Rhea Brandenburg and Jim Stein previously worked together in the funeral industry and agreed that someday they would like to have the opportunity to offer those experiencing the death of a loved one with a more meaningful experience and a larger variety of options. With preparation and perseverance, their dream became a reality with Brandenburg and Stein Funeral Parlor opening at a unique church and cemetery property located in Gettysburg in the summer of 2022.

Rhea has worked in the funeral industry for seventeen years and became a funeral director working in Maryland since 2011. She currently lives in Waynesboro with her husband Thomas and infant son, Fox. Rhea is a licensed mortician, funeral director, and cemeterian in both Maryland and Pennsylvania. Rhea’s partner Jim has worked in the industry for 25 years and currently lives in Gettysburg with his wife, Sheri. Jim is a Veteran of the United States Navy and his son currently serves in the United States Air Force. Jim is also a licensed mortician, funeral director, and cemeterian in Pennsylvania and Maryland. He is also a certified crematory operator and certified celebrant.

In their preparation and research to become entrepreneurs, the duo learned about the services of the Shippensburg University SBDC while working with M&T Bank to complete the necessary documents to purchase and renovate the property. They were connected with the Jennifer Horning, SBDC Business Consultant, who assisted Rhea and Jim with the development of their business plan and financial projections. According to Jim and Rhea, “the SBDC was a valuable asset to us and without their assistance things would have been more complicated and time consuming to complete.”

Rhea and Jim started the process of purchasing the building and establishing their business in 2019 so, undoubtedly, the biggest challenge they faced in their startup were the effects of the pandemic. However, their tenacity was a huge asset as they overcame all of the pandemic related issues as well as the township regulations, industry concerns and state traffic issues.

Brandenburg and Stein Funeral Parlor is proud to bring experienced and personalized funeral services to the area. Rhea and Jim are committed to continuing to make an impact in their community by educating the public of the many options that are available when a death occurs. They specifically aim to highlight the unique options that they provide including green burials and in-home funerals and wakes.