
From the Pastor

I apologize that I was working on an article and was not able to finish due to Lydia coming unexpectedly, so I wanted to share an encouraging article by Aaron Earls on Lifeway:

7 Encouraging Trends of Global Christianity in 2022

By Aaron Earls

As you serve in your local church, it can be easy to forget the global nature of Christianity. Even connections to missionaries or trips to other countries don't fully display the magnitude of the modern-day church.

1. Religious faith is growing faster than the irreligious.

Particularly in the West, it can seem like secularism is growing and people are leaving the church and the faith. Globally, that is not the case at all.

While the number of all religious people is growing at a 1.27% rate, the growth rate of nonreligionists is less than half that—0.52%, well below the total population growth percentage. In particular, the number of atheists is almost stagnant, only growing 0.18% per year.

There are fewer atheists around the world today (147 million) than in 1970 (165 million), and the Gordon-Conwell report expects the number to continue to decline into 2050.

2. Christianity continues to grow.

Not only is religion growing overall, but Christianity specifically is growing. With a 1.17% growth rate, almost 2.56 billion people will identify as a Christian by the middle of 2022. By 2050, that number is expected to top 3.33 billion.

Catholics remain the largest Christian group with almost 1.26 billion adherents, but the two fastest growing Christian groups around the world are

evangelicals (1.8% growth rate) and charismatics (1.88%).

The dramatic global growth for charismatic Christians is particularly noteworthy. In 1900, less than 1 million people around the world identified as Pentecostal or charismatic. By 2050, that number will top 1 billion.

3. Growth is fastest in the global South.

The places where Christianity is growing the fastest? Africa (2.77% growth) and Asia (1.50%). In 2000, 814 million Christians lived in Europe and North America, while 660 million Christians called African and Asia home. This year, 838 million live in the global North, while almost 1.1 billion Christians live in Africa and Asia alone. In 1900, twice as many Christians lived in Europe than in the rest of the world combined. Today, more Christians live in Africa than any other continent. By 2050, Africa will be home to almost 1.3 billion Christians, while Latin America (686 million) and Asia (560 million) will both have more than Europe (497 million) and North America (276 million).

4. Christianity continues to spread out.

As Christianity continues to grow in the global South, it is also becoming increasingly less concentrated. In 1900, 95% of all Christians lived in a majority Christian country. In 2022, that number has fallen to 53.7%. By 2050, most Christians (50.4%) around the world will live in non-majority Christian nations.



Phone: (585) 494-1251 email: fpbergen@gmail.com

Pastor Brandt Hammack: Brandthammack@hotmail.com

(585-732-6163) Website: www.bergenepc.com

You can also find us on Facebook.

Office Hours:

Mon, Wed, Fri: 12 - 3:30 pm

Tue & Thurs: 12 - 4 pm

Pastor's Hours:

Tuesday – Thursday

9:30 -noon (flexible)

5. The percentage of non-Christians who know a Christian is climbing.

With more Christians living outside of Christian nations, more non-Christians know a Christian. In 1900, only 5.4% of non-Christians could identify a Christian they knew. That percentage has risen to 18.3% today. By 2050, 1 in 5 non-Christians (20%) will know a follower of Jesus and have the opportunity to hear the gospel from them.

As a result, the percentage of unevangelized people around the world continues to fall. In 1900, more than half of the world's population (54.3%) was unevangelized. That has now fallen to 28%.

6. More than 90 million Bibles will be printed this year.

As Christianity continues to grow, the printing of Bibles continues to grow along with it. This year, 93 million copies of God's word will be printed, up from 54 million in 2000 and 5 million in 1900. By 2025, 100 million Bibles will be printed each year.

Currently, almost 1.8 billion Bibles are in circulation around the world. That will climb to 2.3 billion by 2050. God's Word continues to expand into new languages in new and exciting ways, including pastors and theologians in India developing and printing a [first-of-its-kind Telugu study Bible](#) for the nearly 90 million Telugu speakers in the country.

7. Fewer Christians are dying for their faith.

In 2000, the Status of Global Christianity marked a rate of 1.6 million Christians martyrs over a 10-year period—the high mark of their report. In 2022, they estimate the decade long number to be 900,000. Each death is a tragedy, but any improvement is worth noting.

The 10-year trends do not negate year-over-year numbers, like the [increase in martyrs for 2021](#) as recorded by Open Doors' latest report. Regardless of the current numbers or trends, churches should continue praying for persecuted believers around the world.

