
From the Pastor

I am excited about what 2022 will bring Bergen Presbyterian as we seek to recover from Covid-19. There are several things that we have coming this year. We will see more times of our coffeehouse ministry, Door of Hope, a new member's class, and as a session, we are looking for ways and means to reach young families. We will also be going through the New City Catechism on Sunday mornings.

So just a few things about some of these. The New City Catechism is an excellent summary of what we hold to within the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. I know that sounds scary, but New City is very pastoral in nature and consistently points us towards Jesus. For example, here is the first question:

1. What Is Our Only Hope in Life and Death?

That we are not our own but belong, body and soul, both in life and death, to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ.

Secondly, I am very excited about Door of Hope. One of the ideas that I have is that a community of Christian musicians might be formed through this ministry, and it can be used to reach our community for Christ. I am very thankful for Bill Engle in helping me with this, and I have also talked with a few other musicians who are looking to play as well. I am also excited about the 35 books of Gentle and Lowly (which I will be teaching from) that was donated to us from an EPC church in California. We do need things like nice couches, chairs, lamps, etc. to make these times more welcoming. If you are able to donate any of these, please let us know. The main thing that you can do is to take time to pray for Door of Hope, especially on Wednesdays at 6 pm, either at church or in your homes.

Third, for the new members class, we will be using Jean F. Larroux III's excellent book, *Don't Swear in Church (Unless You Really Mean It!): Why Church Membership Vows Actually Matter!* Within the book, he goes over the membership questions that are asked within the EPC and what they mean:

- Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God and without hope for your salvation except in His sovereign mercy?
- Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and depend upon Him alone for your salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?
- Do you now promise and resolve, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?
- Do you promise to serve Christ in His church by supporting and participating with this congregation in its service of God and its ministry to others to the best of your ability?
- Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and to the spiritual oversight of this church session, and do you promise to promote the unity, purity, and peace of the Church?

These are all very exciting things in the life of our church. Please continue to keep these things in your prayers.

Pastor Brandt



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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)

Christmas Caroling

On Sunday afternoon, December 12, members and friends from our church family sang Christmas carols for residents at Village Green in LeRoy as well as several shut-ins. Following the windstorm on December 11, it was a beautiful, sunny afternoon to be outside singing praise to our newborn King. Thank you to Chris Wright for organizing this event!



Organ Restoration Project

Organ Restoration Project Moving Forward!

Session has approved proceeding with restoration of our church's 1907 Viner & Sons pipe organ. The work is currently scheduled for early 2023. In 2022, we will continue to (a) share updates on the 2nd Sunday of each month and (b) actively seek pledges, gifts, and additional financial support to continue reducing the church's financial burden for this project.

An Organ Fund has now been established for collection of pledged funds and new donations.

Please contact the Organ Restoration Team (Fred Ely, Tom Jones, Alden Snell, & Rob Willhoft) with any questions about the project.

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

Lord willing, our 2022 plan for packing Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes will include a church-wide packing party. To that end, and with your help, we will be collecting shoebox items throughout the year.

You may donate any shoebox items at any time throughout the year. To have a wide variety of items by packing time, each month we will have a suggested theme for donations. **The theme for January is winter gear: hats, gloves, and scarves.**

Something new this year: different groups within the church are invited to take a turn crafting items for the shoeboxes. Our first craft is to make notebooks. We will need 8.5x11 paper, cardstock, and used Christmas/greeting cards.

Donations of shoebox items and crafting materials may be placed in the shoebox collection bin in the front foyer, near the office. Please contact Julie Foeller with any questions. Thank you!

Mark White

TAG ~ Teens After God

Merry Christmas!!!!

TAG youth group continues to thrive, averaging around 20 teens each meeting. This year we started a new tradition by holding our first annual TAG Christmas party. We had several new teens attend the party, which made it extra special for everyone. During the course of the evening we played games, reflected on God and the gift of Christmas, had a White Elephant present exchange, ate pizza and snacks, and spent time in fellowship. The party was a tremendous success and we are all looking forward to integrating more social gatherings into our TAG youth group program in the coming year. Our spiritual focus at TAG in December was prayer. We are strongly encouraging all the teens to spend time in regular prayer. Throughout our discussions we have emphasized the importance of prayer and staying connected with God. That way, when the tides rise, we will not get washed away with the culture and the World.

Our TAG youth group will be meeting on the following Sundays from 6:00-8:00: January 9th and January 23rd. 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 Christmas Party - December 12th, 2021

Sewing With a Purpose

"A Story about a December 2021 family looking for refuge at the Inn, like Mary and Joseph many, many, years ago"

I received a phone call from Millie Tomidy Pepper earlier in December. She had a Mom and her five children come to the YW looking for help to stay at the Domestic Violence Safe House. The kids ranged in age from 3 - 16 years old. Millie came into the interview room with two teddy bears and offered one to the 3-year-old boy. She had a gray teddy and a brown teddy. The 3-year old pointed to the gray teddy. Millie looked towards the 8-year old girl who was wondering what would become of the other teddy. When Millie offered it to her, she just beamed.

The story continues with Millie describing the 16-year old boy sunken in the chair with angry eyes peering out from behind his mask. Millie said his whole body language was uninterested, angry and mad. Millie asked if anyone else might be interested in a teddy and said she would see what she had. She returned with three more teddy bears; however, she actually looked towards the eldest boy who started to take interest. Millie saw his whole demeanor transform before her eyes! He asked if he might be able to have one. She said you would have thought she handed him a million dollars. Millie glanced at the Mom who added, "He has always liked teddy bears!" Millie usually keeps five teddy bears on hand and this was exactly what she needed for this family.

