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### From the Pastor

We took a few months off from the evangelism series, but I wanted to return to that for this column. So far, we have looked at direct evangelism, apologetics, and relationship evangelism. For this column, I want to cover service evangelism.

So what is service evangelism? The best verses to describe is probably Matthew 5:15-16: "Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." One of the things that has always impressed me about Bergen Evangelism is its servant heart, and they can be seen in so many areas, both formal programs of our church, like Foodlink, but also how our church acts towards people on an everyday basis.

One of the neatest passages that has service evangelism within it is taken from Acts 9:36-43: "Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days, she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then, calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner."

Now, when we think of that passage, we think about Peter raising Tabitha from the dead, and that is something to think about and marvel at, but we often fail to see perhaps the more important part of the passage, and that is the type of person Tabitha was and the type of ministry that she had. "She was full of good works and charity." Also, when Peter came, her friends wanted to display to Peter the type of person that she was, so they displayed "tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them." Tabitha was a wonderful example whose life was touched by Jesus, and she used her gifts and talents to touch peoples' lives with the kindness her Savior had shown to her. She should be an encouragement to all those who have the spiritual gift of being a servant.

Now, there is a word of caution. Servant evangelism is great, but when everything is said and done, it is not enough to just simply have good works. They must also be accompanied by someone explaining the Gospel. Romans 10:17 tells us that "so faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." That is not to say that it necessarily has to come from the person who is the servant, even though that helps tremendously, but it can often be coupled with someone whose gift of evangelism is more direct, or you could combine it with community evangelism (inviting people to the church family, which we will cover in a few months).

There might be a tendency to look down on people with servant evangelism as sometimes, they are not as vocal about the Gospel, but as a church family, we must never take them for granted, as we see them as an integral part of not only our church, but our efforts to evangelize people within our community. In an age that has increasingly become skeptical about Christianity, those with the gift of servant evangelism often soften hearts so that they are more open to the Gospel. We should always pray for, be thankful, and encourage servant evangelism within our church family and the church around the world.

*Pastor Brandt*



*Please join us for a  
**Concert Series**  
 celebrating restoration of our  
 1907 Viner & Son pipe organ!*



Sunday, February 4, 2024  
 6pm:  
**Organ Rededication and  
 Hymn Sing**



Sunday, March 10, 2024  
 6pm:  
**Roberts Wesleyan Brass  
 Quintet**



Sunday, April 14, 2024  
 6pm:  
**Jaclyn Breeze, flute**



Saturday, April 27, 2024  
 6pm:  
 Special Door of Hope event  
 featuring  
**George Collichio, guitar**



Sunday, May 5, 2024  
 6pm:  
 Organ recital featuring  
 students from the  
**Eastman School of Music**

## **TAG ~ Teens After God**

### Are you Casting Seeds on Good Soil?

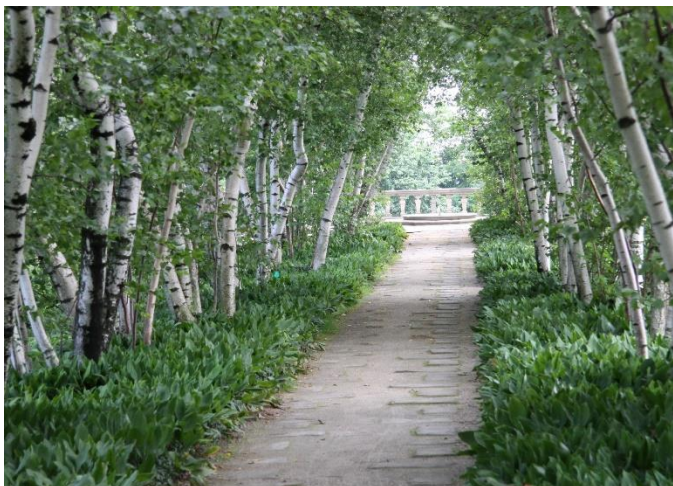
TAG is going great, except for the interruptions to our regularly scheduled Sunday youth group caused by the Buffalo Bills success this season. Now that the Bills are out of it 😞, our teens can once again focus on their spiritual development. Our group continues to work through the book of Luke during our time of bible reading and reflection each week. We read and discussed Luke Chapter 8 verses 1-15 at our most recent meeting. Take a moment to read through those verses. As I have reported previously in my monthly newsletter, each week I challenge the teens to come up with a real-life application of the scripture read, which is relevant to them at this time in their lives. What the teens took away from our evening reflection was, "As Christians, we should cast seeds liberally, while continuing to grow in our own faith and spiritual maturity through daily prayer, bible study, reflection, and keeping God's commandments."

Our TAG youth group will be meeting on the following Sundays from 6:00-8:00PM: January 28<sup>th</sup>, February 11<sup>th</sup>, and February 25<sup>th</sup>. 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!