Pastor Brandt



Welcome!!!

Lydia Jane Hammack

January 30, 2022

At 6:21 am

6 lbs., 13 oz.; 20 inches long



Fellowship

Brrr... We hope that you are all well and WARM!

We celebrated the upcoming birth of baby Lydia, along with her parents Pastor Brandt and Marty, and brothers Noah, Jeremiah, and Jonah, at a baby shower held on Sunday, January 16, 2022. There was much food, fellowship, and presents. Many thanks to all that helped and donated gifts, food, and help. Special thanks to Bethany Berggren and Renee Berggren for their creative decorating ideas and all their willing helpers, and to Dave Wright and Rob Willhoft for their emergency visits the day before to help with frozen water and heating issues! Rob also took many wonderful photos of the event. It was a beautiful occasion.

Many thanks to David Hahn for getting us a new Bunn coffee maker! No more long waits at the antique Mr. Coffee machine.

Again, since Covid and other winter illnesses prevent us from fellowshipping in person as we once did, remember to find special ways of staying in touch with each other. A special card, phone call, or goodies are some ideas to share with each other.

Stay safe and well.

The Fellowship Team

Eunie Ely

Helen Hill

Diane White

Kevin Hollenbeck

Marty Hammack

Sandy Partridge

Delores Seward

Pam Patmore



Children's Minister

We continue to search for a **Children's Minister** to outreach to children and families both in the church and in the community. Details can be found at:

<http://www.bergenepc.com/employment.html>

Operation Christmas Child

I know you are all thinking 'we just finished packing boxes'!!

You're right, we did. This year we are encouraging the congregation to shop early so come November we will have a great assortment of items to pack in the shoeboxes.

Each month we will have different suggested items to donate (Remember items need to be NEW- not used)

January we asked for **hats, gloves, scarves** – keep them coming, the weather is still wintry so look out for clearance items in the next 1-2 months

February we are looking for girls hair accessories: ties, ribbons, bows, scrunchies, etc.; jewelry (bracelets, necklaces), small purses; boy's bandanas, baseball caps, leather or paracord bracelets, keychains, carabiners, drawstring bags etc.

Items needed to work on various crafts throughout the year:

- Greeting cards and cardstock to make notebooks
- Prescription bottles with labels cleanly removed (small/large)
- Clear plastic bags that your prescriptions come in
- Marbles
- Beads, plastic cording to make necklaces

There is a box for donated items outside the office. Thank you for your donations.

If you would like to help make crafts or have ideas, feel free to talk with Julie Foeller.

Community Events

Wednesday night community dinners are held at the Bergen Methodist Church. Please call the Methodist church office at 494-1312 to sign up if you need a home delivery. Dine-in begins at 5:30 pm. Everyone is welcome.

TAG ~ Teens After God New Year!!!!

The start of the New Year has been bumpy for our regularly scheduled TAG youth group, just as it has been for many of us during the COVID era the last two years. After having to cancel a couple of meetings due to kids and leaders quarantining, we were finally able to meet again on January 16th. That evening we read and discussed Luke, Chapter 1. We spent time reflecting on the different responses Mary and Zechariah had to the appearance of an angel and a message from God. The teens felt that our response to God's call should reflect Mary's response to the angel, *"I am the servant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word."* After our bible reflection time, we played an exciting game of Nerf, had a time of prayer, and then headed home just before the big snowfall arrived.

Our TAG youth group will be meeting on the following Sundays from 6:00-8:00PM in the Teen Room. January 30th, February 13th, and February 27th. 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!



*Girls Rule! TAG Nuke 'em Game -
December 2021*

Evangelism & Missions

Mission of the Month for February: Uli in Mexico

Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church has been supporting Jose Fernandez, better known to us as Uli, for more than two decades. Uli was originally from Eastern Europe. Our church became acquainted with him when he was a student at Elim Bible College. He was called by God to evangelize in Mexico, so he took on a Spanish name (Jose) but we have continued to call him Uli, based on his given name of Ulianov.

If you have been attending our church for a while, you are aware that he and his wife, Dena, and two children, have conducted a street ministry and were leading a small congregation in an impoverished section of Mexico City.

