

# **MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

## **July 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

*John Calvin (1509-1564), was a towering figure in the Protestant Reformation. He left us a volume of writings. Among them is this one little sentence: "For what is idolatry if not this: to worship the gifts in place of the Giver himself?" God wants us to worship him exclusively, not because he is vain, but because he is love. He only wants what is best for us, who are the very pinnacle of his creation, created in his image to rule over all the rest. He knows that when we worship created things we veer off course into greed, discontent, envy, gluttony, infidelity, addiction, and a host of other traps and dead ends. God wants us to worship him alone as the Giver of every good and perfect gift. He also wants us to enjoy all that he sends our way in love. Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:4-5, "Everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer." The "word of God" in verse 5 is God's word at creation in Genesis 1, where he said of all he had created that "it was good." The "prayer" in verse 5 of 1 Timothy 4 is the prayer of thanksgiving, which keeps both Giver and gift in proper perspective. Paul says in 1 Timothy 6:17, "Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." Again, acknowledging the Giver of all things, who, in love, wants us not to worship the gifts, but to enjoy them.*

*Summer is here. For many it is a time for vacation, travel, and experiencing a number of foods and activities that we don't normally have the opportunity to do, many of them outdoors in the nice weather. All of this is the gift of God. May we honor him as the Giver, and enjoy all that he provides for us in his great love. David says in Psalm 25:15, "My eyes are ever on the LORD, for only he will release my feet from the snare." Thank you for being a congregation of God's people who keep your focus on the LORD. I am blessed everyday to be your pastor.*

## CHURCH LIFE

**DEACONS** - Our faithful Deacons continue to carry out their many responsibilities with enthusiasm and a cheerful, friendly spirit. Everyone gets a warm greeting as they arrive and leave services, and a steady stream of cards in the mail. Deacons make sure that every voice is heard during announcements and sharing of joys and concerns on Sunday mornings. And when there are special needs in the flock, Deacons are there to give support and care. We appreciate all of our Deacons! Thank you!

**JOYFULLY MADE FELLOWSHIP (A-TEAM)** - Joyfully Made Fellowship (The A-Team church) will be holding a Bingo night at the Quarryville VFW, 1653 Holtwood Rd, Holtwood, on Saturday September 27. There will be lots of great prizes, and extra games can be purchased that night. Tickets are \$ 25 each and are in limited supply.

Doors will open at 5 PM and refreshments will be available to purchase. If you would like tickets, you can get them from Jodi LeFevre or give Rose Griest the money and name of who is going, and she can give it to Jodi. Joyfully Made is a non-profit and only operates on donations, so we need to have lots of fundraisers.

**MIDDLE OCTORARA PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN** - Thank you to all who purchased subs, pretzel sandwiches and strawberry pies recently from the MOPW. So far our profit is a little over \$ 400.

- We will continue to sponsor sub sales every other month and the next one will be August 14<sup>th</sup>.
- We will be spending \$300 for backpacks and other school supplies
- We will spend \$125 to provide prizes for JMF's Bingo event coming up in September - one of their largest fund raisers of the year (see above article)

**PEACH FEST** - The 5th annual MOPW Peach fest will be August 9th beginning at 4 PM. A light meal of beef barbecue and other yummy foods will be served. In addition, there will be a variety of peach dishes and desserts provided by our congregation. Please call Shirley Miller if you would like to bring a peach dessert or other peach food. (717-786-3690)

**SILVER SISTERS** - The Silver Sisters widows group had lunch at BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse at Park City this month. There were 13 of us. Food was very good and they have a great dessert which most of us enjoyed. Lots of good conversation and laughter could be heard. We decided the next time we are going to Perkins near Avondale on Wednesday July 16 at 11:30. All widows are welcome. But if you haven't been with us recently, call Rose Griest at 610-636-5378 so we know you are coming.

### SUMMER MUSIC

July 13	Nick Mohler	piano
July 20	Janet Eaby	singing
July 27	Jen Daily	singing
August 3	"Grace Notes"	quartet singing

**TRUSTEES** - The Board of Trustees have been actively getting bids for replacing the carpet, discussing different types and prices. We also discuss the pews and what we should do with them, and how we should move them to prepare for the carpet. There will be a congregation meeting to help make those decisions. Many questions have been asked, and many scenarios discussed. We need to be mindful of the cost, and the desires of the people that help finance our day to day activities.

There are always ongoing projects, like the work in the cemetery. The bushes that form the cross should soon be trimmed. There have been more trees cut up and the brush pushed back at the top of the hill.

