pleasure to be among you as your pastor.

CHURCH LIFE

A-TEAM

Many of you folks attend the Talent Show put on by the A-Team, including Brandon and some of the students that attend Bible School here. I just wanted to let you know that the talent show will be Sunday May 4 at 6 PM at Wesley Church south of Quarryville. Put it on your calendar!! They would love to see you there.

CHOIR

Weather has had an effect on the choir this year. We had to miss a few practices and also had fewer members on Sundays due to weather and illness. But we practice the music so many weeks ahead of schedule that we were still able to sing all but one Sunday. We are now working hard on Lenten and Easter music. And I got a text about music for the Good Friday Service at Little Britain. So we will plan on joining them again. More info about that later.

DEACONS

Lent is upon us. This year it begins on March 5, Ash Wednesday, and ends on Holy Saturday, April 19. Lent is forty days, not including Sundays, that builds to the climax of Easter Sunday, April 20 this year. It is from the Old English word *lencten*, which means just what it sounds like: lengthen. The days are getting longer. It's springtime. For this reason, Lent is also called spring season. It is springtime for us spiritually because Jesus has opened the way for us to be fully alive through his death in our place on the cross of Calvary. All who believe in him can leave the tomb of sin and sadness, of eternity separated from God and his love, and receive as a free gift forgiveness, freedom and the sure hope of an eternal home in heaven. Jesus exchanged his life for ours once for all, and he calls us to take up our crosses daily and to follow him, laying down our lives for others. It means putting my time, talents, and resources at the disposal of others as God leads. Our Deacons, and so many others at MO, do this so well. The word deacon means, after all, servant. Thank you, Deacons, for following our Lord on this journey throughout the year. MO is a serving church, and you are very much a part of that. To God be the glory!

SILVER SISTERS

Our only event for February is a luncheon at Joe On The Go Coffee Shop in Lampeter. As I write this there are at least a dozen going. Our first March event will be Lunch at Millers Smorgasbord on Thursday March 6 at 11:30. And we will also have lunch at Hometown Kitchen on Wednesday March 26 at 11:30 with gametime afterwards at the church. All widows are welcome!!

TRUSTEES

The weather caused us to cancel our February meeting. But the weather also caused some wind damage to trees behind the manse last week. And some of our Trustees and friends took care of removing the damaged trees. There will be some refreshing of the social hall and hallway in the next month or so. We are getting new "innards" for the ceiling lights to more efficient bulbs. And also repairs and painting will be done to the walls and doors including the double doors in the hallway and stairway. Please continue the contributions to the building fund.

MISSION MUSINGS

Tonight I am recalling the wonderful time so many had at our Community Meal. It is great to see folks from the community gather together for a time of food, fun and fellowship. Last evening was especially special as the donations given will be used to help the family of little Colten Boyd. He is 2 years old and has a multitude of health issues. He, his parents and several family members and friends came to the meal. What a blessing. It was a joy to see the little guy smile and many folks chatting with and encouraging the family. I believe helping and blessing those right here in our community is just as important as helping and blessing people in other parts of our country and the world. Here at M. O. I believe we continue to seek to do whatever we can to make a positive difference in the lives of people locally, nationally and worldwide. The parents Kyle and Jennifer were so appreciative of the outpouring of love and support. That is exactly what Jesus commands us to do, to use the time, talents and treasures He has given us to help others. What a blessing and privilege it is to be able to share our love and the love of Jesus to others. May we never be too busy or preoccupied with our own thoughts and concerns to take time to bless others and do it in the name of Jesus. After all He has given His all for us. No greater gift has ever been given than the gift Jesus gave to us by suffering and dying on the cross for our sins.

I'm also thinking about and asking for prayer for our friends in the Amazon jungle of Peru. My brother Dave and several others will be heading to the Amazon on March 14 for a two week trip. Please keep them in your prayers as well. Much has been accomplished there since his first trip to Iquitos in 1998. We at M. O. have been given the opportunity to share in this mission since 2005 and as we have shared our time, talents and treasures to help the folks in the Amazon and share the love of Jesus we too have been greatly blessed. I am sure Dave will keep me updated while they are in Peru and I will share those reports with you.