Through God's provision, they were able to purchase some property and began construction of a church, which we have helped to finance. Construction was interrupted by the COVID pandemic. During the last few years, Uli's messages have been shared worldwide via the internet. They have had a remarkable number of folks who have signed on to hear the life-changing message of the gospel as preached by Uli.

We are arranging a Skype interview with Uli during our worship service on Feb. 20 when you will be able to hear directly from Uli about how God is moving in this ministry and how you can pray specifically for Uli, his family, and their continued efforts to share the good news in Mexico City.

Things you can pray for:

- That many will come to know salvation through Jesus through the messages shared by Uli each week.
- That technology will continue to work properly to allow the Word to go out.
- That God will protect Uli and his family with good health.
- That funding will be available to upgrade technology to assure high quality presentations.

Prayer Needs for All Babies Cherished



All Babies Cherished, a pregnancy support program in Batavia, was our Mission of the Month in January, which included Sanctity of Life Sunday. Susan Sherman, executive director of All Babies Cherished, shared an update of ABC's activities, as well as some specific prayer requests.

Her biggest news was that ABC has been given a house near their offices on Ellicott Street in Batavia. It is being developed to be a maternity home to house some of their clients. Many of their clients have no permanent housing.

Specific prayer requests include:

- A smooth transition for the opening of the maternity home.
- The right couple to be found to become house parents in the new home.
- Volunteers to assist with opening the home and other programs of the ministry.
- Fundraising. Covid has disrupted ABC's normal fundraising programs, but so far God has continued to meet financial needs. Such a praise!
- Salvation for the clients who come to ABC. That they see and feel love, and come to know Jesus as Savior.
- Donated baby items and clothing up to size 7-8. Diapers, wipes, any baby items.

Keep All Babies Cherished and its ministry to pregnant women and moms with young children in your prayers. For more information

Thank you note from Byron-Bergen Superintendent

Our congregation was given the name of a large family with several children in the school. Using E&M funds from our budget, we provided gifts for the family. Special thanks to Julie Foeller for doing a great job of shopping. The following letter was received at the end of December:

Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Re: Holiday Community Service Donation

(please see the rest of the letter on the following page):

Dear Parishioners,

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your kind donation of "adopting" a large family to give presents to for the 2021 Holiday Community Service effort. The generosity of your congregation is wonderful!!! It is so nice to see people who care and want to give back to their community. On behalf of the Byron-Bergen learning community, we appreciate your efforts to help our students "*believe in the magic of the season!*" Our sincere wishes for a healthy, wonderful 2022. Thank you very much.

With kindest regards,

Patrick McGee, Superintendent of Schools.

(Thank you so much for your kindness!-Patrick McGee)

Foodlink

Feeding the Hungry Who Come to our Door

Monthly FoodLink distributions resume in March through June on the 3rd THURSDAY of the month. Our church serves a vital need as a distribution site in our area of WNY.



Volunteers are essential to make the distribution successful. We are a walk-through site, so volunteers help the clients pick up their food from tables or pallets. Young volunteers can help carry food to clients' vehicles and everyone can smile and chat with the clients to show the love of Jesus.

The truck with the food arrives at 3 pm, which is when volunteers are needed. The distribution usually takes about three hours. Even if you can't stay the whole time, please come anyway. Students can get credit for volunteer hours required for some school classes. Help is especially needed for cleanup, so you can come late if you have a prior commitment. Recruit your friends!

After a winter break, Foodlink will resume in March. Here are the dates for this spring/summer: March 17, April 21, May 19 & June 16.

Let Gregg McAllister know if you can help: 585-738-6141 or greggmca@verizon.net

Anniversaries & Birthdays

February Birthdays

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



February Anniversaries

- 6 - Vincent & Adrienne Cali
- 16 - David & June Hahn

March Birthdays

- 4 - Nancy Charcholla
- 4 - Debbie McAllister
- 5 - Delaney Baker
- 8 - Susan Brownell
- 10 - Stewart Freeman
- 15 - Janice Langdon
- 18 - Kay Harmon
- 21 - Faith Willhoft
- 24 - Sue Kobel
- 26 - Jacob Buckland-Seward
- 26 - Matthew Foeller
- 29 - Paul Lattimer
- 29 - Allen Ruge
- 30 - Elizabeth Minniear

March Anniversaries

- 19 - Bruce & Cathy Glucksman
- 29 - Dave & Christ Wright
- 30 - Marty & Jean Mucher

Prayers

Those serving as Missionaries:

- Sarah Speer at the Kimia Center for Lepers in the Congo
- Jose Ulinov "Uli" Fernandez in Mexico
- Arber "Berti" Berhami with Campus Crusade in Albania
- Jesse vonBergen ministry to the Middle East through Arabic Bible Outreach Ministry
- Teachers in Sierra Leone with EduNations
- Tim Riley with Genesee County Young Life

Those fighting cancer:

Diane

Bryan Dzbia

Becky Thompson

Wendy Buckland

Amy - breast cancer

Nathan Longenecker - brain

Dan Forno

Stacy Cline

Elaine Malkani - Cyndy Jones' sister

Sharon - fighting colon cancer - Corky's friend,

Joe - vonBergen's grandson

Those with ongoing challenges and needs:

All those who have contracted COVID

Harriet Young (still in ICU, off ventilator but still facing several medical issues) (Neva Lattimer's aunt)

Christ Martz (eye issues)

Henry and Diane Hammack (Pastor Brandt's parents)

Marty's father, Gary Shaw



David Hahn

Rusty Breton (ALS)

Ritchie (Bruce Gluckman's brother-in-law)

Diane & Joe (vonBergen's daughter & grandson)

Jake & Michelle Buckland-Seward (custody battle)

Kate & baby Sophia

Other:

Our Church

Our Session & Deacons

Youth Leader, Joe Rebisz, and the youth of our church and our community

Worship Leader, Christin Snell and those who minister in music each Sunday

Christian Education, Evangelism & Missions, Finance, Nominating, Personnel, and Property Committees

Pray for the other local churches in our area (and your area too!)

The service members of the United States, as well as our veterans and their families

Our country's leaders and their advisors

A Peek at the Church Calendar

Opportunities for Service

Weekly

- Sunday, 9:15-10:15 – Sunday School
- Sunday, 10:30-11:45 – Morning Worship
- Communion on first Sunday of the month
- Food Collection on first Sunday of the month
- Sunday, 6:00-8:00 – TAG (see article)
- Wednesdays, 6:00 pm - Prayer for Door of Hope
- Thursday, 6:00-7:00 AM – Son Risers (continuing to meet on alternating Thursdays for breakfast and on ZOOM)

Other meetings

- February 9 - Sessions Meeting @ 7:00 pm
- February 20 - New Member Class
- February 21 - President's Day - no office hours
- February 25 - Newsletter Deadline