## MISSION MUSINGS

Tonight I am thinking about what a wonderful Bible School week we had again this year. We were blessed to have 50 different students attend this year. We were also blessed to have the A Team join us again this year. They are a real joy and make our Bible School even more enjoyable. The theme this year was Road Trip ( On The Go With God ). The students learned that wherever they go God goes with them. Each night we opened in the sanctuary with singing, Bible verses and a skit featuring Scout the dog. Throughout the evening students learned about God enjoying time in the classroom, theater as well as craft and snack time. Each evening the students returned to the sanctuary for more singing, memory verses and skits with Scout. On Friday evening we invited everyone who wanted to come to our closing program. The students sang, read memory verses and once again Scout joined us with words of wisdom from our travel guide book, the Bible. To close the evening everyone gathered in the social hall for a delicious meal including barbecue, hot dogs, macaroni salad, baked beans and other scrumptious food. Please pray that our students will continue counting on God to be with them wherever they go. A huge thank you to everyone who helped to make Bible School a wonderful blessing again this year.

One of our monthly mission focus ministries this month is Christ In Action. Denny Nissley is the president of this wonderful ministry. I first met Denny several years ago at Community Day in Quarryville. He was the featured speaker and during his testimony he recalled his days as a troubled youth in the Quarryville area. His is another life changed by the power of Jesus and His mercy and grace. Christ In Action responds to disasters all over the United States. They respond to help in the aftermath of tornadoes, hurricanes and a host of other disasters. They have over 2 million dollar's worth of equipment on hand to respond to disasters.

Everywhere they respond their mission is to "Make Christ known - bringing hope to American families ". After 9/11 they were invited to set up on the parking lot at the Pentagon. CIA served over 55,000 meals and Denny was able to share the gospel with American military leaders and dignitaries from around the world. CIA also went to Ground Zero and served over 45,000 meals as the recovery efforts continued through the winter months. When hurricane Katrina hit in 2005 CIA served hundreds of thousands of meals, worked on hundreds of homes and distributed over one hundred million dollars worth of goods to those who had lost so much. In each and every one of these disaster responses, CIA saw so many people come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. I encourage you to check out their website and learn more about the amazing work they have done and continue to do. It is because of you that Middle Octorara can support CIA and many other worthwhile missions.

Matthew 5: 14-16.

Blessings, Dan Henry

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## JUST FOR TODAY

When the going gets tough, and you're tempted to complain about your lot in life, stop and remind yourself that this day is a gift from God, one you will never have again. Think about the following words and they will help you:

- ❖ *Just for today*, I will try to improve my mind by learning more than I know; I will read something that requires effort, thought, concentration, and commitment.
- ❖ *Just for today*, I will be agreeable. I will try to look my best, speak softly, and be courteous and considerate to others.
- ❖ *Just for today*, I will have a plan and a goal. I might not follow it exactly, but I will have one, nonetheless. By doing that, I will save myself from two enemies-hurry and indecision.
- ❖ *Just for today*, I will develop my character. I will do a good turn and keep it a secret; if anyone finds out, it won't count.
- ❖ *Just for today*, I will do something I don't want to do. That way, I will train my spirit to overrule my flesh, and my will to overrule my emotions.
- ❖ *Just for today*, I won't be afraid to love or to risk; I will endeavor to enjoy all God's blessings and believe that every seed I sow in His kingdom will be multiplied back to me many times over. That's how I will live-*just for today!*

# REFLECTIONS

by Barry Girvin

## *Too Much, Too Little*

The word “too” comes to mind regarding my many dislikes. For example, news broadcasts include entirely too much weather. I can remember when weather got about five minutes in a half hour newscast, and that was enough. I may just want to know the odds of it raining, not why. Weather reports are so long and technical that by the end I have lost focus and still do not know if it may rain. Worse, the weather report is repeated several times during each news show.

One of the plagues in my life is too many onions. I like cooked onions, but raw onions bring misery to my body: indigestion, lingering taste, and the smell emerges from my pores and my mouth. It takes time, several Tums, and a bottle of mouthwash, and a shower to recover. Yet, it is hard to avoid raw onions. When I ask if the potato salad has any onions, servers look at me as some kind of a trouble maker. The most unkindest cut of all came at QPRC when I ordered ravioli and it came with raw onions sprinkled on top. Shirley said to scrap them off. Didn't work. If raw onions touch anything they leave their mark and I can taste it.

President Harry Truman once said “If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog.” Politics has always been rough and tumble, but in Truman's day, it was a far cry from today. Politicians could fight it out on the floor of Congress, but also be friends who respected each other. Today, there are too many hypocrites in both conservative and liberal ranks. Many claim to be Christians, but wearing blinders like an Amish horse, they follow the lead of their political party and its leaders. Loyalty is required as in a cult. Also, encouraged, view the opposition as stupid, evil, and not worthy of an intelligent conversation. Compromise? Respecting the views of others? Loving your neighbor? Forget it! Doesn't sound like Jesus to me.

I am sad to say that there is too little knowledge of history and the Bible in our country today. Watch Jeopardy and see how many brainy people know all about movies, music, sports, math, and science; but can't answer questions on George Washinton or Moses.

