
From the Pastor

I wanted to share some song lyrics with you:

Well, sometimes my life just don't make sense at all
When the mountains look so big
And my faith just seems so small

So hold me, Jesus, 'cause I'm shaking like a leaf
You have been King of my glory
Won't you be my Prince of Peace?

And I wake up in the night and feel the dark
It's so hot inside my soul
I swear there must be blisters on my heart

So hold me, Jesus, 'cause I'm shaking like a leaf
You have been King of my glory
Won't you be my Prince of Peace?

Surrender don't come natural to me
I'd rather fight You for something I don't really want
Than to take what you give that I need
And I've beat my head against so many walls
Now I'm falling down, I'm falling on my knees

And this Salvation Army band is playing this hymn
And Your grace rings out so deep
It makes my resistance seem so thin

I'm singing hold me, Jesus, 'cause I'm shaking like a leaf
You have been King of my glory
Won't you be my Prince of Peace?

I'm singing hold me, Jesus, 'cause I'm shaking like a leaf
You have been King of my glory
Won't you be my Prince of Peace?
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Won't you be my Prince of Peace?

This song got me through a lot of difficult times as a college student. I can remember hanging on every word as it encouraged me in my faith, but years later, I was surprised about the occasion that it was written. The song is by Rich Mullins, and he wrote it while he was on tour in Amsterdam. He told the story of how he wanted

to go out in the streets of Amsterdam, just to get a little taste of sin, and so he waited for his friend and fellow songwriter, Beaker, to start snoring, so he could sneak out, but for the first time ever, Beaker didn't snore, and so he lay awake all night long waiting for a snore that never came, and he was utterly miserable. That is how the above lyrics came to be.

When I found that out, it utterly surprised me. I had always imagined Rich penning these lyrics under difficult circumstances, such as the loss of a dear friend, but temptation? That didn't seem to fit, but then I thought of my own life where I had intense temptation, and I began to see how Mullins came to this song.

We are going through the Lord's Prayer in these articles, and for this one, we are considering the part where we are taught to pray, "Lead us not into temptation" (Matthew 6:13). I think we need to understand that there is an assumption that God will lead us, but as he leads us, we are asking, or rather, pleading, to lead us away from temptation.

I say pleading because we should understand the darkness that might overtake us if and when we give into temptation. King David talked about how his bones "wasting away" (Psalm 31:10) from underneath the weight of his sin, and we need have a longing and plea with God, that as he leads us, he leads us in such a way to carry us away from the dark valley of temptation.

One last thing, to really pray this, we really need to mean it. Of course, that is true throughout the Lord's Prayer, but it is especially true with pleading with God to "lead us not temptation." It is always easy to see sin, and thus, temptation, as something that is not that big of a deal, but when we truly see sin as the dark valley it is, we then plea with all our might, "Lord, as you lead me, lead me away from temptation."

Pastor Brandt



Introduction to BEPC Committees

Last month we introduced the Session and the Deacons and explained the role that each serves in the church. This month, we would like to introduce the other committees of the church.

- **Christian Education (CE)** is responsible for the teaching programs for children, youth, and adults through Sunday School and other programs. They also coordinate activities for children and youth, including the church's involvement in VBS. They often work with other youth ministries in the community.
Chair: Julie Foeller (bfoeller@frontiernet.net)
- **Evangelism and Missions (E&M)** is directly responsible for the church's ministries to the local community. They also coordinate the church's involvement with other organizations both for local outreach and ministry, and for worldwide evangelism.
Chair: Gregg McAllister (greggmca@verizon.net)
- The **Fellowship Committee** seeks to build relationships within the congregation, especially through dinners and other special events. The Fellowship Committee often works with other committees when food is desired as part of an activity. The Fellowship Committee is responsible for the church kitchen.
Chair: Sandy Partridge (sandraccpartridge@gmail.com)
- The **Finance Team** is responsible for creating and tracking the annual budget of the church and for oversight of special memorial funds. The Finance Team includes three auditors who are elected by the members of the church.
Chair: Brian Foeller (epcbergenfinance@gmail.com)
- The **Nominating Committee** brings a slate of qualified and willing candidates for the various church leadership positions to the congregation at the Annual Meeting. (Members-at-large of the Nominating Committee are elected by the members of the church at the Annual Meeting.)
Chair: Sandy Partridge (sandraccpartridge@gmail.com)
- The **Personnel Committee** oversees the hiring (except for the Pastor) and yearly evaluation of all the church's paid staff. They also coordinate any changes to the job descriptions of the staff.
Chair: Seth McNear (beccaseth@hotmail.com)