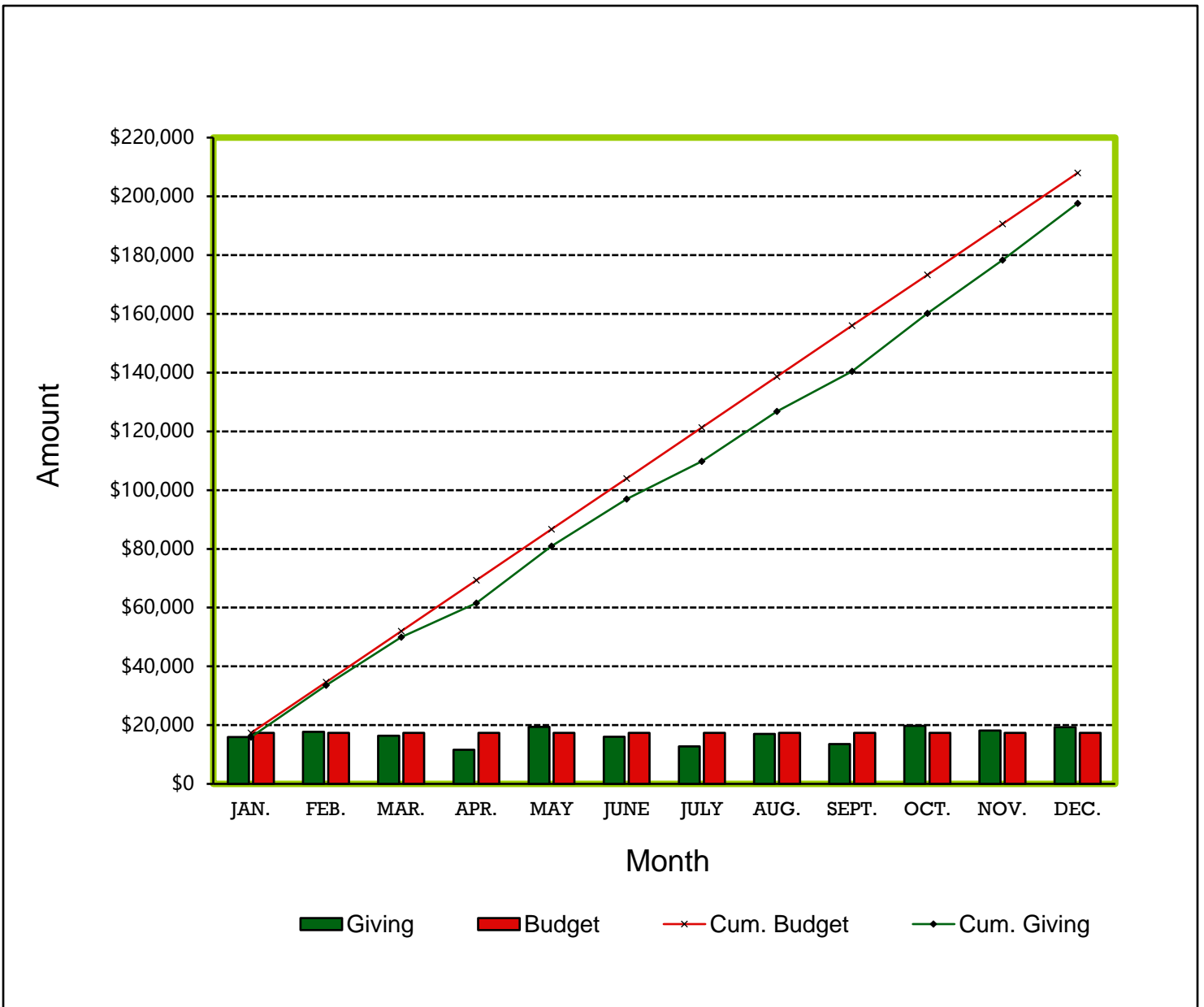
Church Finances

End-of-Year 2021

“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. [...] Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you.”

1 Chron. 29:14, 16

Giving for December was, again, very good, \$19,319, and \$2,000 above the monthly goal of \$17,331. This marks the third month in a row that giving has greatly exceeded our goal. For the year our giving has totaled \$198,539, far above 2020’s giving of \$181,754 and above most of the years in the past decade. *The financial support of our church by this congregation from before and through the pandemic has been extraordinary. In addition to this giving to support the budget a gift of \$1,000 for the Accumulated Income Fund was also received. We are blessed.*



MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – DECEMBER 2021
OPERATING FUND**Income**

Sunday offering:	\$14,352.00
Net Online Offering:	\$1,816.63
<i>*note – online offering reflects \$36.09 fee taken from gross donations from the vendor before deposit</i>	
Amortized one-time gifts:	\$3,150.00

<i>Total New Receipts</i>	\$19,318.63
<i>Opening Balance (from previous month)</i>	\$1,163.80
Total Funds Available (opening balance + new receipts)	\$20,482.43

Expenses

Gross Expenditures for the month	\$24,243.34
Line Item Paybacks received this month that reduce expenses	
• None	\$0.00

Net Expenditures for the Month	\$24,243.34
---------------------------------------	--------------------

Accumulated Income Fund Transfer Needed to cover Expenditures	\$3,150.00
Extra Monthly Amortized Gift Overdrawn from the AIF	\$4,850.00
Monthly Amortized Gift Left in Accumulated Income Fund	\$0.00

OPERATING FUND BALANCE **\$1,089.09**

DESIGNATED FUND

Opening Balance (from previous month)	\$15,267.23
New Designated Receipts	\$19,236.47
Total Designated Expenditures	\$9,513.46

DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE **\$24,990.24**

TOTAL CHECKBOOK BALANCE (Operating Fund + Designated Fund) **\$26,079.33**

OTHER FUND ACTIVITY**Accumulated Income Fund**

- For December expenses -\$8,000.00
- Contribution Deposit \$1,000.00

Current Balance (12/31/2021) **\$19,359.98**

Technology Reserve Fund

- Contribution Deposit \$750.00

Current Balance (12/31/2021) **\$2,887.60**

Gillette Fund

- Property -\$3,000.00

Current Balance (12/31/2021) **\$222,964.76**

Richards/Best Fund

- Organ -\$9,955.00

Current Balance (12/31/2021) **\$142,498.02**