Ash Wednesday is only ten days away and I pray we will take time to reflect upon and share with others this Easter season the price Christ paid on the cross to pay for our sins. On Easter and every day let's praise and worship Jesus for the gift He gave us of spending eternity with Him.

1st Peter 3:15

Blessings, Dan Henry



Birthday's

- 13 – Mary Dalmas
- 21 – Douglas Hileman
- 26 – Shyanne Moore
- 27 – Cody Ressel
- 30 – Betty Trout
- 31 – Jeff Frackman

Anniversaries

- 20 – Barry & Shirley Girvin

April birthday's through the 12th

- 3 – Edie Ambler Jackson
- 4 – Cayla Salander, Gwen Lefever
- 6 – Brandon Pfeiffer
- 7 – Zack Moore
- 8 – JoAnn Irwin
- 9 – Dale Phillips
- 10 – Gene Graver

REFLECTIONS

by Barry Girvin

Random Thoughts

For the 300th anniversary, the Green Tree Thimble Club is planning to make a wall hanging. The congregation will be asked to contribute cloth items (t-shirts, etc.) that could be included: something from softball teams, Peru missions, VBS, Boy Scouts, other church activities.

It is one thing to say that Rev. Shea was our pastor for 50 years. It is another to make it personal. When I was born in 1940, Rev. Shea had already been the pastor for 25 years. He baptized Shirley and me, married us, and baptized two of our children.

As I continue to read Rev. Cairnes' diaries, I hope to learn about his thoughts on family life, local events, slavery, war, prohibition, and Teddy Roosevelt style reforms.

Praying Pastor John will recover well from his surgeries and physical therapy.

Middle Octorara has been a way of life for me, and as in my life in general, there were ups and downs. Hopefully, the activities planned by the 300th Anniversary Committee will produce some first class "ups." It will only happen if the congregation responds positively to requests for involvement. For now, keep the recipes coming in and work with Shirley on your "story."

The 300th Anniversary Committee has a mailbox outside the door to the copy room.

A View from the pew! - "Prayer doesn't change things, It changes people and.....people change things."

GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES February 2025

The following is the individual weekly breakdown of offerings:

February 2 -	General Fund	2,908.00	Benevolence	115.00
February 9 -	General Fund	2,227.00	Benevolence	495.00
February 16 -	General Fund	1,545.00	Benevolence	35.00
February 23 -	General Fund	3,612.00	Benevolence	300.00

An additional \$2,744.56 General Fund money and \$170.00 Benevolence was received by mail etc.

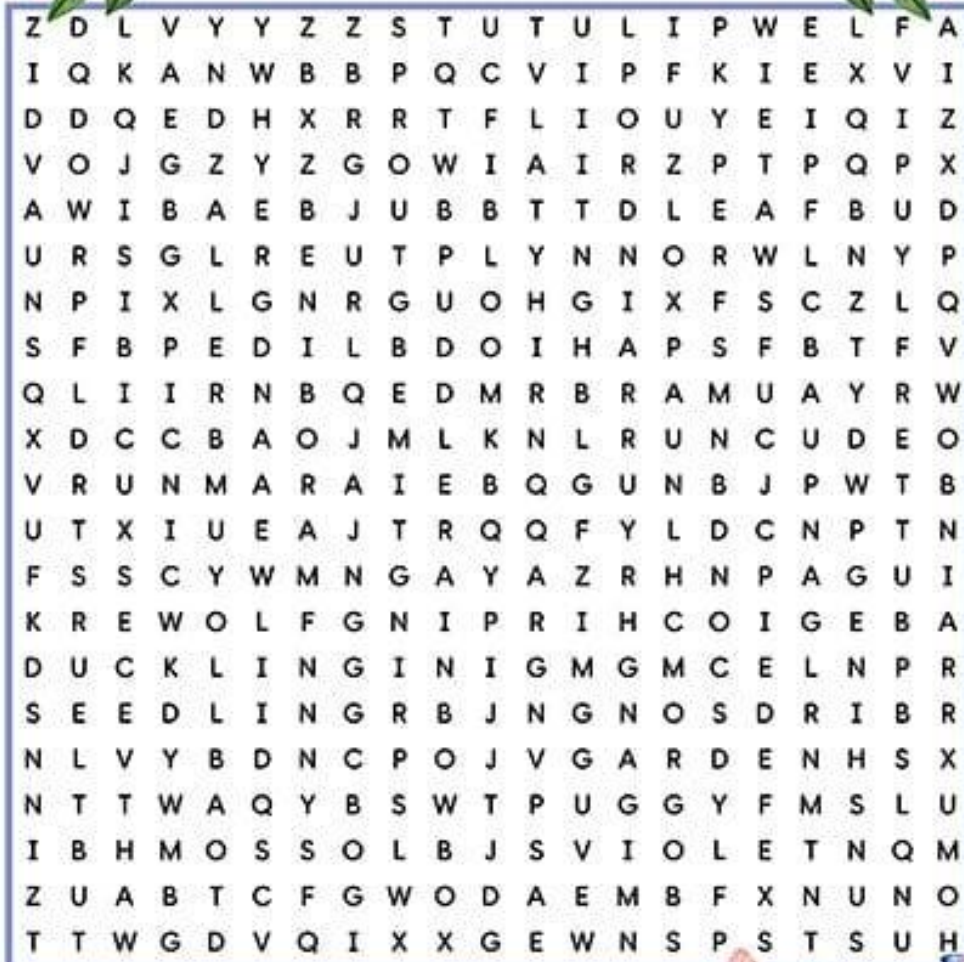
YTD GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES

	Monthly Budget	YTD Budget	Monthly Received	YTD Received	YTD Expenses
General Fund	14,531.36	29,062.72	13,036.56	26,366.01	33,680.53
Benevolence	953.84	1,907.68	1,115.00	1,773.00	

Middle Octorara Presbyterian
Church
Income and Expense Statement
GENERAL FUND 01, February
2025

BEGINNING BALANCE, February 1, 2025		6,316.33
INCOME		
Offerings	\$10,660.00	
Per Capita	844.00	
Initial Offering	20.00	
Manse Rent	1,362.45	
Account Interest	0.11	
Chapel Rent	150.00	
Benevolence	1,115.00	
TOTAL INCOME	14,151.56	
TOTAL CASH & INCOME		20,467.89
EXPENSES		
Pastoral Salary	\$6,026.73	
Pastoral Pension	2,507.73	
Pastoral Technology	50.00	
Secretary-Treasurer	880.00	
Accountant Fees	160.00	
Payroll Taxes	186.86	
Advertising	39.80	
Office Supplies	251.99	
Copier Lease	120.32	
Electricity	383.71	
Propane Gas	2,628.18	
Burner Repairs/maint.	142.00	
Misc. Repairs/Mainten.	294.68	
Telephone/internet	104.49	
Cleaning Service	382.50	
Snow Removal	515.00	
Guest Minister/Speaker	480.80	
Per Capita Payment	844.00	
Tsfr. Session Benev. Fund	1,115.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES	17,113.79	
ENDING BALANCE, February 28, 2025		3,354.10

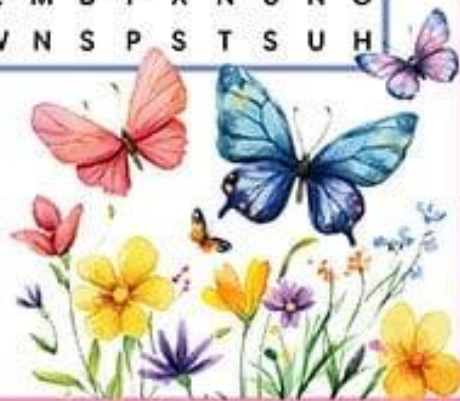
SPRING



BIRDSONG
 BLOOM
 BLOSSOM
 BREEZE
 BUNNY
 BUTTERFLY
 CHIRPING
 DAFFODIL
 DUCKLING

GARDEN
 GRASS
 LADYBUG
 LEAFBUD
 MEADOW
 NEST
 PICNIC
 PUDDLE
 RAINBOW

RAINDROP
 ROBIN
 SEEDLING
 SPRINGTIME
 SPROUT
 SUNSHINE
 THAW
 TULIP
 UMBRELLA





ORPHAN
ASSISTANCE
FOUNDATION
www.transitionsoaf.org

February 23, 2025

Dear Friends,

Tomorrow is February 24. To many people across the globe, that is just an ordinary day. However, every Ukrainian living in country or abroad, and every Ukraine supporter anywhere in the world, recognizes that tomorrow marks three years since Russia ruthlessly attacked Ukraine, beginning a terrible war in which Ukraine fights to preserve its freedom and sovereignty.