*TAG Teens Enjoying a Pizza Party at our  
 2023 Christmas Celebration*

## 2024 Lenten Study on Rest



**Living at peace with God, ourselves, and our world**

**Sundays, February 18 to March 24, 6 PM**

Almost everyone is busy – many times too busy. Work, whether in the marketplace or the home, seems to demand so much of our time and our strength. Even on our days off from work, we find them filled with activities – our calendars are overflowing. Sometimes even our worship and Bible study times seem rushed. We focus on being efficient – making the most of our time. The pattern given in Scripture is very different than this. We are called to Sabbath, not as a day of doing nothing, but as a lifestyle of resting in God’s provision for us.

### Topics:

February 18: Rest from work

February 25: Rest from busyness

March 3: Rest from acquiring

March 10: Rest for our mind (no study, we will attend the concert with *Roberts Wesleyan Brass Quintet*)

March 17: Rest from distractions

March 24: Rest from concerns

This is not going to be a book study. Rather we will be using a devotional guide with five Scripture readings and thoughts for the week before each Sunday study.

For more information:

<https://www.willhoft.net/bible-study/rest>

## Lenten Offering: A Time to Give

During Lent, as we meditate on Christ’s sacrifice for us, our church family traditionally selects a mission that we will financially support. This year, the Evangelism and Missions Committee has selected the family we support in Southeast Asia. Working through the Coalition for Christian Outreach, they offer campus-centered evangelism and Bible study. More information is included in the E&M report elsewhere in this newsletter as they have been named the Mission of the Month. We are arranging to have a live interview at the conclusion of the worship service on February 11. Our offering will help fill a shortfall in their regular support.

You can contribute throughout Lent through regular options: online, the offering box at church, or in the mail. Please mark your contributions Lenten Offering.

## What is Lent?

Lent is a period of 40 days before Easter when Christians have historically made a special effort to remember the sufferings of Jesus. Many Christians give up a specific item for Lent as a way of reminding themselves that Christ gave up heaven to come to this earth to live, suffer, and die for our sins. (Philippians 2:6-8)



Lent has often been viewed as a “should” in the Christian life. However, many Christians from different traditions are learning to appreciate the gift of God’s Son more through this ancient practice. Traditionally, people give up a food item for Lent, often meat, but there are countless choices. You could give up some form of entertainment. Many in our modern age are giving up social media, either completely or one specific app. One interesting idea is taking time to develop a new habit such as Scripture reading or serving in a ministry. Although you are not giving up a specific thing, you are giving up time for this new activity.

One last idea, if you don’t think you can give something up for the entire period of Lent, do it for just one week or one day a week. Don’t make Lent legalistic, make it a joy as you remember the love of Christ for you.



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## Fellowship

We hope Happy February! Use this month as an opportunity to share God's love to our church family and our community.

Again, many thanks to those that helped with the lunch before the Annual Meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup>.

And thank you for your patience waiting for the fellowship lunches to start. We are taking a few minutes after the service to fellowship in the sanctuary with those that are not staying for the lunch. So, enjoy visiting and please give us about 15 minutes to get the food ready before lunch begins.

On Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, there will be a special dedication of the refurbished organ and a hymn sing. The Fellowship Committee, with much help (and thank you in advance for all the promised cookie donations), will host a reception in the fellowship hall, following the program.

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

Thank you,  
Fellowship Team

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## Deacons

The Deacons were saddened by the loss of Joan Dermody & Debbie McAllister after six years of enthusiastic, faithful service. Our thanks and appreciation to them. We look forward to having Wendy Caccamise join us.

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## Evangelism & Mission Update

### Mission Moments and More

Weather and illness combined to force Jessica Maskell to cancel her visit to us in January to talk about the Young Lives ministry that our church supports. We are working to get her rescheduled so we can all learn more about this ministry to teen moms here in Genesee County. In the meantime, ask Sandy Partridge about Young Lives. Sandy is a mentor in the program.

Therefore, for February we may have two Mission Moments. On February 11 we will connect with David, who is working in Southeast Asia. He is designated to receive the Lenten offering, so you will want to attend on

Feb. 11 to have the latest information about his work with college students and others. A copy of his latest newsletter is on display on the Missions Board at the entrance to the Fellowship Hall. Check it out. We do not share much information about him for security reasons within the country he is working. In addition, we will get Jessica rescheduled for another Sunday in January.

### Meeting rescheduled

Weather also forced us to cancel the January E&M meeting. It has been rescheduled for Sunday, Feb. 4 after the worship service. We always welcome new members who have a heart for serving others and spreading the good news of Jesus.