This condition can be reversed by requiring four years of Social Studies in our high schools. Three of those years should include courses in American, World, and local history. All churches should have Bible School and Sunday School. More important, all parents should read and discuss the Bible with the family.

Lastly, there is too much apathy in our society. What does a driver for Meals on Wheels and a demonstrator in the street have in common? They care and they take action. One is meeting a need and the other practicing their freedom of speech. All of the laid back, comfortable folks may someday regret the needs they did not serve and just causes they were too lazy to address.

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### July birthday's

25 – James Williams  
26 – Carla Phillips  
28 – Dottie Garver  
30 – Nancy Cox  
31 – Jim Hammond

### July Anniversaries

15 – Roger & Kathy Harvey  
23 – Sam & Faye Reinhart

### August birthday's through the 3<sup>rd</sup>

3 – Kristine Hileman

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

07/03/2025 01:03 PM

BEGINNING BALANCE, June 1, 2025		<b>5,978.56</b>
INCOME		
Offerings	\$12,498.01	
Manse Rent	1,362.45	
Account Interest	0.08	
M.O.Cemetery Fund-Mowing	4,000.00	
Benevolence	1,020.00	
TOTAL INCOME	<u>18,880.54</u>	
 TOTAL CASH & INCOME		<b>24,859.10</b>
EXPENSES		
Pastoral Salary	\$6,026.73	
Pastoral Pension	2,507.73	
Pastoral Technology	50.00	
Secretary-Treasurer	775.50	
Accountant Fees	90.00	
Payroll Taxes	49.50	
Advertising	31.84	
Office Supplies	517.79	
Church Supplies	325.87	
Copier Lease	120.32	
Electricity	269.59	
Insurance	2,947.25	
Plumbing Repairs/Maint.	119.99	
Misc. Repairs/Mainten.	175.91	
Telephone/internet	104.53	
Cleaning Service	480.00	
Upkeep of Grounds	1,979.01	
Special Music Payments	150.00	
Tsfr. Session Benev. Fund	1,020.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>17,741.56</u>	
 ENDING BALANCE, June 30, 2025		<b>7,117.54</b>

## GENERAL FUND & BENEVOLENCE FINANCES - June 2025

The following is the individual weekly breakdown of offerings:

June 1 -	General Fund	2,728.00	Benevolence	380.00
June 8 -	General Fund	3,630.00	Benevolence	135.00
June 15 -	General Fund	1,447.00	Benevolence	55.00
June 22 -	General Fund	2,872.01	Benevolence	290.00
June 29 -	General Fund	1,171.00	Benevolence	160.00

An additional \$6,012.53 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	18,164.20	94,453.84	17,860.54	93,650.85	97,201.93
Benevolence	1,192.30	6,199.96	1,020.00	6,198.00	

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**A View From The Pew!** - Life without God, is like an unsharpened pencil, It has no Point! Billy Graham



ORPHAN  
ASSISTANCE  
FOUNDATION  
[www.transitionsoaf.org](http://www.transitionsoaf.org)

June 15, 2025

Dear Friends,

*Now I lay me down to sleep  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.*

My momma taught me that prayer when I was a little girl. Every night at bedtime, my sister and I would kneel at our bedside and say those words. The God blesses always followed: "God bless Mommy and Daddy, God bless MomMom and PopPop," and aunts and uncles and cousins and friends. . . . The God Bless List could be short or long depending on how tired we were or how long we wanted to delay getting in bed. I've moved on to more adult prayers since then, but I've never forgotten that one. There is another part to it, too:

*If I should die before I wake  
I pray the Lord my soul to take.*

I never heard that second part until much later in my childhood. I wonder if my mom skipped that part because, to a young and fearful child (me, not my sister), the idea of dying during sleep would have been very anxiety producing. I'm glad she skipped that part.

Many years have passed since then. Recently, I traveled to Odesa, Ukraine, which is embroiled in war with Russia. Talk about anxiety producing.

We had just spent time in Germany visiting with our foster family in Bad Arolsen, and visiting with Hasan, one of our orphan graduates in Offenbach. We enjoyed our time with the Vatan family catching up with the parents, doing crafts and playing games and music with the children. The children are growing up before our eyes and assimilating well to German



culture. The parents are nearing the end of their German studies and are making difficult decisions about what happens next. We attended services at the Ukrainian church and enjoyed our annual pizza dinner with the family at a local restaurant. Before we knew it, it was time to move on to Offenbach to see Hasan.

Hasan surprised us with his arm in a sling. He had suffered a bad break near his shoulder, underwent surgery, and was still recuperating. Hasan shared his news with us over a meal, and we took a long walk around the city waterfront to enjoy a new city and to finish catching up. Hasan is determined to continue German lessons for as long as Germany will allow in order to qualify for the best paying job possible. Hasan is intelligent, hard-working, and possibly the most positive-thinking person I know. He never complains and always sees the bright side, even in challenging situations.

