



From the Pastor

For the last few columns, I have been writing on different methods of evangelism. So far, we have done direct evangelism and apologetics, and for this column, I want to address relationship or friendship evangelism. Out of all the different ways of telling people about Jesus, this seems to be the one that most people claim to be their approach. However, I want to add a word of caution here. I think too often people claim this is their approach simply because they don't want to go through the frightening times of actually sharing their faith, so they are simply "waiting for the right time to share their faith" with a friend, but that time often never comes. In other words, if we truly are sharing our faith within the context of friendships (which we should all strive to do), people would be able to see the fruit of that.

So what does relationship (or friendship) evangelism look like? We can see several examples of this in church history. The one that comes to mind is CS Lewis who came to the Christian faith largely on his friendship with Tolkien. However, there is another equally important outcome of relationship evangelism, and that is Gregory who was converted to Christianity by his friendship with Origen in the 3rd century. Michael Green in his book, *Evangelism in the Early Church* recounts the story, so I want to share a few quotes from that book.

Gregory's father died when he was fourteen years old, and through different circumstances, he found himself under the tutelage of Origen of Alexandria, often described as the greatest genius the early church produced. This great theologian "possessed a rare combination of a certain sweet grace and persuasiveness, along with a strange power and constraint.' Moreover, the genuine warmth and friendship of the man had its own mute attraction: 'the stimulus of friendship was also brought to bear on us – a stimulus not easily withstood, but keen and most effective – the argument of a kind and affectionate disposition, which showed itself beneficently in his words when he spoke to us and associated with us.'"

This eventually led to Gregory's conversion which he recounts: "And thus, like some spark lighting upon our inmost soul, love was kindled and burst into flame within us – a love at once to the Holy Word, the most lovely object of all, who attracts all irresistibly towards himself by his unutterable beauty, and to this man, his friend and advocate. And being most mightily smitten by this love, I was persuaded to give up all those objects or pursuits which seem to us befitting, and among them even my boasted jurisprudence – yea my very father-land and friends, both those who were present with me then, and those from whom I had parted. And in my estimation there arose but one... object and worth desire - philosophy [sc. Christian truth] and that master of philosophy, this inspired man.' And he goes on to tell of the intimacy of relationship he began to enjoy with his teacher, who took Gregory and his brother in hand like a gardener, a wild plant, or a farmer an uncultivated field, and set to work on them. The fruit of that work was seen in years to come, when Gregory became a celebrated missionary bishop, and was instrumental in a widespread turning to Christianity among his own people in Pontus [in Asia Minor]." Gregory goes on later to account, "He did not aim merely at getting us round by any kind of reasoning; but his desire was, with a benignant, affectionate and most generous mind, to save us'" (pages 393-399).

So here, we see a wonderful example of friendship evangelism. This is something we should all strive for, but again, we might not be particularly gifted in this area. I will be the first to admit that I am not. As I have often shared with you, I was too afraid to share my faith when I was in high school with my best friend. Friendship evangelism requires a commitment to the friendship, but more importantly in understanding that the most loving thing that I can ever do for my friends who are not Christians is to tell them that they are sinners, and they need Jesus, and to faithfully share that within the context of the friendship. Like all these areas, we need to develop these methods, but we also need to be thankful for people who seem especially gifted in this area.



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You can also find us on Facebook.

Office Hours:
Mon, Wed, Fri: 12 - 3:30 pm
Tues & Thurs: 12 - 4 pm
Pastor's Hours:
Tuesday - Thursday
9:30 am - noon (flexible)

Poinsettias

The time is fast approaching when the Poinsettia order forms will be distributed in your worship bulletins. The deadline for orders this year will be December 4th. More information to come.



