

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

October 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

I saw another sign which caught my eye, this time not at a church, but a business. Where it might have had hours for that business, it said, "God doesn't have hours; his ear is always inclined to our cries." That fact is a perfect recipe for total security. I could almost feel myself relaxing into that reality, my body and mind untensing. It made me think of Philippians 6:6,7: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." At the end of Romans 8, in verses 38 and 39, Paul says, "neither the present nor the future will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." How is that for a comprehensive, blanket provision. No exceptions, nothing, absolutely nothing can separate us from our loving God.

The enemy of our souls would like us to conclude that God has abandoned us when we are going through a tough time, maybe that we have done something to land ourselves in it and drive him away. And when we are in a smooth season, his favorite tactic is worry. What about the future? What if ...? The answer to both situations is to trust God to do what he has promised us. Trust him to hear and to help us, at the present time of trial, or any future one that may arise. To remember and apply the truth of 1 Peter 5:17 "Cast all your anxiety on God because he cares for you." I like it even better in an older translation which says, "Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you." Two uses of the word "cares", one as a noun, the other as a verb, demonstrating how God responds perfectly to our every need when we call on him in prayer. I am so thankful to be pastor of a congregation of strong believers who have proved God's love over and over. What a wonderful sustainer is our God, at all times, in every need.

CHURCH LIFE

CHOIR - Choir season has begun. Most of our faithful members have returned. But we would always welcome more. We sing many different varieties of music, and we practice the music often enough to learn it even if you don't read music. We love praising God and telling others about Him.

DEACONS - It's that time again, time for the Nominating Committee to do its very important work. Please keep those serving in your prayers, along with those they will be asking to consider filling vacancies, that they will be God's choices through the voice of the people. Fortunately, MO has the deepest benches in my experience. It is truly remarkable for a church the size of ours to be able to fill out full boards of Elders, Deacons, and Trustees. Many churches, including those I have served previously, are unicameral, meaning all they are able to field is a Session, which includes people who fulfill Elder, Deacon, and Trustee responsibilities. We are truly blessed! The practice of requiring people to take a one-year break after two continuous three-year terms is based on the Biblical precedent of the Sabbath year, six years of work followed by a year of rest, for people and the land. MO is able to follow this Biblical model because of all of our faithful people.

MIDDLE OCTOPRARA PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN - It's been a relatively quiet month for MOPW. We are preparing a gift basket for the New Hope Auction. And we are having another sandwich sale as well. We have a meeting scheduled for Sunday October 26th after church.

MISSIONS - We are emphasizing two missions this month: Joyfully Made Fellowship (JMF) and Operation Christmas Child (OCC). Each of these ministries will receive \$300 from our Benevolence Mission Fund and \$1000 from the Bueche Fund.

JMF is a ministry that provides events, worship services and many activities for their students of all ages who have some level of special need. We have gotten to know the folks who participate in JMF very well because they attend VBS every year at MO and they participate in our August Yard Sale in the summer.

On October 13, Dan and Boni will take their annual trip to the OCC Warehouse in Shippensburg to purchase items that will be used to pack shoeboxes in November. All are encouraged and welcome to bring anything that will fit into a shoebox. We will add your gifts to the ones purchased at Shippensburg. The shoeboxes will be packed on Sunday morning, November 16 beginning at 9 AM. It's a fun time for all. We will serve some breakfast snacks. Come and join us as we pack boxes of gifts for children, ages 2 through 14 which will be distributed around the world to a grateful, smiling child.

SILVER SISTERS - We had a delicious lunch at Woody's Crab House in North East MD. And our next one is planned for Wednesday October 8 at 11:30 at Bespoke Brewing just east of Strasburg on Route 741 near the ChooChoo Barn. All widows are welcome to join us.

TRUSTEES - The Board of Trustees tries to make the best decisions for the good of the congregation and the future of the church. We will be choosing the color of the new carpet soon with the hope that it lasts for many years to come.

This month we had to deal with damage done to the well-casing by someone running into it the day of the Scottish Festival. We realized there was no water at the church or tenant house. Some of the men with the Scouts did a temporary fix to get us through the weekend. Then the plumbers came two days in a row to get the water flowing correctly again.

Remember that church work day is November 15th with a rain date of the 22nd. There will be a brunch break. Please join us. We can find little jobs if you can't help with the big ones.

YOUTH



Youth Crew in the Solanco Fair parade. They got a little wet but still had fun!