- The **Property Committee** is responsible for the church building and its contents, manse, parking lot, grass, and landscaping. They coordinate cleaning and other services as needed.
Chair: Dave Wright (david.christine.wright@gmail.com)
- The **Worship Committee** provides direction and support to the Pastor and Music Coordinators in the planning and administration of all parts of the worship services of the church. They are responsible for the maintenance of the musical instruments and the sound equipment and personnel.
Chair: Wendy Caccamise (wcacc63@gmail.com)

Session Report

The Session met on April 9 this month.

- We discussed several people in the congregation who are experiencing especially difficult times right now.
- We established a payment amount for those from outside the church who come to lead music, similar to what we have for pulpit supply.
- Brian Foeller talked about volatility in the stock market and that we plan to stay invested for the long-haul.
- We discussed the carpet in the sanctuary. The Property Committee is working on getting estimates for replacement.
- Chad Caccamise, Judy Bailey, Dave Wright, Joe Heukensfeld, Mike Welch, and Pastor Brandt were named to the search committee for a new Children/Youth Minister. We also approved the job description for the position.
- We did the annual review of the church's membership roll. A few updates were made and we will be contacting some members (who are attending other churches) to see if they want to remain members.
- We discussed VBS. The opening and closing will be at our church this year.
- Several methods of communication with the congregation were discussed. We want to keep the church more informed about what is happening.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to talk to any Elder.

Spring Concert Series

Following our successful organ rededication concert series last year, the E&M committee is pleased to present a new concert series in 2025. We are once again offering five FREE concerts, featuring a variety of talented musicians from our area. A freewill offering will be collected to support music outreach at the church, and there will be a reception following each performance. All are welcome—**please invite a friend!**

Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church 38 S. Lake Avenue, Bergen, NY

*Invites you to join us for our
2025 Concert Series*



*All concerts are FREE with a reception
following*

*More information at
epcbergen.org/concerts*

Sunday, February 2, 2025, 6pm:
Roberts Wesleyan University Chorale

Sunday, March 16, 2025, 6pm:
Zuriel Patterson, harp

Sunday, April 6, 2025, 6pm:
George Collichio, guitar

Sunday, May 4, 2025, 6pm:
**Organ recital featuring students
from the
Eastman School of Music**



**Sunday, May 18, 2025,
6pm:**
**Small Ensembles from
the
Genesee Valley Wind
Ensemble**



This project is made possible with funds from the Statewide Community



*Regrant Program, a regrant program of the New York
State Council on the arts with the support of the office of
the Governor and the New York State Legislature and
administered by GO ART*



Basket & Baked Goods

AUCTION

SATURDAY, MAY 3RD
Preview 4:30-5:30pm (snacks served)
Auction 5:30-7:00PM

Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church
 Fellowship Hall
 38 South Lake Ave, Bergen NY

AUCTIONEERS: CRAIG AND BRETT WILCOX
 FREE ADMISSION!



PROCEEDS BENEFIT
 YOUNG LIFE GENESSEE COUNTY

The Young Life Benefit Basket and Baked Goods Auction is returning to Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church on Saturday, May 3, 2025.

This annual event is a fundraiser for the various activities of Young Life in the Genesee County area - summer camps, monthly meetings, and other special events throughout the school year. Young Life is a non-profit Christian outreach program that spans the whole world. They go where kids are and build relationships by providing fun, adventurous, life-changing experiences. They work in communities, alongside like-minded adults (volunteer leaders, committee members, donors, and staff).

Genesee County Young Life currently has a high school program with Rochester West Young Life, Wyldlife (middle school ages), and Young Lives (a teen mom group). Young Life is one of the missions that BEPC supports.