HELP NEEDED WITH SALVATION ARMY FOOD DONATIONS

We are looking for persons to gather & deliver the food collected the 1st Sunday of the month for Salvation Army to their Batavia location. Some of the dates that we need help after we collect for Salvation Army are - Nov 5, 2023; Dec 3, 2023; Jan 7, 2024 & Feb 4, 2024. Sign-up sheet and dates are on the hall bulletin board. Thank you!

Old Friends

Church friends of Ann Johnson who was visiting from Florida met for brunch to catch up on good memories from the past.



November is Veterans Month

Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church will be acknowledging our veterans the second Sunday (Nov 12) in November. We will also have a special guest from Eagle Star Shelter for Homeless Veterans that day.

We Honor our Veterans: Fred Ely, David Hahn, Paul Rider, Rick Stacy, Ward Baily, Robert Cosgrove, Harvey Morse, Charlie McAdam, Joe Heukensfeld, Dennis Gillett, Keith Marshall, Christie (McAllister) Komarek, Jesse Craig, Stu Freeman



Veterans at Eagle Star



Eagle Star Veterans with Alecia, Staff Member

TAG ~ Teens After God

REVERB!!!!

The annual **REVERB** (formerly "Superbowl") youth event takes place in Rochester on the 3rd and 4th of November. It is an all-night event that includes a Rochester Americans hockey game, awesome group activities on the ice after the game, a phenomenal message given by a nationally known evangelist, all you can eat pizza, all night Tri-county Sports Complex athletic events, glow in the dark bowling, go-carts, arcade games, and more. Almost 1,300 teens will be attending this year and many will give their lives to the Lord for the first time. We will be traveling by bus, along with Country Church from Oakfield, this year. Please pray for all the teens, leaders, and volunteers who will be attending the event.

At our most recent TAG youth group on October 15th, we had several new teens. It is always exciting when new people show up to TAG for the first time. Sometimes the new teens have never even been in a church, and sometimes, as was the case on the 15th, they are strong Christians with a deep faith. The night's activities consisted of a time of fun and fellowship, followed by a time of reflection and meditation focused around Luke chapter 7, and finishing with a very competitive game of Nuke 'em.

Our TAG youth group will be meeting on the following Sundays from 6:00-8:00: November 19th and December 3rd. Please keep all the teens of our group, and in Bergen, in your prayers. Continue to pray for God's protection and guidance in their lives!



Looking Back... - January 9, 2020 TAG Group

Operation Christmas Child 2023



Each year, our church partners with Samaritan's Purse in the Operation Christmas Child shoebox ministry. This mission sends shoeboxes packed with toys, school supplies, hygiene items, etc. to children in need throughout the world. When the shoeboxes are distributed, children have the opportunity to learn about Jesus by participating in a discipleship program.

This year there are three ways you can participate:

1. Pack shoeboxes on your own at home. There are empty shoeboxes available for you to take home, located in the foyer. Please note the cost for shipping is \$10 per shoebox. You can include this in the box or pay online. We would like to encourage everyone/family in our congregation to pack a shoebox. Bring them back to church by NOVEMBER 19 and we will take to a drop-off site.
2. Purchase items for our Sunday School children to pack boxes. We welcome any other items such as toiletries--toothbrush, comb, washcloths, small toys, games, school supplies. There is a collection bin in the church foyer for any donations. Thank You!
3. Donate money toward shipping. If you would like to contribute to the cost of shipping (for the shoeboxes the children pack in Sunday School), please place your donation in the offering box with the envelope marked/designated for OCC shipping. Thank You!

**Please return packed shoeboxes to church by
NOVEMBER 19**

Please stop by the Operation Christmas Child display in the foyer.

See Julie Foeller with any questions.

You can also check out [samaritanspurse.org](https://www.samaritanspurse.org) for lots of great information.

Foodlink

Foodlink is taking a break for the winter months of December - February. It will resume in March on Thursday the 21st at 4 pm and then continue through the spring on the 3rd Thursday of each month (Mar 21, Apr 18, May 16 & June 20)

Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped this year and we will see you in March!