Three years of relentless attacks throughout one's country might leave one discouraged and defeated. Ukraine and Ukrainians are neither, although recent events have left all feeling stressed to the max. Very recently, our folks in Odesa have withstood two serious attacks. An historic hotel (listed with UNESCO) in the city center was bombed, and the historic philharmonic hall across the street from the hotel also sustained significant damage. Even more recently, a residential building in the city was hit, taking down a children's polyclinic and a kindergarten and leaving 250,000 citizens without heat and light. It is still winter in Odesa and it is cold and dark.

A letter from one of our coworkers in Odesa describes the current conditions as "a very difficult period." He goes on to say, that not only do they worry about daily attacks, additionally, they worry that there is a very real possibility that they may lose their lands and their independence. Worse, they worry that Ukraine may cease to exist. Imagine waking up to those thoughts every morning for three years.

Despite all this, all of the things we were doing to assist before the war are still being done as war wages on. We continue to house older orphans, either in transitional homes with family support or in cottages built for independent living, also with surrounding support. Our team continues to visit the children in the orphanage in Pishana, as well as making home visits to orphans in the surrounding villages. We continue to serve pensioners and widows. To those in need, we offer food, clothes, and daily necessities as well as community, connection, and care. Perhaps greatest of all, we offer our love in very tangible ways.

Whether you read this today, tomorrow, or next week, please continue to pray for and to support these folks who have become our friends and extended family across the years. And, as always, thank you for all you do to make this happen. With gratitude and love,

Audrey

Donation Information

Checks may be written to:

Transitions Orphan Assistance Foundation, Inc.

*541 Evening Sky Drive
Oviedo, FL 32765*

-or-

*3530 Diamond Leaf Lane
Oviedo, FL 32765*

Online options to donate can be found on our website: www.transitionsoaf.org

Pancakes



A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, Ryan, 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson.

“If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, ‘Let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait.’”

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, “Ryan, you be Jesus!”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Subject to change)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 2 Congregation Mtg. Prayer & Praise 4:30 Little Britain	March 3	March 4	March 5 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	March 6 Silver Sisters 11:30 a.m.	March 7	March 8 Lenten Tea 2:00 p.m.
March 9	March 10	March 11	March 12 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	March 13	March 14	March 15 Bart Mud Sale Parking
March 16	March 17 	March 18	March 19 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	March 20 	March 21	March 22
March 23	March 24	March 25	March 26 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Siler Sisters 11:30 Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	March 27	March 28	March 29
March 30	March 31	April 1	April 2 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	April 3	April 4	April 5

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR REV. JOHN BARLOW

Address: 433 W. Lincoln Ave
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
2023-2025-Joan Probst, Sue Ressel, Brenda Roark
2024-2026-Shirley Girvin, Richard Keene, Jonathan Welch
2025-2027-Vivian Caldwell, Dan Henry, Jerry Garver

Deacons

Administrator: Pastor John Barlow
Phone: 717-377-4570
mail: barlowjohn604@gmail.com
2023-2025-Annie Frackman, Dottie Garver, Kathy Harvey, Cathy Miller
2024-2026-Kim Barlow, Dixie Clark, Linda Farmer, Sue Herr
2025-2027-Koryn Barrett, Andy Keene, Val Keene, Elaine Ressel

Trustees

President: Jeff Frackman
Phone: 717-989-6896
2023-2025-Rose Griest, Boni Henry, Sam Reinhart
2024-2026-Jeff Frackman, Herb Girvin, Nancy Minchoff
2025-2027-Bob Mowery, Dale Phillips, Rick Ressel