

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

September 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

A local church sign caught my eye the other day. It's a church that consistently has some catchy messages displayed, and this one was no exception. It read: "Need a new life? God takes trade-ins." I thought, "Amen! Right on! That is exactly the idea we want to be communicating to the world!" Not that the church is a private club of goody-goodies who have it all together, and are confidently working their way to heaven. But just the opposite. We are an association of recovering sinners who are casting ourselves wholly on the grace of the One who took our place on the cross of Calvary. And we warmly welcome all whom the Lord our God is calling to saving faith, and entrusting to our care.

I see a lot of vehicles with bumper stickers to the effect that there is a student driver at the wheel, and patience is requested. Same idea. Maybe we should have bumper stickers that read "Student Christian – Please Be Patient." Because that is what we are: people who are learning to place ourselves in the nail-scarred hands of the only One who can make a difference in our lives, who can take our trade-in and give us a brand-new life. 2 Corinthians 5:17-18 says, "If anyone is in Christ, she is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ." The rest of verse 18 and verse 19 says that God has committed to us, his new creations in Christ, the ministry and the message of reconciliation: "that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting peoples' sins against them." We are exhibit A, examples of the kind of changes Jesus can make in a life. And God makes us responsible for telling others how it all works, as we give time and energy to that purpose, and the Holy Spirit sends people our way. So we strive not only to live the life of faith, but we put the gospel on display on our church signs and whatever other means we can.

We are so blessed to be Christians. And I am so blessed to be pastor of a vibrant church that lives into that purpose every day.

CHURCH LIFE

CHOIR

It's that time of year that choir practice begins. If you love to sing of the Lord's love and like to sing, please consider joining the choir. We practice the songs many times before we sing them, so reading music is not necessary. Our first rehearsal is Wednesday September 24 at 7 PM and our first Sunday to sing is October 5. Any questions? Talk to Rose.

DEACONS

We've all heard the expression, "First impressions count." I think what it means for people visiting a church for the first time is that if a first impression isn't good, they're not coming back. They may not return anyway, but it's a sure thing, if the experience isn't positive. In the case of MO, all I can say is, "Whew!" We have, in our Deacons, people who make not just a good – but a great first impression. Warm greeting with a smile. Practical instructions if needed. Welcome bags for first-timers. Worship bags for children. It would be hard for me to overstate my feelings about the ministry of our Deacons on Sunday mornings.

MEMBER ADDRESSES NEEDED

Barbara (Rice) Vest, R.D. 1, Pilottown Road, Peach Bottom and Amanda Brown, 10 Barbara St., Willow Street-mail is being returned for these two. Please let the church secretary know if you have updated addresses for them.

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Peach Fest was very successful!! So much so that a lot of the food was gone in short order. They ran to the store to get more hot dogs and macaroni salad. Thankfully there was still a little bit of peach treats and milkshakes left. The attendance was at least double of last year. We had a profit of \$770.00.

The August Sub sale profited \$335.00 so far. Because of our continued success with our sub/sandwich fundraisers, recently MOPW was able to donate \$1000.00 to Solid Rock's Capital Campaign which continues to minister to many students within the Solanco area.

MISSIONS

Good news from Peru Praise God for answered prayers.

Our friend Villa in Iquitos and his extended family of 10 have been living in a very small house for many years. Recently the roof was continuously leaking and was basically beyond repair. Medical Missions has been helping Villa search for a suitable home for several months and have found one.

Villa and his family moved in earlier this month. M. O. and others contributed enough funds for a down payment and Medical Missions is covering the balance trusting more donations will be provided in the future. Just another way our M. O. family has answered the call of Jesus to help our brothers and sisters in their time of need.

PEW/CARPET FUND

We have received \$12,300.00 in donations towards the total cost of the \$102,170.00 sanctuary carpet replacement and pew repair that was voted on at the July 27th congregation meeting. If you are interested in contributing to this project, please make a note on the memo line of your check and please do not include it with other offerings.

SILVER SISTERS

We had another good get-together in August at Hometown Kitchen. And then we came back to the church for games. The next time we will have lunch, we are going to North East, MD to Woody's Crab House on September 24 at 11:30. Carpooling is available. All widows are welcome. We do enjoy getting together!! Call Rose if you would like to join us. 610-636-5378.

TRUSTEES

If you haven't stood in the church parking lot and looked up towards the cemetery lately, now is the time to do it. Now we need a little rain!! The Middle Octorara bushes and the cross bushes and macadam between have been removed. Grass seed has been planted so it's easier to maintain. It was a hard decision, as we tried to save them by trimming them back hard. But some of them didn't come back and the weeds took over. We just don't have the manpower to keep weeding and maintaining the look we desired.