We are looking for donations of gift baskets, new items (that we can use in gift baskets), homemade crafts, baked goods, and/or services. Please contact Gregg McAllister or Sandy Partridge if you are interested in donating to the auction.

We hope to see you there!

Easter Plants

Thank you to the following people for helping to decorate our church by purchasing Easter plants in memory or honor of their loved ones:

- Michael Welch in loving memory of Paula Welch-my sweet wife
- Bruce and Sandy Partridge in loving memory of our families
- Bev Rogers in memory of her Loved Ones
- Pam Patmore in loving memory of Parents and In-Laws
- Eleanor Bater in loving memory of her Husband, Ron, and Loved Ones
- Jim and Kathy Barber in loving memory of Tim Barber
- Rick and Amy Stacy - a daffodil in memory of Rick's Dad and Amy's Dad; a tulip in honor of Amy's sister, Nancy Seward
- Tracy and Loretta Miller in loving memory of Barry G. Miller and in loving memory of Joan Miller
- Donna Lacey in loving memory of her husband, Richard Lacey
- Beverly Loiacono in loving memory of Mom and Dad
- Delores Seward in loving memory of Gordon Lee Seward and in honor of Nancy Lee Seward
- Susan Cokeley in honor of our Loved Ones
- Kay Harmon in loving memory of her husband, Ron; sister, Lynn Bateman and Ted; parents Eleanor Harmon and Naomi Martin
- Tom and Cyndy Jones in loving memory of Kathy Hyde
- Dick and Shirley vonBergen in loving memory of Diane and Jim
- Faith Willhoft

Easter Greetings from Sarah in the Congo

Sarah Speers, who ministers at the Kimia Leprosy Treatment Center in the Congo, sent Easter greetings to our church family. Here is a link to her message <https://www.epcbergen.org/missions/sarah-speer>
Sarah loves our congregation and the visit she had with us last summer

Administrative Assistant Recognition

In honor of Administrative Assistant Day in April, The Deacons recognized Susan with a thank you card & gift certificate to Pully's Farm Market for her office work & all she does to assist the church family. When you see her, please join us in saying thanks. In case you don't know Susan, we asked her for a short bio for this newsletter.

Susan's bio:

Hi! I am Susan (or Sue works, too) Miller. I have been your church secretary for the past several years, and have been enjoying it very much! I have worked as a church secretary for various churches since 1998, when I was called, out-of-the-blue, to come work at the LeRoy United Methodist Church. I have since worked for several churches and several different denominations. It has been very fulfilling work.

I am a widow and I have two children - a son who lives with his family in North Carolina, and a daughter who lives in California. I have an "office dog," named Maya, who comes to work with me most days. I enjoy gardening, reading, feeding and watching the birds, spending time with my dog, and my family.

Stop in any afternoon to say, "Hi!" to Maya and me. We would love to see you!



Thank You!

I would like to thank the Deacons and the church family for the thoughtful gift of "flowers" for Administrative Professionals Day. The gift certificate to Pully's Farm Market is absolutely perfect! I will use it to purchase my annuals this spring.

Thank you!

Susan Miller, Church Secretary

TAG ~ Teens After God

Just Go!!!

We had another packed youth group on April 13th, with over 25 teens showing up for TAG. That evening we continued our study through the book of Luke during our time of bible reading and reflection. We read and discussed Luke Chapter 10 verses 1-16. In these verses, Jesus sends out his disciples two by two. Each week I challenge the teens to come up with an application of the scripture read, which is relevant to them in their own life. What the teens took away from our evening reflection on April 13th is that, "God is all we need. He will always provide. So **GO** and do the work He has prepared in advance for you to do." After our bible reflection, the teens spent a few minutes working collaboratively to come up with modern, fun, short summaries of well-known bible stories. For example, "He said 'no.' Then he was eaten by a whale. Then he said, 'yes.'" Another example: "A guy fed 5000 people from a random kid's lunchbox because nobody else remembered to pack snacks." It was an enjoyable time of creativeness and comradery.

Our TAG youth group will be meeting on the following Sundays from 6:00-8:00PM: April 27th and May 18th. 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!



