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## From the Pastor

After finishing the sermon series on outreach and evangelization, I hope that what we learned from Scripture will stay with us, and so I think it is a healthy thing for us to continue to look at what I consider to be the six ways that we might be able to share our faith. Last month, we considered direct evangelism, and this month, I want us to consider apologetics which means defending the Christian faith.

Before we divide into apologetics, we must consider that there are two types of apologetics. There is classical apologetics and presuppositional apologetics. What's the difference? Classical apologetics deals with things primarily in striving to prove important things like the existence of God, the virgin birth, the resurrection of Christ, etc. According to Gotquestions.org, "Presuppositional apologetics is an approach to apologetics which aims to present a rational basis for the Christian faith and defend it against objections by exposing the logical flaws of other worldviews and hence demonstrating that biblical theism is the only worldview which can make consistent sense of reality."

There is sometimes arguments between those who hold to two different views, even within Presbyterian and "reformed" circles, with those within the classical camp talking about the need to defend the faith, while those who hold to presuppositional apologetics insist that without taking into account a person's worldview that needs to be challenged before launching into defending the faith.

So, where do I, as a pastor, fall under? Well, I can see the value in both classical and presuppositional apologetics. I probably lean towards presuppositional apologetics in this day and age. Why? Because in this day and age, if, for instance, you strive to prove one of the most important doctrines of the Bible, the resurrection of Christ, to a non-Christian, much of the time, they really

will not care. Shocking as it may seem, they won't even see it as relevant to their lives.

Why is that? Why would someone view the resurrection of Jesus as something that is not relevant to their lives? If you remember, a few months ago, we dealt with what academics call postmodernism, which is in almost every aspect of our lives. Within postmodernism, people view truth as being all-relative, so for instance, if the death and resurrection of Jesus means everything to me, others will often simply view it as my truth, but not truth for them. They are happy for me, but they don't see it as relevant to their lives.

What often is needed is challenging people of their worldview. This is what presuppositional apologetics does. Again, according to Gotquestions.org: "The presuppositional approach to apologetics calls for the Christian and non-Christian to engage in an internal examination of their respective worldview and thus determine whether or not they are internally consistent. The essence of presuppositional apologetics is an attempt to demonstrate that the non-Christian's worldview forces him to a state of subjectivity, irrationalism, and moral anarchy."

Since the unbeliever's worldview is objectively false, by necessity it contains demonstrable contradictions (e.g., he makes moral judgments, but he cannot account for moral absolutes without the Christian/theistic worldview). The believer, within the Christian framework, can account for things like rationality, logic, uniformity of nature, morality, science, etc., because the Christian worldview conforms to a transcendent reality."

Now, as I noted, postmodernism has switched to meta-modernism. Much of postmodernism is still present, but instead of saying there is no truth, people are now saying, there is a truth, and here is what it is. They still tend to devalue the importance of the truth of



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Tues & Thurs: 12 - 4 pm

Pastor's Hours:  
Tuesday - Thursday  
9:30 am - noon (flexible)

Christianity being relevant to their lives, but what people have become assured on is that there is an ethical truth, and this ethical truth often twists the Biblical view of creation and God's law into something they long it to be.

I personally think that meta-modernism opens the door for some amazing witnessing opportunities, but in order to do this, I think it starts with two vitally important things that we must accomplish. First, we need to completely and wholeheartedly understand that the Biblical view of living our lives is the best way of going about living, and that people living apart from Scripture are utterly and totally miserable. One only has to look at our world, especially social media, to see that this is the case. They will often strive to convince you that this is not true, but when one truly digs in, they will see a life crying out for meaning and purpose.

Secondly, it is important to know what the Bible teaches and know how to apply it in conversations. For instance, when we dealt with meta-modernism, we covered both that all of God's creation is good and the creation of mankind was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). We also noted that "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes" (Psalm 19:7-8).

When we combine these two, the knowledge of Scripture and the understanding that apart from a Biblical way of living brings nothing but misery, and we add in the importance of prayer and compassion for people, we are often able to lovingly question people how their life is going apart from God's Word. This can, and often does, lead to conversations where we are able to witness about the love of Jesus as found in the Gospel. Within that conversation, we can then often use classical apologetics, but as with every method of evangelizing, it often starts and ends in relationships in which we truly care about people, and we don't just use a method, but we seek to minister to the person.