YARD SALE

The August 30th benefit yard sale was such a blessing. We had beautiful weather, many vendors and even more customers shopping for their latest treasure. Wonderful community outreach event. Even better though we were able to give Joyfully Made Fellowship a check for **\$1,587.00!** from space rental and food sales. Thank you to Dale Phillips who donated all the purchased food and also cooked and served it and Robin Hammond helped him prepare food and wait on customers. Thank you to Dan Henry for taking care of the vendors and where they were located.

YOUTH RE-LAUNCH

- ❖ Sept. 7th beginning of Nursery and Preschool/Kindergarten classes during our worship service.
- ❖ Sept. 17th participating in the Solanco Fair Parade handing out Youth Re-launch flyers and candy.
- ❖ Sept. 17th – 19th stand at Solanco Fair promoting our Re-launch and Fall Fest.
- ❖ Oct. 12th Fall Fest from 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Grand re-opening of our Children's Ministry.
Food, drinks, smores making, arts and crafts, pumpkin painting, costume contest and more.

We are still looking for helpers for nursery and teaching classes. Any questions contact: Alyssa Armstrong aparmstrong527@gmail.com or Cayla Sallander caylamiller96@gmail.com.



A PRESBYTERIAN PASTOR MARRIED

Rev. Geo. H. Shea, of Middle
Octoraro Church, Weds
Miss Florence E.
Lantz.

The most brilliant and elaborate wedding of the season was solemnized in the Middle Octoraro Presbyterian church last evening, at six o'clock, when Rev. Albert Sheppard, of Leechburg, Pa., assisted by Dr. William P. Finey, of Lincoln University, united in marriage, Rev. George H. Shea, pastor of the Middle Octoraro church and Miss Florence E. Lantz, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Phares Lantz, of "Shady Oak" farm, near Nine Points. The church was artistically trimmed with yellow chrysanthemums and palms.

The bridal party entered the church by the left aisle to the strains of Lohengrin's wedding march, played by Miss Bromer, of Schwenkville, Pa.

The groom and the best man entered the church at the same time by the right aisle. The ring ceremony was used, the ring bearer was Master Fulton Thompson, cousin of the groom. The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, Mr. Phares Lantz, was gowned in white satin and georgette crepe with court train, the silk tulle veil, which reached to the end of the train was held in place by orange blossoms, she carried a shower bouquet of bride roses and lilies of the valley.

The maid of honor was Miss Lillian Lantz, sister of the bride. She wore a dress of yellow satin with an over drapery of yellow chiffon and opalescent trimming. She carried a bouquet of yellow chrysanthemums.

The four bridesmaids, Miss Mary Aster, of Altoona; Miss Alice Brown, of Odessa, Delaware, Miss Sadie Strunk, of Boyertown, Pa., and Miss Myra Grove, of Glen Rock, Pa., were dressed in four difference shades of

pink satin and carried white shepherdess crooks with a bow of yellow tulle. The two little flower girls, Frances Beyer and Alta Steene, both of Bart township, wore white and carried flower baskets filled with pink and white sweet peas, with a bow of yellow tulle on each handle.

Mr. Clyde Mason, of Oxford, Pa., was best man. The ushers were Dr. Evan Stubbs, of Media, Pa.; Mr. Norwin Lukens, of Philadelphia; Rev. Raymond Day, of Nottingham, Pa., and Mr. George Gillespie, of Princeton, New Jersey.

Miss Kathryn Redmond, of Corpus Christi, Texas, sang "Perfect Day," and "Oh Promise Me."

Following the wedding at the church, a reception was given at "Shady Oak Farm," near Nine Points, the home of the bride, to about 100 guests, who were present from Frederick, Maryland; Atlantic City; Altoona; Lancaster, Texas; Philadelphia; Oxford and Christiana. The house was beautifully decorated in palms and cut flowers. The reception luncheon was served by Caterer Stegeman, Lancaster. The bride's traveling suit was a French blue broad cloth trimmed with Hudson Seal. The small silk beaver pattern hat is of the same shade. The young couple were given a royal send off by their guests and left for New York and from there to the Catskill mountains and then up the Hudson River to Lake George, where they will spend their honeymoon. On their return Rev. and Mrs. Shea will reside at the Presbyterian manse, Bart township and will be at home to their many friends after December 1.

On Monday evening after the rehearsal at the church Miss Florence Lantz gave a dinner to her Bridal Party, at her home "Shady Oak Farm," Nine Points. There were twenty guests present, the girls being Hood College girl friends of the bride.