Youth Ministry Solanco Fair Booth

MISSION MUSINGS

It has been a busy time of events for M. O. the past month.

On Saturday August 30th we hosted an outdoor yard sale as a fundraiser for Joyfully Made Fellowship. There were 25 vendors with over 40 spaces of a large variety of items for sale. God blessed us with a beautiful day and lots of buyers came to shop and purchase the wonderful items for sale. Dale Phillip and Robin Hammond handled the food table and bake table. We made a profit of over \$1500.00 to donate to Joyfully Made Fellowship.

The next event was our annual Scottish Festival which was held on Saturday September 6th. Once again God blessed us with a beautiful day and the church grounds were filled with people who came to enjoy the festival. The grove was alive with bagpipers, Highland Games athletes, musicians, vendors, clans, a sheep herder, sheep dogs and more. Barry Girvin and Sandra Shenk welcomed many folks into the Shrine Church and museum to show them lots of memorabilia and show and tell much about the history of the church, Bart High School and early days of this area of the new frontier. This event along with being a wonderful day to celebrate Scottish culture and heritage is a major fundraiser for our Covenanters Board. The goal of the board is to maintain and restore the Shrine Church Building. Final numbers are expected soon but it looks like the profit will be at least \$7,000.00. Thanks to everyone who helped to make this event successful again this year.

The next event was the Solanco Fair and Parade. Alie Armstrong and Cayla Sallander spearheaded the efforts with the goal to advertise and promote our Youth Relaunch and Children's Ministry. With a float in the parade and a booth at the Fair volunteers handed out flyers and gifts inviting families to attend M. O. Thanks to everyone who helped and continue praying for God to guide and bless these efforts.

The next event was our Community Meal held on Saturday September 20th. Over 70 people joined us for a delicious meal of lasagna, salad, bread, drinks and dessert. Scout Troop 87 and Pack 87 with their leaders assisted with food prep, serving and clean up. All donations were given to the Scouts and \$469.00 was received. We are pleased to be able to offer a place for these young people and their leaders with a place to meet.

On Sunday mornings Pastor John led Kids Time at the beginning of each service before the kids were dismissed for children's church. Pastor John also continued his message series on the Fruits of the Spirit. As we continue to seek to share the love of Jesus and His salvation message in our community and in the world may we listen for and heed the teachings of our Lord and Savior.

1st John 3: 16-18

Blessings

Dan Henry

REFLECTIONS

by Barry Girvin

Video Day

On Sunday, October 26, we will have a luncheon after Church and then show the Middle Octorara history video produced by the 300th Anniversary Committee. Barbecue, rolls and beverage will be provided. Please bring a covered dish or dessert.

I wrote the script for the video and the technology was done by Bill and Joyce Russell. The video will be used to promote our 300th anniversary. It will be made available to clubs and churches looking for programs during 2026. Telling a 300 year old story in about 40 minutes was a challenge.

Unable to detail the events of all 300 years, we selected three focus points: Early Days (1727-1821), Glory Days (1877 – 1965) and The Church in a More Secular Society (1976-2027). A wide range of artifacts including information from earlier anniversary celebrations was used to tell a story which fits the theme of our celebration: “Foundation for the Future Through a History of Faith.”

REFLECTIONS

by Shirley Girvin

The Meaning of Loch Lomond

Folks, this is your lucky month – two Reflection articles!

The song Loch Lomond makes reference to several Scottish landmarks. The Scottish Gaelic meaning “**Lake of the Elms**” is a freshwater lake in central Scotland and home of the Loch Ness Monster. Unfortunately, when we were there Nessie must have been taking her nap because we did not see her! **Ben Lomond** is one of the hills surrounding the lake. **Mooreland** is a British term for a type of grass or shrub common in the UK, and heather is a beautiful flower found in the hills of Scotland from which jewelry is created. (I have information on the process of making the jewelry if you are interested)

There is much in literature that taken literally is simply a story, but many of these stories have a hidden meaning or code to those in the know. Gulliver’s Travels shows how the “little people,” working together, can succeed, just as those oppressed by a king could overthrow him. Some Biblical scholars believe that the evils of Roman oppression were revealed in the imagery in the “Book of Revelation”. Those in the know hope that their oppressor, like the British or the Romans, will be fooled and take the story at face value, literally.