### Concert Series

The wonderful concert series planned by Alden Snell is a great opportunity to invite your friends to our church. The series kicks off with the dedication of the organ at 6 pm Sunday, Feb. 4. The music-filled event can be the setting to introduce your friends to the warmth and love of our church family. We view the concerts as our church's gift to the community, but we know that the real gift is to share the love of Jesus.

We are hoping to provide some rides for folks who may want to attend. If you know of anyone who needs a ride, please call the church office. And if you would be willing to provide a ride, tell Susan at the office as well.

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## Mending Pants as Well as Hearts

Sewing with a Purpose is continuing to provide light repairs for your torn or worn clothing items. Drop your item in the box by Susan's office. Be sure to attach your name, contact info and what actually needs to be done to fix your clothing item.



## Calendar

**Online calendar:** [tinyurl.com/29zhbnbr](https://tinyurl.com/29zhbnbr)

### Weekly/Monthly

- First Sunday of the month - Communion
- First Sunday of the month – Salvation Army 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 (Mar 5<sup>th</sup> is the last scheduled day for this study)
- Wednesdays, 6:00 pm – Prayer
- 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays @ 5 pm - Preaching Class
- 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 (February 24 this month)

### Other Events in February

- Sunday, Feb 4 @ 12:15 pm - Fellowship Committee meeting
- Sunday, Feb 4 @ 12:15 pm - E&M meeting
- Sunday, Feb 4 @ 6 pm - Organ Dedication Recital
- Saturday, Feb 10 @ 12 pm - Private function in F.H.
- Wednesday, Feb 14 - Ash Wednesday
- Wednesday, Feb 14 - Valentine’s Day
- Wednesday, Feb 14 @ 7 pm - Session meeting
- Sunday, Feb 18 @ 12:15 - E&M meeting
- Sunday, Feb 18 - @ 6 pm - Lenten Bible Study
- Monday, Feb 19 - President’s Day - Office closed
- Sunday, Feb 25 @ 12:15 pm - Worship Committee mtg
- Sunday, Feb 25 @ 6 pm - Lenten Bible Study
- Tuesday, Feb 27 @ 7 pm - Deacons meeting



## Eagle Star Visit

Gary of Eagle Star shows off the cloth bag Faith Willhoft made for his Christmas present. The veterans were full of gratitude when they received bags filled with handmade hats, gloves, razors, calendars, pens and snacks.

## Anniversaries & Birthdays

### February Birthdays

- 2 - Dave Wright
- 2 - Bill Engle
- 4 - Robert Cosgrove
- 7 - Emily Caccamise
- 8 - Rebecca McNear
- 9 - Joan Edwards
- 13 - Renee Berggren
- 16 - Danielle Foeller
- 18 - Christin Snell
- 19 - Wendy Hutchurson
- 20 - Marty Hammack
- 26 - Cyndy Jones

### February Anniversaries

- 16 - David & June Hahn (61 years)

### March Birthdays

- 4 - Nancy Charcholla
- 4 - Judy Bailey
- 4 - Debbie McAllister
- 8 - Susan Brownell
- 10 - Stu Freeman
- 18 - Kay Harmon
- 21 - Faith Willhoft
- 24 - Sue Kobel
- 26 - Jacob Buckland-Seward
- 26 - Matthew Foeller
- 29 - Paul Lattimer
- 29 - Al Ruge

### March Anniversaries

- 29 - David & Chris Wright (16 years)