One final note, if this method really interests you, I encourage you to read *Telling a Better Story: How to Talk about God in a Skeptical Age* by Joshua D. Chatraw. I will include it in the pastoral resources in the foyer area at church.

*Pastor Brandt*

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## Fellowship

Happy Fall to all of you!

We are continuing to share fellowship and refreshments after the Sunday service, in the Fellowship Hall. We will serve a light 'lunch' every other week and baked goods on the other weeks. Please come and share time with your church family.

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 brought food during our summer!

We served hot dogs again at the September Foodlink event. It was another beautiful day and the hot dogs were appreciated by many of the people attending. If you would like to help with grilling and/or serving hot dogs at the Foodlink events during October and November, please let us know.

We helped with the Deacon's "Celebrating Faithfulness" luncheon on Sunday September 24<sup>th</sup>. We were so blessed to be a part of this wonderful time to honor those in our church family that have served the Lord and our church for so many years. Again, many thanks to the Deacons and many others that helped us in the kitchen.

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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## HARVEST FEST

**October 31 at 6 pm**

Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church

38 S. Lake Ave

Join us for

\*Refreshments!

\*Candy!

\*Games!





# For Years of Faithful Service



On Sunday, September 24, a "Legacy Lunch" was held after the morning service. Sponsored by the Deacons, the goal was to honor the seniors in the church, and those who have been members the longest. Honorees were mentioned individually, including their unique contributions and positions. The purpose was to ponder the legacy these people are leaving and appreciate the years of faithful service they have poured into this church. The Fellowship Committee provided a tasty lunch, including a beautifully decorated cake from Greg'ry's Bakery.



At the conclusion of the luncheon, a special gift and framed certificate was presented to Tom Jones, in honor of his 34 years of serving as Financial Chairman. All those years, Tom wisely handled the church's finances with diligence and excellence.



The following persons were honored from most recent attenders, to the most years of church membership.

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Joan Edwards   | John Jessop       |
| Donna Lacey    | Helen Hill        |
| Barb Fasoldt   | Shirley vonBergen |
| Shirley Harris | Dick vonBergen    |
| Shirley Cudney | Nancy Charcholla  |
| Bev Wooton     | Delores Seward    |
| Joan Dermody   | Loretta Miller    |
| Cyndy Jones    | Craig Wilcox      |
| Tom Jones      | Fred Ely          |
| Corky Shaw     | Tracy Miller      |
| June Hahn      | Eleanor Bater     |
| David Hahn     | Bev Rogers        |
| Ann Johnson    | Eunie Ely         |



Bev Rogers and Eunie Ely are the longest-standing members -- joining the church in 1950, they've been members for 73 years.



## TAG ~ Teens After God

### Marshmallow Olympics and REVERB!!!!

TAG teens had a great school year kickoff on September 17<sup>th</sup> by participating in our semi-annual Marshmallow Olympics. After sharing the greatest blessing of their summer vacation, the teens were ready to get their game faces on. After the marshmallow basketball, marshmallow toss, marshmallow straw pickup, and marshmallow mouth stuff, David Snell went home as the champion of the day! The annual **REVERB** (formerly "Superbowl") youth event takes place in Rochester on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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. Over 1,000 teens will be attending and many will give their lives to the Lord for the first time. We will be traveling by bus with over 40 teens and leaders from our TAG group. Please pray for all the teens, leaders, and volunteers who will be attending the event. For more information about a teen attending Reverb please call or text Joe Rebisz 585-794-8295.

Our TAG youth group will be meeting on the following Sundays from 6:00-8:00: October 1<sup>st</sup> and October 15<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!



*Marshmallow Olympics - September 17,  
2023*

## Operation Christmas Child - 2023



### 'Sock'-tober



**We are requesting donations of socks for boys and girls ages 2-4, 5-9, and 10-14.**

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.

This year there are **three ways** you can participate:

- 1. Pack shoeboxes on your own at home.** Starting October 8, we will have empty shoeboxes available for you to take home. *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 and we will take to a drop-off site.
- 2. Purchase items for our Sunday School children to pack boxes.** For the month of October, we will be collecting socks. 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 12**

For more information, there will be an Operation Christmas Child display in the foyer starting October 8 - see Julie Foeller with any questions.



