

MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

September 2026 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

It's the fall of the year. Students of all ages are returning to the classroom and the lecture hall. Some of us are adjusting our travel times to avoid the big yellow buses with their frequent stops. As Christians, we have the opportunity to learn all through the year, and all through the years that God grants us. The Apostle Peter concludes his Second Letter with these words: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen." In Paul's Letter to the Christians in Colossae, chapter 1, he says that he and his fellow missionaries pray continually "that God will fill all the believers with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ...that they may grow in their knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might."

A believer's education involves head knowledge. In 2 Timothy 3:16, Paul says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching." In the previous verse, he says, "The holy Scriptures are able to make a person wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." We must begin with our textbook, the Bible. We must spend time in the Word as often as we are able. But we must do more than read. James, the brother of our Lord, says in the first chapter of his Letter, "Do not merely listen to the word, ...do what it says." We must depend on the Holy Spirit, who inspired the human authors, to bring the words alive to us, to grant us a true understanding of what he would speak to us, as we read. And, beyond information, we need spiritual power to live into what God reveals to us of his will. Jesus said in his farewell discourse in John 14-16, that "the Holy Spirit, whom the Father would send to believers in his name, would teach us all things, ...and that he, the Spirit of truth, would guide us into all truth." As we ask the Holy Spirit to speak to us as we read God's Holy Word, and as we depend on the Spirit's power to guide us in the path he lights before us, we will grow in our knowledge of God in the school of Christ. I wish you all the best in your continuing Christian education. I am deeply grateful to be serving a congregation of God's holy people who are committed to learning and following his Word.

CHURCH LIFE

CHOIR - Well it's time to start choir practice!! We will start on Wednesday September 23 at 7 PM. I hope all our members come back and I would welcome anyone that wants to come to give it a try. We do have fun and you don't have to read music. We will start singing in the service on the 4th of October. Please come and help us have a successful season.

DEACONS - Proverbs 17:17 says, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." We all need a friend when our lives hit a rough patch in the road. Our Deacons are there at the ready, with prayers, cards, visits, and practical help. How blessed we all are with such a reliable safety net. We give thanks for our faithful Deacons!

SECRET SISTERS – The Secret Sister's group met for their annual party to find out who their sisters were for the previous year and pick new ones for the upcoming year. Everyone brought their favorite snack and a small wrapped gift for the "Now You Have it Now You Don't Game." Then we tried to guess who had been our sister and unwrapped the gifts that each of us were given. Below is a picture of our party. We missed Annie Frackman who had another commitment that night and Cayla Sallander will be joining us for the next year.



SILVER SISTERS - We had twelve ladies joining us for lunch at B J's Restaurant and Brewhouse. They are known for their "Pizookies" desserts. And many of us enjoyed one! Our next luncheon will be on Wednesday September 23 at 11:30 at Hershey Farms. All widows are welcome.

SUMMER MUSIC

September 13	Nicholas Mohler – piano
September 20	Voices of Praise
September 27	Pam Jones

TRUSTEES - Some of our Trustees have been working on sprucing up one of the unused Sunday School rooms downstairs for the Cub Scouts. They are pleased to have a large group. Some more of the Trustees worked in the cemetery to level off some of the graves. We always need to wait awhile before we do that, so the ground settles some. You may have noticed some of the plaster getting bad near the bell tower. One of our Trustees went up on the roof to check out what the problem may be. There is some of the mortar that has been cracking between the stones, so we will need to have that repaired. We always find things that need to be tended to, and we do our best.

UPDATE FROM SOLANCO NEIGHBORHOOD MINISTRIES

Good morning, I want to share with you about our Backpack Day event this weekend:

Backpack Day is one of my favorite days to help. So many local families participate, the kids are so excited to pick out their own backpack (*and we had 100s to choose from*), and the generosity of our community is on full display with the amount of supplies we have. Quarryville Elementary's cafeteria was filled with tables full of backpacks, binders, notebooks, markers, crayons, glue sticks, and everything else students need to start the school year. There were books and toiletries, and racks of clothes and shoes for families to go through and choose what they like.

169 students received backpacks on Saturday and 59 backpacks were filled and sent to the local elementary, middle, and high schools so they can accommodate incoming students' needs. **228 backpacks for students** who need them + we will continue to give them away throughout the week to the families who could not come in person on Saturday.

This day, along with so many others, really highlight God's provision and blessing on this ministry. What began with modest school supplies on two tables in our (former) office, expanded to our (former) warehouse, and now meets in the QE cafeteria. We continue to say "yes" to those in need and the Lord provides, working through YOU and our community, who give so generously of your time, talents and gifts. Thank you for meeting the needs in our community in so many ways, and know that there were many smiling faces this weekend because of it.