The color scheme, yellow and white, was carried out in decorations and place cards.

The girls received as favors gold friendship circles with initials and date.

The young men were presented with gold tie clasps from the groom, Rev. George Shea.

The groom's gift to the bride was a

platinum friendship circle and the bride's gift to the groom was a white gold scarf pin.

REFLECTIONS

by Barry Girvin

A Presbyterian Pastor Married

Elaine and Rick Ressel gave me a book of newspaper clippings for the collection at the Museum. As I skimmed through the articles, a gem caught my eye, a description of a wedding on October 10, 1916. The title and sub-title- "A Presbyterian Pastor Married-Rev. Geo. H. Shea of Middle Octorara Church, Weds Miss Florence E. Lantz."

Having known Rev. Shea as a down-to-earth guy who could communicate with anyone on their level, the elite nature of his first wedding came as somewhat of a shock.

Fresh from Princeton Seminary and Hood College, respectively, the groom and bride celebrated with their college and university friends. The bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Phares Lantz, were prominent citizens of the community.

I did not find much involvement by local ordinary folks with one exception. Frances Beyer, Dick Keene's mother, was one of the flower girls.

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

09/01/2025 08:08 PM

BEGINNING BALANCE, August 1, 2025 **5,827.23**

INCOME	
Offerings	\$11,039.00
Manse Rent	1,362.45
Account Interest	0.09
Chapel Rent	50.00
CD Cashed	5,037.34
M.O.Cemetery Fund-Mowing	3,916.00
Benevolence	1,405.00
TOTAL INCOME	22,809.88

TOTAL CASH & INCOME **28,637.11**

EXPENSES	
Pastoral Salary	\$6,026.73
Pastoral Mileage	477.40
Pastoral Pension	2,507.73
Pastoral Technology	50.00
Secretary-Treasurer	1,017.50
Accountant Fees	90.00
Payroll Taxes	49.62
Advertising	39.80
Office Supplies	276.70
Church Supplies	312.38
Copier Lease	120.32
Electricity	367.73
Propane Gas	13.56
Telephone/internet	118.19
Cleaning Service	240.00
Upkeep of Grounds	1,979.01
Special Music Payments	90.00
Tsfr. Session Benev. Fund	1,405.00
Property Taxes-Manse	2,192.71
TOTAL EXPENSES	17,374.38

ENDING BALANCE, August 31, 2025 **11,262.73**

The majority of the bills are due by the 20th. I did not have enough money by the 20th to pay those bills and the account was overdrawn. I then cashed the Betty Book C/D and also received the final payment from the cemetery fund for their 1/2 of the mowing bill. This is a good balance to start off September with but I am expecting to have to cash another C/D probably October or November.

GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES - August 2025

The following is the individual weekly breakdown of offerings:

August 3 -	General Fund	3,920.00	Benevolence	850.00
August 10 -	General Fund	1,620.00	Benevolence	120.00
August 17 -	General Fund	1,341.00	Benevolence	50.00
August 24 -	General Fund	2,069.00	Benevolence	305.00
August 31 -	General Fund	1,939.00	Benevolence	80.00

An additional \$10,515.88 General Fund (including the C/D) money was received by mail etc.

YTD GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES

	Monthly Budget	YTD Budget	*Monthly Received	**YTD Received	YTD Expenses
General Fund	18,164.20	127,149.40	21,404.88	127,353.18	126,759.07
Benevolence	1,192.30	7,153.80	1,405.00	8,393.00	

***This includes the cashed C/D of \$5,037.34**

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



September birthdays

9 – Justin Pfeiffer
 12 – John Girvin
 13 – Donna Garver, Greg Trout
 15 – Shirley Graver
 19 – Beaty Armer, Val Wessner
 20 – Deb Hoover
 25 – Shirley Girvin
 27 – Nancy Minchoff

September Anniversaries

14 – John & Sue Ressel
 19 – Douglas & Kristine Hileman
 25 – Steph & Jim Miller

October birthdays through the 6th

3 – James Phipps
 6 – Mike Hoover

Name: _____

Date: _____

September

Word Scramble



September has brought a bit of chaos to these words! Can you help sort things out by unscrambling the letters and filling in the blanks with September-related terms? Give it a try and see what you can uncover!