Deacon Corner

It was a joy to recognize our faithful members and to fellowship with the congregation at the recent Legacy Luncheon. Please share your joys, concerns and needs with us. This month the deacons have a need. We will be decorating the sanctuary for Christmas on Saturday morning November 25th. If you are interested in helping, please contact Ruth Morse at #733-1786.

Sewing With a Purpose

Sewing With A Purpose comes to the help for Foodlink:

Volunteers of Foodlink noted that there was a need to easily survey our parking lot during Foodlink distribution to distinguish our wagons. So, Sewing With A Purpose quickly decided to make brightly colored red pom poms. Jodi Engle attached each pom pom and also added white highlighter to the labeled blue wagons. Thanks Jodi!!



Fingerless gloves have been distributed to Shirl Harris and Joan Dermody's Veteran Ministry for the veterans at Eagle Star Housing in Corfu.

Catherine McAllister Bichler is a supervisor/Case Manager for Soldier On in Pittsburgh. Soldier On helps homeless veterans secure housing and connects veterans to resources in their community. Soldier On received the remainder of these fingerless gloves for homeless veterans for the upcoming winter months.

Catherine's team of Case Managers distributed Soldier On information and passed out hats and gloves at a county wide veteran resource event. Catherine wishes to thank all who helped with this worthwhile Sewing With A Purpose project.



Fellowship Report

Happy early Thanksgiving to all of you! We pray that you might find thanks in all that happens this month.

We are continuing to share fellowship and refreshments, after the Sunday service, in the fellowship hall. It has been wonderful to share with many of you after the service. We will try to make a schedule of what we will provide each month, so that you can better plan your day.

October 29: baked goods and fruits

November 5: Chicken rice soup, bread, and a few baked goods

November 12: HARVEST DINNER (details to follow below)

November 19: baked goods and fruits

November 26: light lunch to be determined (soup or casserole)

We are looking for donations of baked goods, so please let us know if you could provide cookies, muffins, quick breads, etc. Many thanks to those that have brought food!

We invite you again this year to celebrate the season of Thanksgiving with a **HARVEST DINNER** on Sunday, November 12, following the service. Our menu will be: ham, stuffing, potatoes, roasted green beans, baked butternut squash, rolls, and pumpkin dessert. We will offer take-outs for those that may not be able to attend, but we ask that you have your order to Sandy Partridge, no later than Sunday, November 5. Take-outs will be available before the dinner is served.

We served hot dogs again at the October Foodlink event. It was another beautiful day and the hot dogs were appreciated by many people attending. We will have our last Foodlink for the year on Thursday, November 16th.

As always, if you have suggestions for events to bring us all together, please let any of us know.

Thank you,
Fellowship Team



Blessing Our Neighbors with Food

Foodlink food distribution at our church continues to bless our neighbors. More than 225 families were represented at the October distribution in our parking lot.

Thanks to the 35 volunteers who assisted during the afternoon.

Any "leftover" food that is not picked up by families during the distribution is taken to local food pantries in nearby communities, so nothing goes to waste.

November 16 will be our last distribution of 2023. We take a three month break during the most severe winter months and resume our distributions in March 2024. We have been given dates for the third Thursday of the month, March through June.

To volunteer on Nov. 16, please come by 2:45 pm. We begin to unload the truck at 3 pm and start the distribution by 4. If you are volunteering, please park in the Methodist Church parking lot so there is more room for our clients.

Be sure to dress for the weather! The distribution is outside in the parking lot.

Honoring Our Veterans in November

The November Mission Moment will focus on the veterans' outreach ministry conducted by Shirley Harris and Joan Dermody. A brief video on Sunday, Nov. 12, will feature those two ladies interviewing Kristen, the manager of Eagle Star Housing's temporary housing facility for homeless veterans in East Pembroke. This will be played during the worship service.