Blessings on your week, Teresa

MISSION MUSINGS

The Solid Rock Youth Ministry is one of our Monthly Mission Focus ministries for September. They are in the process of renovating the old Duvall car dealership building in Quarryville right now as it will be their new home in the near future. I'm sure you have seen the work being done if you have been through Quarryville this summer. Our Session voted to add an additional \$1500.00 to our Monthly Mission Focus donation of \$1000.00 and therefore we will be a sponsor of a "rock" on an inside wall in the new building. They host dozens of young people each week with a variety of activities including Bible studies for students from kindergarten to high school. It is a wonderful ministry that was started by Clair and Jackie Myers nearly 30 years ago ! Raeanne Nixon is the Executive Director now and she and her staff are providing a wonderful outreach to the students in the Solanco community.

I have spoken with Raeanne and she would love to come to M. O. to tell us more about the Solid Rock ministry. I plan to invite her soon on a Sunday when Pastor John is on vacation. I am sure we will all learn a lot and be impressed with this ministry.

This is just one of the 19 Monthly Mission Focus ministries we support with each one receiving \$300.00 from our Session Fund and \$1000.00 from the Bueche Fund in the month they are focused. It is such a blessing to bless these ministries because of God's blessings bestowed upon us.

We are looking forward to being a Drop Off Center for Operation Christmas Child again in November. We will also host the Southern End Gift Drive again in December this year. These are of course two more of our Monthly Mission Focus ministries. Just two of the many ways we have the opportunity to bless others in the name of Jesus.

We thank each of you because it's your generous donations that help support these ministries that reach out to help those in need here in our community as well as throughout our country and the world.

Luke 6:38 - Blessings, Dan Henry

REFLECTIONS

by Barry Girvin

A Monument Worthy of Notice

If you go south on Rt 222 to Mechanics Grove and immediately after you pass Black Bear Road, there is a Revolutionary War monument on the left side of the road. Drive slow, it is easy to miss. It honors General John Steele, his brother Col. Archibald Steele, Col. Thomas Porter, and Dr. David Ramsay. I will be portraying General Steele during the Minute for History on Sunday, September 6. I will detail the military career and lives of the Steele brothers at that time.

The others honored on the monument each aided the American cause in their own ways. Col Thomas Porter was one of the earliest supporters of the Revolution and was elected to the Committee of Sixty, the group that enforced the boycott on British goods in 1774. By 1775, he was made a colonel in the 3rd Battalion of Lancaster County and fought at Brandywine. He passed away in 1777, having given everything he had to the Revolution.

Dr. David Ramsey was born in what would become East Drumore Township. He was one of the first Revolutionary War historians. He received his degree as a medical doctor in 1767 and moved to Charleston, South Carolina. During the war, he served as a surgeon for our forces located there. Ramsey went on to serve one term in the Continental Congress, but he is best known for his historical works. He published the first biography of George Washington, titled, The Life of George Washington. He also wrote The History of the American Revolution, the first piece of national history written and published by an American. Because of these two works, he is known as the father of American history.

Please note: Copies of this year's Minutes for History (one per month) are available on a stand outside the library. Next year, our anniversary year, there will be a Minute for History each week from January through August 8.





SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

4 – Carol Girvin, Melissa Keene
 9 – Dee Romito, Justin Pfeiffer
 12 – John Girvin
 13 – Greg Trout
 19 – Val Wessner, Beaty Armer
 20 – Deb Hoover
 25 – Shirley Girvin
 27 – Nancy Minchoff

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

14 – John & Sue Ressel
 17 – Cory & Koryn Barrett
 19 – Douglas & Kristine Hileman
 25 – Jim & Stephanie Miller

GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES - August 2026

The following is the individual weekly breakdown of offerings:

August 2 -	General Fund	3,195.00	Benevolence	300.00
August 9 -	General Fund	2,055.00	Benevolence	125.00
August 16 -	General Fund	1,790.00	Benevolence	370.00
August 23 -	General Fund	1,958.00	Benevolence	185.00
August 30 -	General Fund	1,486.00	Benevolence	75.00

An additional \$4,059.20 General Fund money was received by mail etc.