Impromptu Bible Study at the Rebisz House - April 2025

Sewing With a Purpose

Fifty Flannel hearts were requested from the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) at Strong Golisano for the 1 - 2 pound babies and were sent in April. Thank you, ladies, for your continued work on this worthwhile project.

We have a need of training two people to ready these items. If interested, please see Debbie.

Five women from our church visited the St. Paul's Lutheran church in Batavia on April 15. We worked together to finish quilts that will be sent to missions all over the world. At the end of April, these quilts will be boxed up and sent to a central location in Baltimore to be processed and ready for shipment. We exchanged ideas on sewing projects and fellowshiped with our quilter friends.

Here are some pictures:



A St. Paul quilter & Bonnie



Vicky & Shirley



Debbie & Marty

Foodlink Distribution Draws Large Crowd

The church's April Foodlink Distribution attracted many from our community who were seeking food. As we were about to start the distribution, the line stretched from behind the church around the perimeter of the parking lot to the street.



Fresh vegetables, like carrots, tomatoes and green beans, made up the majority of this month's delivery. These and others were delivered in large bags, boxes or crates, and needed to be bagged into smaller amounts by our volunteers. This required an extra step in our distribution system, but our able volunteers all pitched in and we were able to maintain our schedule.



We also started a new computerized registration system that will allow us to more quickly enter data into the system in the future. Like any new software program, there is a learning curve, but our volunteers were able to get folks registered and keep the line moving.

God smiled on us and sent a sunny, warm afternoon to bless our efforts and the folks who came for food. From 3 pm on, for three hours, the parking lot was a buzz of activity. By 6 pm, everything was distributed, cleaned up, and the parking lot was empty. You couldn't tell that this event had taken place there.



Some Foodlink staff were at our event to help with the new registration program. They commented on our welcoming volunteers and the atmosphere of smiles and friendliness that surrounds our event. Thank you to all our volunteers who share the love of Jesus to our neighbors in need.

Our next Foodlink distribution will be Thursday, May 15. New volunteers are always welcome.

Ladies' Tea



Over thirty women enjoyed light lunch and fellowship on Saturday, April 26. Marty Hammack and Faith Willhoft decorated the Fellowship Hall and tables. The theme was "Then & Now" and featured some fun activities and an interview with Shirley vonBergen and Danielle Foeller.



The Fellowship Committee coordinated the preparation of the food. We especially wanted to thank Jonathan Snell and Noah Hammack who helped in the kitchen and with serving the lunch to the ladies. Thanks also to Paul Lattimer who coordinated much of the activity in the kitchen.





Sunrise Service

Over fifty people met on top of Ely's hill for the Easter sunrise service. Because Easter was late this year, the sun actually peeked over the horizon about ten minutes before the service began. The weather was partly cloudy and a little brisk, but hearts were warmed to be on the hill celebrating the Lord's resurrection.



Alden Snell led the singing and Pastor Brandt brought a short Easter devotion. We were delighted that Fred and Eunie Ely were able to join the service again this year being transported up the hill with a four-wheel drive vehicle.



Son Risers – Zoom

The Men's Bible Study group (Son Risers) meets on Thursday every other week for breakfast, and on the alternate weeks we meet on Zoom. Several times, we have had more than twenty men for breakfast.

Usually, we have nine to twelve men when we meet on Zoom. However, on April 3, we set what we believe is a new record for Zoom – we had fifteen men and boys who joined us on the computer that day for the introduction to our study in Ecclesiastes.



We invite men of all ages to join us both in person for breakfast or on Zoom as we continue through the book of Ecclesiastes over the next four months.

Spring and Summer Activities Coming

Warmer weather brings some regular events that provide a platform to share the gospel and more about our church to the local community. Watch for details about Bergen Parkfest and parade plus Vacation Bible School. The E&M Committee meeting for April was late in the month because of Easter, so plans weren't finalized by the time this newsletter had to go to print.

Calendar **Online calendar:** tinyurl.com/29zhbnbr

RECURRING WEEKLY/MONTHLY

- Sundays, 10:30-11:45 am – **Morning Worship**
 - First Sunday of the month -- **Communion**
 - First Sunday of the month – **Salvation Army Food Collection**
- Sundays, 9:15-10:15 - **Sunday School**
- Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 am – **Son Risers**
- 25th of each month - **Newsletter deadline**

OTHER EVENTS IN MAY:

Pastor Brandt will be away at Presbytery from May 15 till May 21. Rob Willhoft will be covering for Brandt while he is away.