Calendar

Online calendar:
tinyurl.com/29zhbnbr



Weekly/Monthly

- First Sunday of the month - Communion
- First Sunday of the month – S A Food Collection
- Sundays, 9:15 am - Sunday School for All Ages
- Sundays, 10:30-11:45 am – Morning Worship
- Each Sunday following worship (unless there is a committee luncheon) is “Fattening the Flock” coffee & snack time.
- Mondays, 1 pm - Tech Class
- Tue & Thurs - Homeschooling Co-op
- Alternating Tues @ 2:00 pm - Women’s Bible Study
- Wednesdays, 6:00 pm – Prayer
- Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 am – Son Risers
- Saturdays, 11 am – Kid’s Quest
- Newsletter Deadline on the 25th of each month
- Last Saturday of the month – Door of Hope Coffee House @ 6 pm (November 25th this month)

Other Events in November

- Nov 3 & 4 - Reverb in Rochester
- **Nov 5 - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS**
- Nov 5 (Sun) - Fellowship meeting @ 12:15 pm
- Nov 7 (Tues) - Election Day
- Nov 8 (Wed) - Session @ 7 pm
- Nov 9 (Thurs) - Pastor Brandt @ Reformation Society
- Nov 10 (Fri) - Young Life Wyldlife Club @ 7
- Nov 11 (Sat) - Veterans Day
- Nov 12 (Sun) - Veterans Acknowledgement Day
- Nov 12 (Sun) - OCC Shoebox deadline
- Nov 12 (Sun) - Harvest Dinner after worship
- Nov 14 (Tue) - Women’s Bible Study (review Ch. 4, homework is Ch. 5) @ 2 pm
- Nov 16 (Thurs) - Foodlink Event @ 4 pm
- Nov 19 (Sun) - Operation Christmas Child shoebox deadline
- Nov 19 (Sun) - E&M meeting following worship
- Nov 19 (Sun) - TAG @ 6 pm
- Nov 21 (Tue) - Deacon meeting @ 7 pm

- Nov 23 (Thurs) - Thanksgiving - No Office Hours
- Nov 24 (Fri) - No Office Hours
- Nov 25 (Sat) - Decorating the sanctuary for X-mas
- Nov 27 - Dec 1 - Susan on vacation
- Nov 26 (Sun) - Poinsettia order deadline
- Nov 26 (Sun) - Worship Committee meeting following worship
- Nov 28 (Tue) - Women’s Bible Study (review Ch. 5 homework is Ch. 6) @ 2 pm

Anniversaries & Birthdays

November Birthdays

- 3 - Garry Hutchurson
- 5 - Richard Stacy
- 7 - Fred Ely
- 11 - Loretta Miller
- 12 - Marianne Newmark
- 15 - Deb Heukensfeld
- 19 - Kevin Hollenbeck
- 27 - Seth McNear

November Anniversaries

- 27 - Brian & Julie Foeller (30 years)
- 29 - Joe & Deb Heukensfeld (54 years)

December Birthdays

- 1 - Brandt Hammack
- 3 - Isaac Buckland
- 4 - Donna Lacey
- 10 - Chaz Newmark
- 11 - Wesley McNear
- 11 - Robbie Newmark
- 11 - Sandy Partridge
- 12 - John Jessop
- 16 - Joe Rebisz
- 19 - Rena Wilson
- 20 - David Brownell
- 23 - Wendy Caccamise
- 27 - Sandy Gillett
- 31 - Bev Wooton

December Anniversaries

- 21 - Tom & Cyndy Jones (51 years)



Organ Renovation Nears Completion

The restoration of the organ is nearing completion. All the pipes and mechanism has been reinstalled in the church. Parsons is now working on the final tuning and voicing of each pipe.

On Thursday morning, Alden got a taste of the sound of the newly restored organ. His delight was obvious. He commented "I have never heard the organ sound like this before!" We could be using the organ again sometime in the next couple of weeks.

Check the Organ page on the website for more pictures and information: <https://www.epcbergen.org/organ>



Registration is non-refundable.