YTD GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES

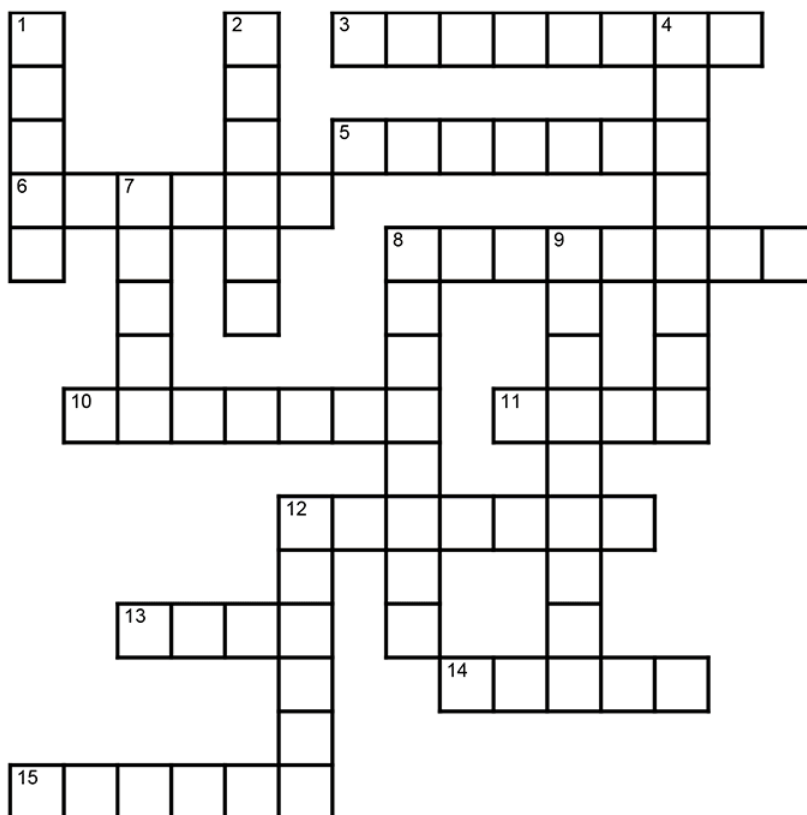
	Monthly	YTD	Monthly	YTD	YTD
	Budget	Budget	Received	Received	Expenses
General Fund	19,217.00	134,519.00	14,543.20	115,486.60	131,274.25
Benevolence	1,192.30	8,346.10	1,055.00	7,635.00	
*This includes an \$11,268.58 C/D					

This month was a 5 Sunday offering month, but unfortunately, we still ended with a significant decrease in the General Fund balance. I have requested the final payment from the Cemetery Fund towards the yearly mowing expense which should get us through September's expenses. I will talk to the Trustees because we will need to pull money from other funds for the rest of the year. We will soon be working on the budget for 2027 and will have to make cuts wherever possible. Please prayerfully consider your giving and please remember to make up your missed offering if you cannot be at church on Sunday. It all makes a difference.

				Middle Octorara Presbyterian Church	
				Income and Expense Statement	
09/02/2026 11:44 AM				GENERAL FUND 01, August 2026	
BEGINNING BALANCE, August 1, 2026					13,654.09
INCOME					
Offerings				\$13,134.00	
Manse Rent				1,408.95	
Account Interest				0.25	
Benevolence				1,055.00	
TOTAL INCOME				15,598.20	
TOTAL CASH & INCOME					29,252.29
EXPENSES					
Pastoral Salary				\$6,082.54	
Pastoral Mileage				424.08	
Pastoral Pension				3,010.42	
Pastoral Technology				50.00	
Secretary-Treasurer				936.00	
Accountant Fees (January-July)				630.00	
Payroll Taxes				191.04	
Advertising				39.80	
Office Supplies				212.78	
Church Supplies				128.64	
Copier Lease				120.32	
Electricity				430.90	
Propane Gas				50.15	
Electrical Repairs/Maint.				481.68	
Telephone/internet				118.80	
Cleaning Service				337.50	
Upkeep of Grounds				1,979.01	
Guest Minister/Speaker				150.00	
Special Music Payments				150.00	
Tsfr. Session Benev. Fund				1,055.00	
Property Taxes-Manse				2,269.44	
TOTAL EXPENSES				18,848.10	
ENDING BALANCE, August 31, 2026					10,404.19

Name: _____ Date: _____

Back to School



Across

1. Time to play outside during a break in the school day.
5. A place to sit and study in your room or at school.
8. It helps you measure and draw straight lines.
10. Writing utensil made of wood.
12. The person who guides and helps you in class.
14. A subject that involves numbers.
15. Use this to stick things together.
16. Where you go to enjoy stories and explore new worlds.

17. A colorful container to keep your sandwiches and snacks.

Down

2. Place where you might eat your lunch at school.
3. Present for the teacher.
4. Someone who goes to school.
6. A place where you learn and have fun.
7. Mark on an exam or in a class.
9. What school is all about.
11. A pad made of bound sheets of paper for taking notes.
13. A small tool to undo mistakes.

WORDBANK: Apple, Cafeteria, Desk, Eraser, Grade, Learning, Library, Lunchbox, Math, Notebook, Pencil, Recess, School, Stapler, Student, Teacher



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Subject to change)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sept. 6	Sept. 7	Sept. 8 Trustee Mtg. 7:00 p.m.	Sept. 9 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m.	Sept. 10	Sept. 11 "Forged in Fire" Men's Group 6:30 p.m.	Sept. 12 Covenanter Festival
Sept. 13	Sept. 14	Sept. 15 Mom's Connect 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Sept. 16 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Solanco Fair Parade	Sept. 17 Solanco Fair	Sept. 18 Solanco Fair "Forged in Fire" Men's Group 6:30 p.m.	Sept. 19
Sept. 20 Luncheon after church	Sept. 21	Sept. 22	Sept. 23 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Silver Sisters 11:30 a.m. Choir practice 7:00 p.m.	Sept. 24	Sept. 25 "Forged in Fire" Men's Group 6:30 p.m.	Sept. 26
Sept. 27	Sept. 28	Sept. 29	Sept. 30 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.	Oct. 1	Oct. 2 "Forged in Fire" Men's Group 6:30 p.m.	Oct. 3