Mission of the Month - Genesee Co. Young Lives

- May 3 - Young Life Basket Auction @ 4:30 pm
- May 4 - Worship Committee meeting @ 12:15 pm
- May 4 - Concert Series featuring an Organ Recital featuring students from the Eastman School of Music
- May 11 (Mother's Day) - Fellowship Luncheon @ 12:15 am
- May 13 - Ladies Bible Study @ 2:00 pm
- May 13 - Susan will be out of the office
- May 14 - Session meeting @ 7:00 pm
- May 15 - Foodlink Event @ 4:00 pm
- May 16 - Young Life Event from 5:00 - 7:00 pm
- May 17 - Cub Scout Pulled Pork Fundraiser from 1:00 - 7:00 pm
- May 18 - Concert Series featuring small groups from the Genesee Valley Wind Ensemble @ 6:00 pm with reception to follow
- May 19 - Susan will be out of the office
- May 22 - Susan will be out of the office
- May 23 - Recital rehearsal from 3:00 - 8:00 pm
- May 24 - Piano Recital from 10:00 - 2:00 pm
- May 26 - Memorial Day - No Office Hours
- May 27 - Ladies Bible Study @ 2:00 pm
- May 27 - Deacons meeting @ 6:00 pm

Anniversaries & Birthdays

MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 13 - Marva Lee McCracken
 May 13 - Susan Miller
 May 13 - Justin Newmark
 May 21 - Barb Fasoldt
 May 23 - Ann Johnson
 May 24 - Helen Hill
 May 25 - Ward Bailey
 May 30 - Joyce Coxeter
 May 30 - Charles McAdam
 May 30 - Mark White

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

May 13 - Joe and Jocelyn Rebisz (25 years)
 May 23 - Erik and Renee Berggren (43 years)
 May 25 - John and Janet Wise (51 years)
 May 27 - Bruce and Sandy Partridge (47 years)
 May 29 - David and Sonya Catalino (31 years)

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

June 1 - Michelle Buckland-Seward
 June 9 - Garrett McNear
 June 14 - Erik Berggren
 June 15 - Jodi Engle
 June 24 - Elaine McAdam
 June 26 - Christ Wright
 June 28 - Noah Hammack
 June 29 - Shirley Cudney

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

June 6 - Kevin and Chris Hollenbeck (38 years)
 June 8 - Fred and Eunie Ely (68 years)
 June 14 - Seth and Becca McNear (22 years)
 June 19 - Don and Candy Kent (49 years)
 June 25 - Tracy and Loretta Miller (64 Years)