## Sewing With a Purpose

Sewing With A Purpose met on September 12th in the Fellowship Hall . The Sewing With A Purpose team of 10 amazing volunteers processed 83 pairs of fingerless gloves for Homeless Veterans. These gloves will be shared with the Veteran Ministry of our church and other homeless veteran services, such as Soldier On who help homeless veterans secure housing. Case Managers can offer these gloves to veterans being transported to medical appointments, apartment viewings, veteran benefit services appointments. Thank you team!

Sewing With A Purpose Team having fun and fellowship:



Attaching red rose for ladies' gloves



Attaching yarn to pairs of gloves

## Church's YouTube – 10,000 Views



On September 17<sup>th</sup> our church's YouTube channel reached 10,000 views. That's an average of about 50 views a week since we created the channel in October of 2019. Some people click and only watch a little, but we have about an average of about 19 hours of viewing per week. We are so grateful that we can minister to our "shut-ins" through this tool. We also hope that it is reaching those outside our church family with the Gospel of Christ.



**Uli Invited to Speak at Conference in Mexico**

This newsletter was just received from Uli, who is supported by our church as he ministers in Mexico:

Greetings!!

I had a wonderful time sharing with a group of Christian leaders at UNAM University, this a public university and it is considered the best in Mexico. It has 2 million students!



So, one day we had the training with the national leaders from several universities in Mexico. It was both in person and online with leaders all over the country. It was so exciting when I got invited to share testimonies and teach to this group of young leaders!

In Mexico it would be against the law to preach in a public university, but this group found a way around that law by meeting in one of the gardens.

I was able to share from my own personal experience how to bring more students to Christ, this is a new experience for me, and it was amazing talking with them, even sharing meals together, had a wonderful fellowship with this lovely group of young leaders, ready to preach the gospel inside universities in Mexico!

Prayer needs:

- The Lord's provision to continue the building project.
- For the church's outreach to continue to have a great impact in our community
- God's grace with local authorities.

Ulianov & Dina



Anna Valeria-Iseman, CEO of the Open Door Mission in Rochester shared an update on the mission's activities on Sunday during our worship service. The mission, now in its 70th year, has been supported by this church for most of those 70 years.

Recently, the mission has expanded its emergency shelters for men and women; offers transitional housing for women and children and 12-month recovery programs for persons struggling with addictions. The need has increased exponentially, she said.

As winter approaches, the mission is preparing for the increased demands on its services during the difficult cold weather. In particular, she asked us to pray for:

- Staff, because there are several open positions that need filling.
- Staff currently working, that as they get stretched thin, they can still minister with the love of Jesus.
- Clothing, especially for children. Supplies have been depleted due to the influx of migrants. Winter clothing is in critically short supply.

Please remember these prayer requests throughout the month.

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*We are tenants, not owners, of this "vineyard" — this earth, this life. God, as we live and work in your vineyard, teach us to cultivate love.*



## Foodlink



**Elizabeth was a helpful young volunteer during the September Foodlink distribution.**

### Numbers Growing for Foodlink Food

The September Foodlink distribution at our church brought the largest number of families seeking food. 241 families received a variety of foods. The families represented more than 700 individuals.

Many service organizations are finding increased demand for food and assistance as inflation has squeezed family's wallets and government assistance that was provided during the Covid pandemic has disappeared.

Thank you to the 40 volunteers who assisted with the distribution. Any food that is not distributed at the event is shared with local food pantries in communities adjacent to Bergen.

### Special Assistance to Salvation Army Food Pantry

Our church's monthly food collection for the Salvation Army food pantry in Batavia was been especially helpful in the last two weeks. Todd Rapp, who administers the pantry for the Salvation Army and spoke at our church in August, said they almost had to close the pantry when a food shipment was disrupted.

Food is in short supply, he said. Contributions from our church help close the gap. **Remember, we collect the food the first Sunday of every month, which is Oct. 1 this month.**

In addition, the Evangelism & Mission Committee directed to use \$500 from the Covid Relief Fund to assist the local Salvation Army during this shortfall.