Loch Lomond is a popular Scottish song first published in the 19th century. At first glance, it can easily be understood as just a romantic song. The Scots hoped that this was how the British would see it. In fact, it describes the Catholic Jacobite uprising of 1745 against the Protestant English. There are different versions of the lyrics: a more romantic version is sung from the perspective of a lady who mourns the death of the brave Jacobite soldier she loved. The second version is the more standard, counter-revolutionary rendition. In the second version the song is sung from the perspective of a Jacobite soldier

captured by the English whose “true love” is his King, Bonnie Prince Charley, and who chooses the “low road” which is execution, out of loyalty to Prince Charles. Choosing the “high road” would be to recant his loyalty to Prince Charles and be allowed to live life in prison in London. By taking the “low road”, the soldier prefers death rather than to betray the Catholic cause, and it was believed that after death the soul would return to the homeland of Scotland.

Listen to *Loch Lomond*

Romantic Version - Scots lyrics:

O wither away my bonnie May
Sae late an' sae far in the gloamin'
The mist gathers grey o'er moorland and brae
O wither sae far are ye roamin'?

Chorus: O ye'll tak the high road an' I'll tak the low
I'll be in Scotland afore ye
For me and my true love will never meet again
By the bonnie bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond

O well may I weep for yestreen in my sleep,
We stood bride and bridegroom together.
But his arms & breath were as cold as the death
And his heart's blood ran red on the heather

I trusted my ain love last night in the broom
My Donald wha' loves me sae dearly
For the morrow he will march for Edinburgh toon
Tae fecht for his King and Prince Charlie

Chorus

As dauntless in battle as tender in love
He'd yield ne'er a foot tae the foeman
But never again frae the field o' the slain
Tae his Moira will he come by Loch Lomond

The thistle may bloom, the King hae his ain
And fond lovers may meet in the gloamin'
And me and my true love will yet meet again
Far above the bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond

Chorus

Standard Version - Scots Lyrics:

By yon bonnie banks and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomond,
Where me & my true love were ever wont to gae,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond.

O ye'll tak' the high road an' I'll tak' the low,
And I'll be in Scotland a'fore ye,
But me and my true love will never meet again,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond.

'Twas there that we parted, in yon shady glen,
On the steep, steep side o' Ben Lomond,
Wher'n soft purple hue, the highland hills we view,
And the moon coming out in the gloaming (dusk).

O ye'll tak' the high road, and I'll tak' the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland a'fore ye,
But me and my true love will never meet again,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond.

The wee birdies sing and the wildflowers spring,
And in sunshine the waters are sleeping.
But the broken heart it kens nae second spring
again,
Though the waeful may cease frae their grieving.

O ye'll tak' the high road, and I'll tak' the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland a'fore ye
But me and my true love will
On the bonnie, bonnie banks



ORPHAN
ASSISTANCE
FOUNDATION
www.transitionsoaf.org

September 26, 2025

Dear Friends,

Here in Florida, fall is a welcome respite from relentless summer heat. We Floridians welcome the cooler mornings and can once again enjoy walks in the crisp early morning and the still-warm evenings. The transition from summer to fall is subtle, so much so that it is easy to miss if one forgets to look for it.

By contrast, Odesa autumns are glorious. The nip in the air arrives soon after the school bells ring at the beginning of September. It is time to bring out the jackets. Trees turn yellow, and leaves fall. Pumpkins and a variety of colorful squash line the markets, store fronts, and sidewalks. October often brings a lovely, warm Indian summer before colder weather moves in for good.

First Bell, the official first day of school throughout Ukraine (always celebrated on September 1) is behind us, and the new school year is already in full swing. The younger members in our family foster homes both in Odesa and in Germany are back to school. Two of the three oldest (in Odesa) have started a new year of technical training, and the third is working a fulltime job. In the Pishana Orphanage this fall, there are 16 new-comers for us to love and to care for in addition to all the "old-timers" that we already know and love.

Our summer camps in the villages of the Odesa Region were completed at the end of August. In my last letter, I included photos of the summer camps. As a recap and a reminder of one of the programs your generous gifts provide to our orphans, please follow this link to a video of summer camp fun that was compiled by Amanda Keeny, one of our faithful members of the Pishana Team: <https://vimeo.com/1114646735/c83c3b7e02>

Your future gifts will continue to fund weekly visits to the orphanage that have resumed and will continue throughout the fall. Support for our foster families and food packages for local Odesa widows and pensioners are also possible only through your donations for which we remain so very grateful.