munuta _____

clsoho _____

selvae _____

taervsh _____

epaslp _____

uimkpn _____

eroocl _____

cakbpack _____

cirsp _____

eesmtrbp _____

crhorad _____

jeatk _____

iedlf _____

ntoebko _____

ceraeht _____

asertew _____

niuqoxe _____

loalbtfo _____

eakr _____

smum _____

esaasnlo _____

sdihoay _____

csasl _____

socnra _____

August 17, 2025

Dear Friends,

Summer has always been a magical time for me, especially summers spent in Odesa. Picture, if you can, long hot days and short, warm evenings perfect for strolling in the parks or on the boulevard overlooking the port. Picture children playing on the playgrounds, parents and grandparents chatting on park benches, and men gathered in the square to play chess. Picture market stalls filled with all manner of nature's summer bounty, and miles and miles of seashore beckoning one to come and enjoy the sun, sand and sea. When I close my eyes and think of Odesa summers, that is what I see. I did not spend this summer in Odesa, but I understand that summer days there have largely remained unchanged, except perhaps, that the hordes of tourists that used to crowd Odesa's streets, beaches, and restaurants are now few and far between. Folks are not flocking to Odesa these days for vacation as was typical in the past, but the natives are doing their best to live their lives as normally as possible.

By contrast, nights conjure a completely different picture. Night is the time that Russia has chosen to attack -- brutally and often. Drones and missiles take to the sky each night across Ukraine, terrorizing those on the ground below. Attacks on Odesa and other cities in Ukraine have escalated this summer and civilians have been frequently targeted. Those in Odesa are accustomed to spending nights huddled in shelters and hallways, wondering if they will see the light of a new day.

Miraculously, our folks have survived thus far, and they are doing more than just surviving. Our teammates in Odesa have been especially busy this summer conducting summer VBS-style mini-camps for our orphans and at-risk families in the villages. By the end of this month, they will have made twelve trips to various villages bringing relationship, fun, and joy to our kids and families as well as to any neighborhood families who wished to join in the activities. These camps were made possible because of folks like you who generously support our orphan programs. Thank you so much for providing us with the means to make this happen. These camps mean so much to so many. Please enjoy these photos of your gifts in action.

Summer Mini-Camps



In other news, we have rejoiced that two of our older orphans, Pasha and Radik, were given leave from the army for a few days this summer to spend time with their families. A return to active duty on dangerous fronts is daunting. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers as they bravely face whatever the future will bring.

And please send healing thoughts and prayers for Sasha, one of our girls in the Rybakovs' foster family. She recently had an accident that seriously injured her heel. She has undergone surgery and we are anxiously waiting to hear if the surgery will be a success or if she will need more surgeries and additional treatment.

Now, as another summer quietly slips away, we remain ever thankful for each one of you who keep us close in your hearts.

With gratitude and love,
Audrey

Donation Information

Checks may be written to:

Transitions Orphan Assistance Foundation, Inc.

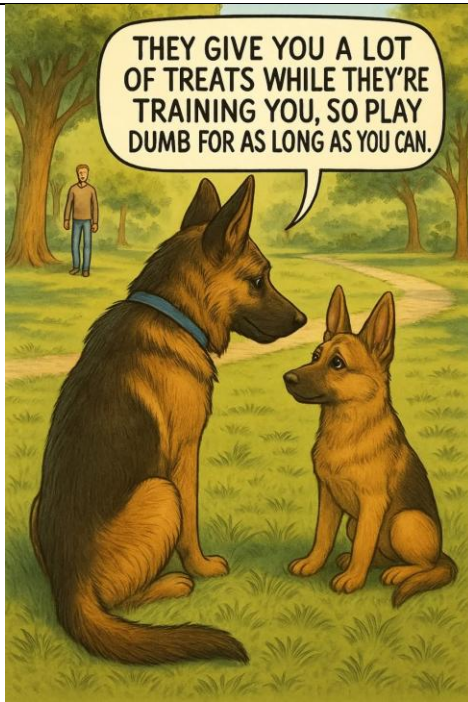
541 Evening Sky Drive
Oviedo, FL 32765

-or-

3530 Diamond Leaf Lane
Oviedo, FL 32765

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





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Subject to change)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sept. 7 Youth Sunday School classes begin	Sept. 8	Sept. 9 Trustee Mtg. 7:00 p.m.	Sept. 10 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m.	Sept. 11	Sept. 12	Sept. 13
Sept. 14	Sept. 15	Sept. 16	Sept. 17 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m.	Sept. 18	Sept. 19	Sept. 20 Community Meal 4:00 p.m.
Sept. 21	Sept. 22	Sept. 23	Sept. 24 ROMEO Club 9 a.m. Silver Sisters 11:30 Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	Sept. 25	Sept. 26	Sept. 27
Sept. 28 Breakfast cooked by Dale Phillippes 9:00 a.m.	Sept. 29	Sept. 30	Oct. 1 ROMEO Club 9 a.m. Prayer 4 p.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4

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: danhenny55@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