# Church Finances

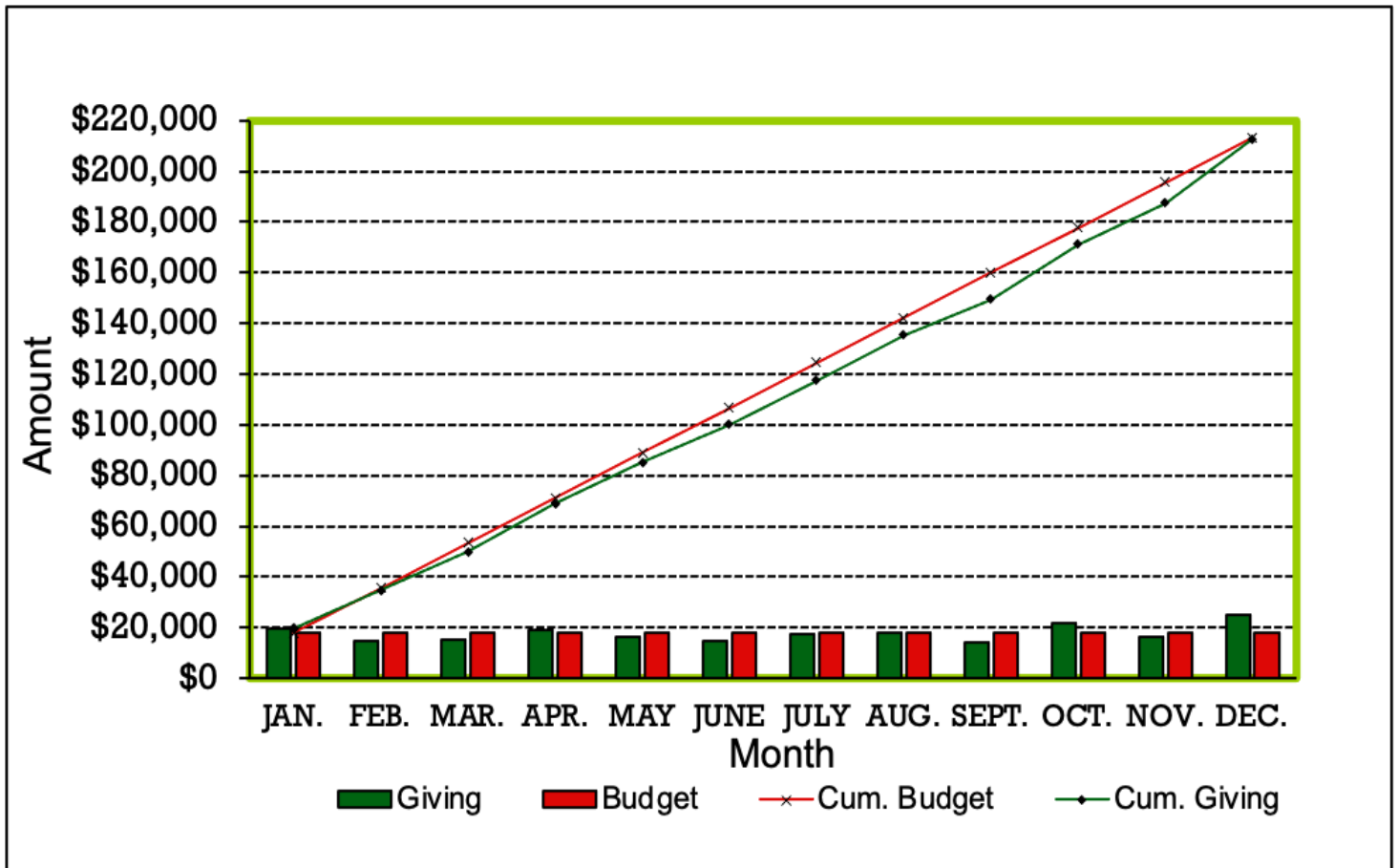
## December 2023

*"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*

December's giving was extraordinary, \$25,281 – the greatest monthly financial support of a budget by about \$5,000 our church has ever experienced. Expenses were high as expected for every December; nevertheless, no funds from the AIF were needed to pay the bills.

December's giving continued the very good level of budget financial support we have seen throughout 2023. Thus, this year's total giving also broke the record for annual support of a budget with a total of \$213,408. It is also rewarding to note that 2023 was the year the church completed its successful financial support of our Organ Renovation efforts with a total giving over the past two years of over \$71,000. Praise the Lord!



**MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – DECEMBER 2023**

**OPERATING FUND**

**Income**

Sunday offering:	\$17,655.00
Net Online Offering:	\$4,618.73
<i>*note – online offering reflects \$79.85 fee taken from gross donations from the vendor before deposit</i>	
Amortized one time gifts:	\$3,007.00

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<i>Total New Receipts</i>	\$25,280.73
<i>Opening Balance (from previous month)</i>	\$5,945.32
<b>Total Funds Available (opening balance + new receipts)</b>	<b>\$31,226.05</b>

**Expenses**

Gross Expenditures for the month	\$25,522.72
Line Item Paybacks received this month that reduce expenses	
• None	\$0.00

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<b>Net Expenditures for the Month</b>	<b>\$25,522.72</b>
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Accumulated Income Fund Transfer Needed to cover Expenditures	\$0.00
Extra Monthly Amortized Gift Overdrawn from the AIF	\$0.00
Monthly Amortized Gift Left in Accumulated Income Fund	\$3,007.00

**OPERATING FUND BALANCE **\$2,696.33****

**DESIGNATED FUND**

Opening Balance (from previous month)	\$10,401.78
New Designated Receipts	\$2,441.93
Total Designated Expenditures	\$1,370.94

**DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE **\$11,472.77****

**TOTAL CHECKBOOK BALANCE (Operating Fund + Designated Fund) **\$14,169.10****

**OTHER FUND ACTIVITY**

**Accumulated Income Fund**

• December Withdrawal	-\$0.00
<b>Current Balance (12/31/2023)</b>	<b>\$3,168.66</b>

**Gillette Fund**

• December Withdrawal – Dave Hahn	-\$3,000.00
<b>Current Balance (12/31/2023)</b>	<b>\$205,456.35</b>