Samuel's Grande Manor
8750 Main St.
Williamsville, NY 14221

Questions or dietary restrictions? Please call or text Laurie Rudolph at 585-813-8770 or email laurie@carolmcleodministries.com.

Please return this portion to Laurie Rudolph 8536 Slusser Rd Batavia, NY 14020

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Please Check one:

- ____ cash
- ____ check (made payable to Laurie Rudolph)
- ____ Venmo @Laurie-Rudolph-2

Number attending _____x\$40 each

Total amount paid _____



Poinsettia Order Form

Last day to order is November 26, 2023

Every year at this time, you are given the opportunity to purchase a Poinsettia plant in memory or in honor of a loved one. These flowers are then used by the church to decorate the sanctuary for the Christmas Season. After the Christmas Sunday morning service, you are encouraged to take your plant(s) home with you.

Please fill out this form and give, along with your payment for your flower(s), to the administrative assistant or place it in her mailbox. If paying by check, please make out to BEPC and put "flowers" in the memo line.

Name: _____

CHOICES:

My Choice is (please check):	How Many	Total Due:
6" Red @ \$ 6.95 ea	_____	\$ _____
6" Pink @ \$ 6.95 ea	_____	\$ _____
6" White @ \$ 6.95 ea	_____	\$ _____
8" Red @ \$16.00 ea	_____	\$ _____
8" Pink @ \$16.00 ea	_____	\$ _____
8" White @ \$16.00 ea	_____	\$ _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____