We said goodbye to Hasan and flew the next day from Frankfurt to Chisinau, Moldova. We de-boarded the plane and immediately boarded a bus headed to Odesa. Germany had been fun, but I was excited to be home again in Odesa. I was also a bit wary and a lot nervous to enter Ukraine again. The war had been very volatile in the weeks leading up to this trip, and Odesa is no longer being spared. However, we were entering during the time of Russia's declared cease fire for the May holidays, and we were hoping for quiet skies during our time there.

That first night, as I tucked myself in bed, my mind conjured that prayer that I had prayed every night as a child. *Now I lay me down to sleep. . . . This time, for the first time ever, I completed the prayer – If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.* And instead of the God blesses, I added a plea for quiet skies, an absence of drones and missiles, and for us all to wake up rested and ready for the busy schedule that lay ahead. I prayed that same prayer each night and my prayers were answered. Miraculously, there were no attacks on Odesa while we were there. Even the sirens were few until the last few days of our stay.

We dived in to our business, prepared for a quick exit if necessary, and hoped that it would not be so. As it turned out, we were able to spend all the time we planned with our folks and families in Odesa, and we were able to accomplish our goals. With the absence of the air raid sirens and explosions that we had experienced in the last visit, it actually felt so very normal that when it was time to leave, I was reluctant to go. I was not ready to say goodbye to my Odesa home. However, it was time. We took the bus back to Chisinau, flew back to Frankfurt, and on home to Orlando. Two days after we left, bombs rained down again on Odesa, and I thanked God for our safe, quiet, productive visit and for keeping all of our folks in Odesa safe. I also suffered guilt that I had been spared the recent horrors while my friends in Odesa were witnessing and experiencing these horrors over and over again.

These two things I know well: Ukrainians are a brave, determined people with huge, huge hearts. And, what you and I do together through your prayers and gifts make a difference. From our foster families who are sustained by us, to our orphans in the village of Pishana who are loved and cared for by us, to those who have found shelter in one of the cottages we built, to the widows and pensioners who know that there will always be another bag of food waiting for them when they need it, we make a difference to all of them. They are so grateful. Thank you for being a big part of this! To end with a smile, some photos for you:

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 Online options to donate can be found on our website: [www.transitionsoaf.org](http://www.transitionsoaf.org)





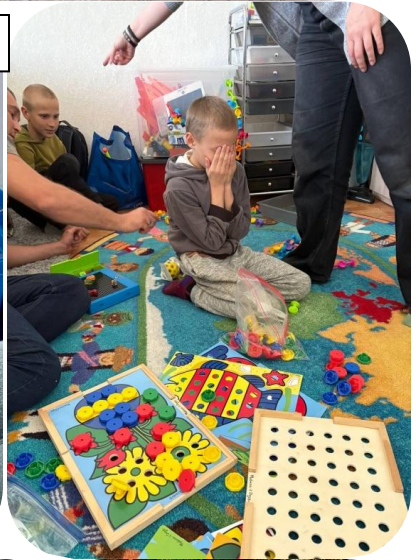
With Hasan



With the Rybakov Family



The Pishana Orphanage kids



Please pray for our young men currently serving in the army







L L R M U H W Q Q L N X K Y N  
I M E U U J J B M I R D Q T L  
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L O D S R T Q C Z B D A K C F  
Y P A N T M Z S L O X G H E M  
T J N Q Y S T A T E S C T E P

United States	Independence	Revolution	Fireworks
Freedom	Liberty	America	Liberty
Liberty	Summer	States	Parade
Picnic	Flag	Flag	July



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Subject to change)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July 6	July 7	July 8 Trustee Mt. 7:00 p.m.	July 9 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4:00 p.m.	July 10	July 11	July 12
July 13	July 14	July 15	July 16 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Silver Sisters 11:30 a.m. Prayer 4:00 p.m.	July 17	July 18	July 19
July 20	July 21	July 22	July 23 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4:00 p.m.	July 24	July 25	July 26
July 27	July 28	July 29	July 30 ROMEO Club 9:00 a.m. Prayer 4:00 p.m.	July 31	Aug. 1	Aug. 2

## **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR REV. JOHN BARLOW**

Address: 433 W. Lincoln Ave  
Myerstown, PA 17067

Cellphone: 717-377-4570  
Email: [barlowjohn604@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:mopc_sec@comcast.net)  
**Website:** [middleoctorara.org](http://middleoctorara.org)  
**Facebook:** middle octorara

**Church Secretary/Treasurer** Debbie Hoover  
**Phone:** 717-786-8284  
**Email:** [thehoovers@comcast.net](mailto:thehoovers@comcast.net) or [mopc\\_sec@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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