## Calendar

Online calendar:  
[tinyurl.com/29zhbnbr](https://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
- 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 (October 28th this month)

### Other Events in October

- October 1 (Sun) - Fellowship meeting @ 12:15 pm
- October 1 (Sun) - Worship Committee @ 12:15 pm
- October 1 (Sun) - TAG
- October 3 (Tue) - Women's Bible Study @ 2 pm
- October 9 (Mon) - Columbus Day - No Office Hours
- October 11 (Wed) - Session @ 7:00 pm
- October 12 (Thurs) - Pastor Brandt @ Reformation Society
- October 13 (Fri) - Young Life Wyldlife Club @ 7 pm
- October 15 (Sun) - TAG
- October 17 (Tue) - Women's Bible Study @ 2 pm
- October 19 (Thurs) - Foodlink Event @ 4:00 pm
- October 22 (Sun) - Finance Team Mtg @ 12:15 pm
- October 22 (Sun) - E&M Meeting @ 12:15 pm
- October 24 (Tue) - Deacons @ 7:00 pm
- October 26 (Thurs) - Y L Wyldlife Club @ 7 pm
- October 29 (Sun) - Worship Committee meeting @ 12:15 pm
- October 31 (Tues) - Women's Bible Study @ 2 pm
- October 31 (Tue) - Harvest Festival @ 6:00 pm

# Anniversaries & Birthdays

## October Birthdays

- 6 - Debbie Sheldon
- 13 - Delores Seward
- 15 - Joan Dermody
- 16 - Chris Hollenbeck
- 18 - Mandy Wilson
- 25 - Richard vonBergen
- 25 - Dale White
- 26 - Maddie Buckland
- 30 - Ruth Morse
- 31 - Chad Caccamise
- 31 - Diane White

## October Anniversaries

- 1 - Jake and Michelle Buckland-Seward (7 years)
- 26 - Dick and Cheryl Saville (49 years)

## 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)



# Puzzle!

Jesus instructs us to give and serve. What does Proverbs 3:27 (NIV) tell us *not* to do? To find out, cross out all the following letters. Then write the remaining letters in order on the spaces below.

B J K Q X Z

BWJITJHQHOB LZD GBOOK

DKFQR OMTBHJOBSQEXZT

OKXWJHOBMIZTIJSDQKU

EWXBHEQNITKISIZNYOU

RPJZOWBEQRTOAXCZTXJ

DO NOT \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PROVERBS 3:27, NIV

Answer: Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act. Proverbs 3:27, NIV