As we contemplate and prepare for winter camps and our holiday project 2025, we remain cognizant that war is still in full swing in Odesa and throughout Ukraine, leaving destruction, fear, and trauma in its wake. Yet, life continues and love prevails. Please continue to keep Ukraine and all of our folks in your thoughts and prayers.

With gratitude and love,

Audrey

Donation Information: Checks may be written to: **Transitions Orphan Assistance Foundation, Inc.**

541 Evening Sky Drive -or- 3530 Diamond Leaf Lane, Oviedo, FL 32765



October birthday's

11 – Paul Trout
12 – Sue Herr
14 – Herb Girvin
15 – Brandon LeFevre
19 – Jerry Garver
24 – Josh Keene
28 – Shirley Miller
30 – Ethel Walden

October anniversaries

12 – Jeff & Annetta Frackman

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

10/03/2025 01:28 PM

BEGINNING BALANCE, September 1, 2025		11,262.73
INCOME		
Offerings	\$10,077.00	
Manse Rent	1,362.45	
Account Interest	0.10	
Benevolence	1,115.00	
TOTAL INCOME	<u>12,554.55</u>	
TOTAL CASH & INCOME		23,817.28
EXPENSES		
Pastoral Salary	\$6,026.73	
Pastoral Mileage	311.50	
Pastoral Pension	2,507.73	
Pastoral Technology	50.00	
Secretary-Treasurer	676.50	
Accountant Fees	90.00	
Payroll Taxes	42.67	
Advertising	31.84	
Office Supplies	667.47	
Church Supplies	133.89	
Printing Exp/Supplies	-217.55	
Copier Lease	120.32	
Electricity	369.39	
Insurance	3,141.23	
Misc. Repairs/Mainten.	542.67	
Telephone/internet	118.19	
Cleaning Service	465.00	
Upkeep of Grounds	1,979.01	
Special Music Payments	90.00	
Tsfr. Session Benev. Fund	1,115.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>18,261.59</u>	
ENDING BALANCE, September 30, 2025		5,555.69

We typically have between \$11,000 - \$12,000 in expenses due by the 15th of the month. Never knowing how much money we will receive in the offering, I need more of a balance than this to start off the month. Therefore, I will be cashing another C/D and depositing it in the General Fund. The next time that money is needed it will be coming from the Ameritus Investment Fund

GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES

The following is the individual weekly breakdown of offerings:

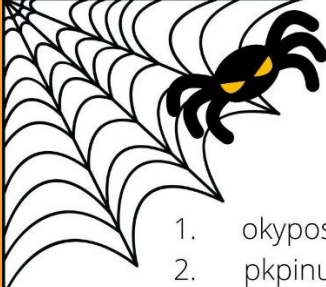
September 7 - General Fund	3,623.00	Benevolence	700.00
September 14 - General Fund	1,350.00	Benevolence	110.00
September 21 - General Fund	4,053.00	Benevolence	230.00
September 28 - General Fund	951.00	Benevolence	75.00

An additional \$1,462.55 General Fund money 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	141,680.76	11,439.55	138,792.73	143,905.66
Benevolence	953.84	9,299.94	1,115.00	9,808.00	

**This includes two C/D's cashed this year so far of \$10,677.22 and \$5,037.34




HAPPY

HALLOWEEN

WORD SCRAMBLE

1. okypos _____
2. pkpinum _____
3. treta _____
4. oghst _____
5. ydanc _____
6. rpivame _____
7. keonstel _____
8. luhgo _____
9. pecyre _____
10. tomcuse _____
11. nthua _____
12. owaercrcs _____
13. iyderah _____
14. oblod _____
15. labck act _____
16. ogbiln _____
17. mymmu _____
18. rasyc _____
19. piserd _____
20. sremca _____





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Subject to change)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Oct. 5 World Communion	Oct. 6	Oct. 7 Session Mtg. 6:45 p.m.	Oct. 8 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Silver Sisters 11:30 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	Oct. 9	Oct. 10	Oct. 11
Oct. 12 Fall Fest 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Oct. 13	Oct. 14 Trustee Mtg. 7:00 p.m.	Oct. 15 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18
Oct. 19	Oct. 20	Oct. 21	Oct. 22 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	Oct. 23	Oct. 24	Oct. 25
Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28	Oct. 29 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Nov. 1

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

Personnel Committee:
2023-2025- Brenda Roark
2024-2026- J Barry Girvin
2025-2027- Sue Ressel

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