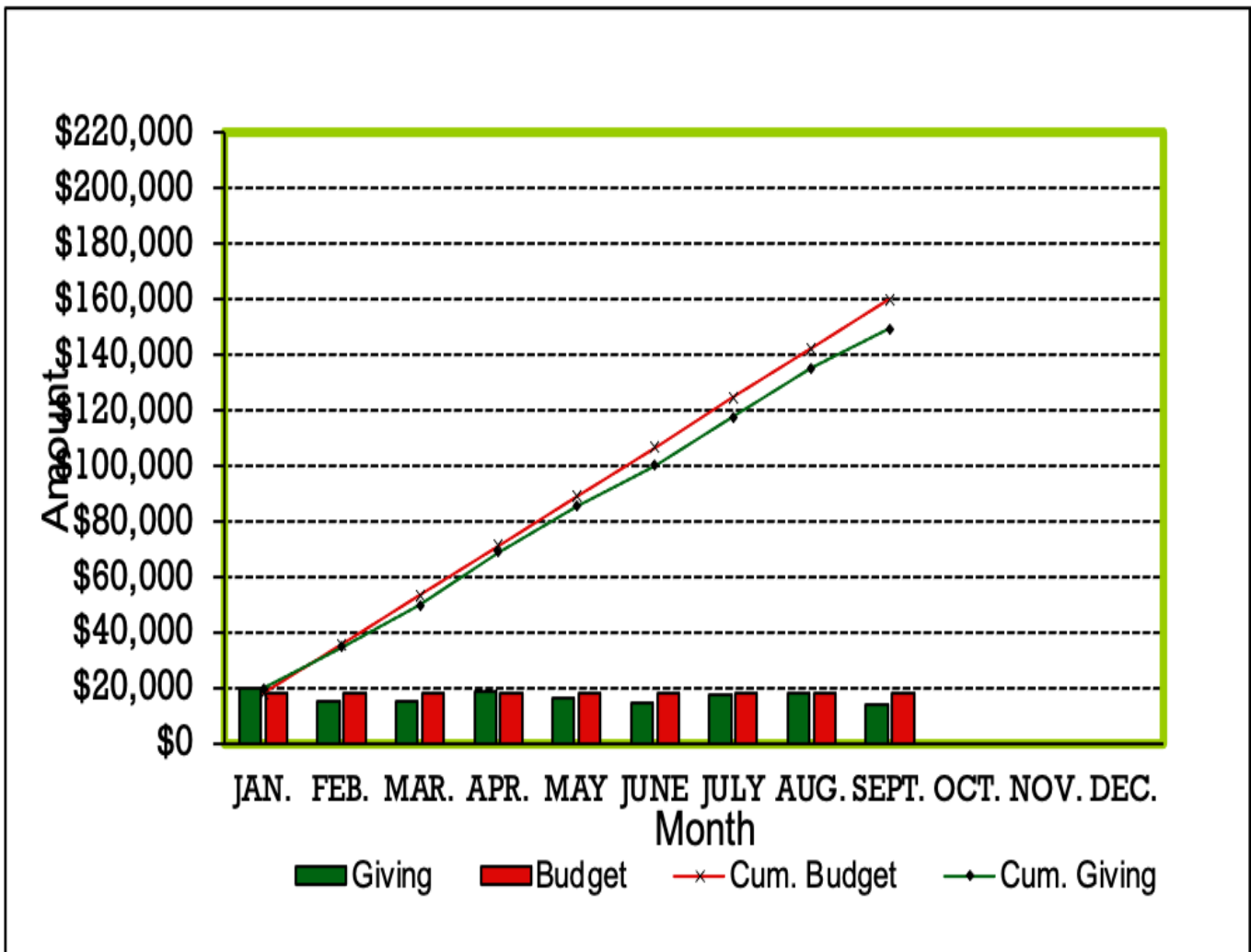
Church Finances

September 2023

"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need."

Malachi 3:10

This September was, financially, the "perfect storm" for BEPC, and not in a good way. Giving was low, \$14,031 (the lowest this year by several hundred dollars), and expenses were very high, \$23,529 (by far the highest of the year and one of the highest for several years). That led to the need for a large withdrawal of \$12,000 from the AIF to enable us to pay the bills. Being the end of a quarter, the bills for September called for the quarterly payments to all our foreign missions, the EPC payments, the Pastor's pension plan and health reimbursement plans, and the bill for the summer's VBS program. This large draw on the AIF has brought this reserve fund down to a very low level, one not likely to fill the needs later this year. We do have other sources of funding we can call on if needed to get us through to next year. And, both October and December this year are five-Sunday months – always a good thing for our Sunday collections!



MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2023

OPERATING FUND

Income

Sunday offering:	\$9,625.00
Net Online Offering:	\$1,399.16
<i>*note – online offering reflects \$42.53 fee taken from gross donations from the vendor before deposit</i>	
Amortized one-time gifts:	\$3,007.00

<i>Total New Receipts</i>	<i>\$14,031.16</i>
<i>Opening Balance (from previous month)</i>	<i>\$723.63</i>
Total Funds Available (opening balance + new receipts)	\$14,754.79

Expenses

Gross Expenditures for the month	\$23,560.16
Line Item Paybacks received this month that reduce expenses	
• Janitorial Supply	\$31.41

Net Expenditures for the Month	\$23,528.75
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Accumulated Income Fund Transfer Needed to cover Expenditures	\$3,007.00
Extra Monthly Amortized Gift Overdrawn from the AIF	\$8,993.00
Monthly Amortized Gift Left in Accumulated Income Fund	\$0.00

OPERATING FUND BALANCE **\$219.04**

DESIGNATED FUND

Opening Balance (from previous month)	\$11,974.16
New Designated Receipts	\$1,270.00
Total Designated Expenditures	\$1,412.23

DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE **\$11,831.93**

TOTAL CHECKBOOK BALANCE (Operating Fund + Designated Fund) **\$12,050.97**

OTHER FUND ACTIVITY

Accumulated Income Fund

• September Withdrawal	-\$12,000.00
Current Balance (9/30/2023)	\$4,357.90

Organ Fund

• September Donations	\$100.00
Current Balance (9/30/2023)	\$48,773.16