# Church Finances

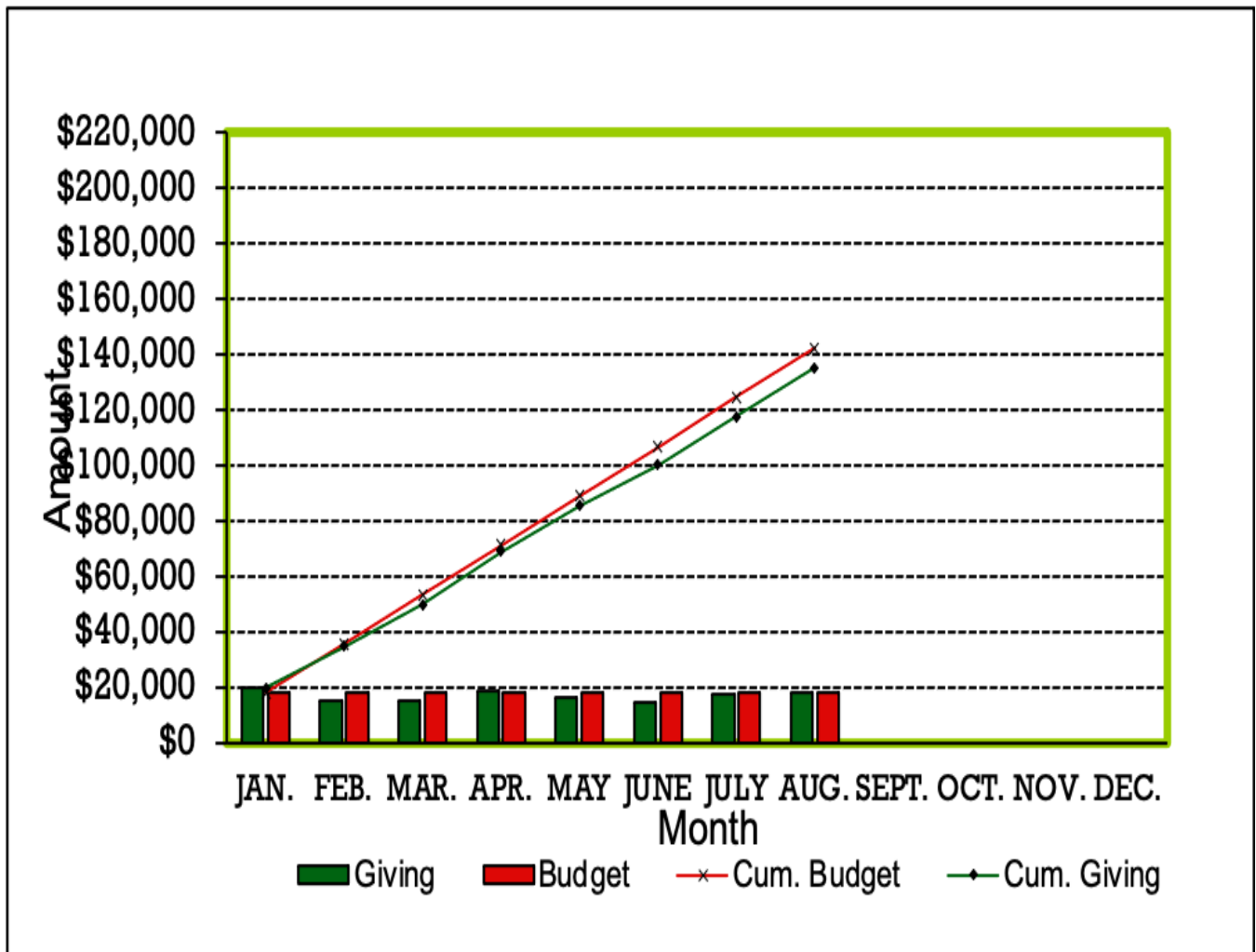
## August 2023

*"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*

Giving for August was good, \$17,912, just over the monthly budget target of \$17,777. The monthly average for the year thus far remains higher than that for 2022 at the same time of the year. Expenses were \$15,225, low even for a summer month. A low draw of only \$1,000 was needed from the AIF to meet expenses.

Some designated giving was received in August which is does happen quite often. VBS raised \$591 for the EPC's EduNations mission in Africa, \$125 for the Deacons Fund to use as they see fit, and \$3,500 designated for the unanticipated Property or Building expenses that seem to come up every year.



**MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – AUGUST 2023**

**OPERATING FUND****Income**

|                                                                                                               |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Sunday offering:                                                                                              | \$13,750.00 |
| Net Online Offering:                                                                                          | \$1,154.62  |
| <i>*note – online offering reflects \$35.07 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>                                     | \$17,911.62        |
| <i>Opening Balance (from previous month)</i>                  | \$42.95            |
| <b>Total Funds Available (opening balance + new receipts)</b> | <b>\$17,954.57</b> |

**Expenses**

|                                                             |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Gross Expenditures for the month                            | \$15,223.94 |
| Line Item Paybacks received this month that reduce expenses |             |
| • None                                                      | \$0.00      |

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|                                       |                    |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Net Expenditures for the Month</b> | <b>\$15,223.94</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|

|                                                               |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Accumulated Income Fund Transfer Needed to cover Expenditures | \$1,000.00 |
| Extra Monthly Amortized Gift Overdrawn from the AIF           | \$0.00     |
| Monthly Amortized Gift Left in Accumulated Income Fund        | \$2,007.00 |

**OPERATING FUND BALANCE** **\$723.63**

**DESIGNATED FUND**

|                                       |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Opening Balance (from previous month) | \$16,786.56 |
| New Designated Receipts               | \$5,216.00  |
| Total Designated Expenditures         | \$10,028.40 |

**DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE** **\$11,974.16**

**TOTAL CHECKBOOK BALANCE (Operating Fund + Designated Fund)** **\$12,697.79**

**OTHER FUND ACTIVITY****Accumulated Income Fund**

|                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| • August Withdrawal                | -\$1,000.00        |
| <b>Current Balance (8/31/2023)</b> | <b>\$16,940.61</b> |

**College Fund**

|                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Catalino, Caccamise, Fleming     | -\$3,000.00        |
| <b>Current Balance (8/31/2023)</b> | <b>\$25,996.12</b> |

**Geer Fund**

|                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Welch loan                       | -\$1,000.00       |
| <b>Current Balance (8/31/2023)</b> | <b>\$5,478.87</b> |