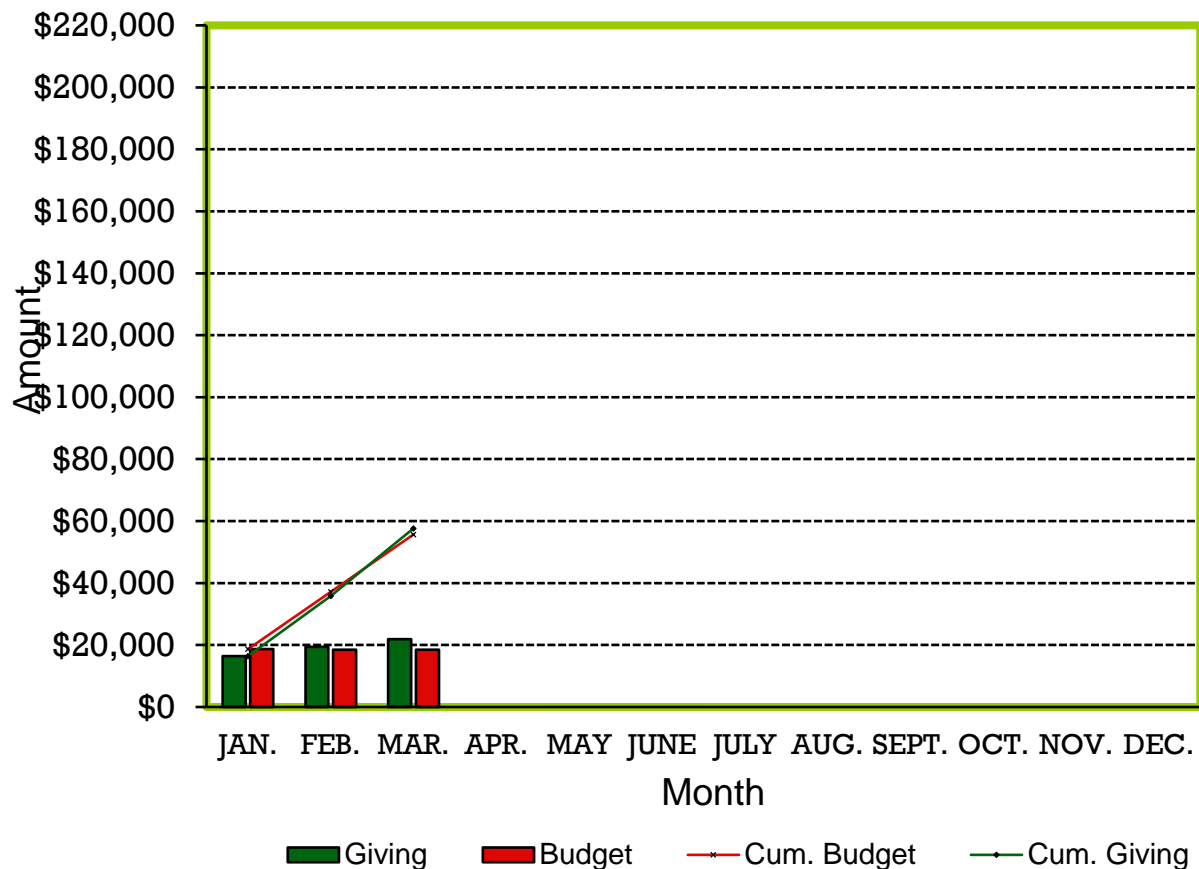
Church Finances

March 2025

"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

March's giving was \$21,860 for the monthly financial support of the annual budget. Based on the approved 2025 annual budget of \$223,865.00, the monthly support needed for this budget is \$18,655.42 per month. This month was one of the largest giving months we have had in several years.



MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – MARCH 2025**OPERATING FUND****Income**

Sunday offering:	\$17,691.00
Net Online Offering:	\$737.50
<i>*note – online offering reflects \$12.36 fee taken from gross donations from the vendor before deposit</i>	
Amortized one time gifts:	\$3,430.00

<i>Total New Receipts</i>	<i>\$21,858.50</i>
<i>Opening Balance (from previous month)</i>	<i>\$393.70</i>
Total Funds Available (opening balance + new receipts)	\$22,252.20

Expenses

Gross Expenditures for the month	\$22,024.60
<i>Line Item Paybacks received this month that reduce expenses</i>	
None	\$0.00

Net Expenditures for the Month	\$22,024.60
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Accumulated Income Fund Transfer Needed to cover Expenditures	\$3,430.00
Extra Monthly Amortized Gift Overdrawn from the AIF	\$0.00
Monthly Amortized Gift Left in Accumulated Income Fund	\$0.00

<u>OPERATING FUND BALANCE</u>	<u>\$227.60</u>
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DESIGNATED FUND

Opening Balance (from previous month)	\$11,180.10
New Designated Receipts	\$1,860.64
Total Designated Expenditures	\$259.49

<u>DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE</u>	<u>\$12,781.25</u>
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<u>TOTAL CHECKBOOK BALANCE (Operating Fund + Designated Fund)</u>	<u>\$13,008.85</u>
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OTHER FUND ACTIVITY**Accumulated Income Fund**

March Withdraw	\$3,430.00
Current Balance (3/31/2025)	\$38,402.00

Technology Reserve Fund

March deposit from budget	\$250.00
Current Balance (3/31/2025)	\$4,450.00

Property Reserve Fund

March deposit from budget	\$750.00
Current Balance (3/31/2025)	\$10,962.00