When I heard this story, it touched my heart. Millie said she couldn't leave me a message because she wanted me to hear the whole story. Here it was the middle of December and this mom and her children were leaving all they knew for safety. No presents under a Christmas tree, no cookies, entering the unknown of what tomorrow would bring. When Millie took them to the safe house, the kids all thought it was so beautiful and were very appreciative.

We have no idea the conditions that this family was living with, but here with a warm house, clean bed, and a teddy bear to snuggle with, they would have safety. Let us keep this family in our prayers as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.



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)
- Thursday, 6:00-7:00 AM – Son Risers (continuing to meet on alternating Thursdays for breakfast and on ZOOM)

Other meetings

- 1/2/22 - Fellowship Committee
- Office closed 1/3/22 in observance of New Years
- 1/12/22 - Session meeting @ 7 pm
- 1/16/22 - E&M meeting @ 12 pm
- 1/23/22 - Annual Meeting @ 12 pm
- 1/25/22 - Newsletter Deadline
- 1/25/22 - Deacons Meeting @ 7 pm
- 1/30/22 - Worship Committee @ 12 pm

Office Hours

Office hours are:

M, W, F - 12 - 3:30 pm; Tue & Thurs - 12 - 4 pm

Community Events

Wednesday night community dinners have resumed at the Bergen Methodist Church. Please call the Methodist church office at 494-1312 to sign up. Dine-in begins at 5:30 pm. Everyone is welcome. If interested in helping make dessert on Wednesday mornings, please contact Dawn at 356-6024.

The LeRoy Rotary Community Kitchen is offering free community meals every 2nd and 4th Tuesday, from 4:30-5:45pm, at the Catholic church on Route 19 in LeRoy. They serve a hot meal and provide a second, take-home meal to all who attend. Everyone is welcome.

Young Lives

Young Lives is a ministry of Young Life. It is a ministry for teen moms through mentorship, community, and a life with Christ.

We are looking for childcare volunteers for a once-a-month evening meeting in Batavia (with the moms and their babies.)

You must be at least 14 years of age. The meetings will last about an hour. Transportation can be provided.

If you are looking for a way to snuggle with babies and help teen moms, please call Sandy Partridge, Young Lives childcare coordinator at 585-414-4593.

Foodlink

Foodlink Distributions Stop in winter. Resume in March.

Because our parking lot is not conducive to outdoor food distributions in winter, we are not hosting Foodlink for January and February. We will resume in March.



However, Foodlink is assigning us a different day of the week for March through June. We will be hosting food distributions the third Thursday of each of those four months. The time will be the same. We will start to unload the truck starting at 3 pm and will be open to our clients as soon as we can get set up after that.

Please mark your calendars for March 17, April 21, May 19 and June 16. We hope you will volunteer and join us as we help feed our neighbors in need.



Evangelism & Missions

January Mission of the Month: All Babies Cherished



All Babies Cherished is a pregnancy support ministry that our church has supported for many years through the E&M budget. Their statement of purpose says: "We offer Christ-centered assistance throughout pregnancy and early childhood."

Support: ABC provides emotional support, encouragement and guidance throughout pregnancy, & early childhood, or the option of adoption for both mothers and fathers. At All Babies Cherished, they want parents to know that they are here for you and you are not alone.

Education: Newly updated online curriculum provides important and interesting information on pregnancy, childhood and parenting. In addition, there are lessons on life skills, finance, time management, and Bible studies.

Supplies: ABC has an "earn while you learn" program that provides parents with the opportunity to earn "baby bucks" that can be used to "purchase" items such as clothes, formula, diapers, brand new cribs and nearly everything a new baby will need.

All of these services and care are provided with a solid Christian foundation. As their website says, "We at All Babies Cherished believe in salvation, accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We would love to talk to you about this." The Sinner's Prayer is included on the website.

Sue Sherman, Executive Director at All Babies Cherished, will attend our Jan. 16 worship service and share an update on the center's activities. She will be able to share with us how ABC has continued through the pandemic

Special prayer needs:

As Covid interrupted All Babies Cherished normal fundraising activities, pray that God will continue to provide the financial resources to continue this ministry's mission.

Pray for each mother and father who comes for assistance: that they will develop the skills to be successful parents.

Pray that those who receive assistance will come to know Jesus Christ.

Pray for each unborn child.

Please keep the ministry of All Babies Cherished in your prayers and come hear Sue on Jan. 16. You can learn more about their ministry by going to their website: www.allbabiescherished.com

Anniversaries & Birthdays

December Anniversaries

21 – Tom & Cindy Jones (49 years)

January Birthdays

1 – Jim Wilson
4 - Collin McNear
7 - Rose Wilson
8 - Luke Hollenbeck
11 - Bruce Partridge
12 - Shirley Harris
13 - Bruce Glucksman
15 - Alvin Shaw
23 - Eleanor Bater



January Anniversaries

1 - Jack & Katy Logan (75 years)
1 - Chad & Wendy Caccamise (29 years)
5 - Stu & Gail Freeman (60 years)
8 - Brandt & Marty Hammack (11 years)

February Birthdays

2 - Dave Wright
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



Prayer

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:

Henry and Diane Hammack (Pastor Brandt's parents)

Marty's father, Gary Shaw

David Hahn

Rusty Breton

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 servicemen & women of the United States, as well as our veterans and their families

Our country's leaders and their advisors



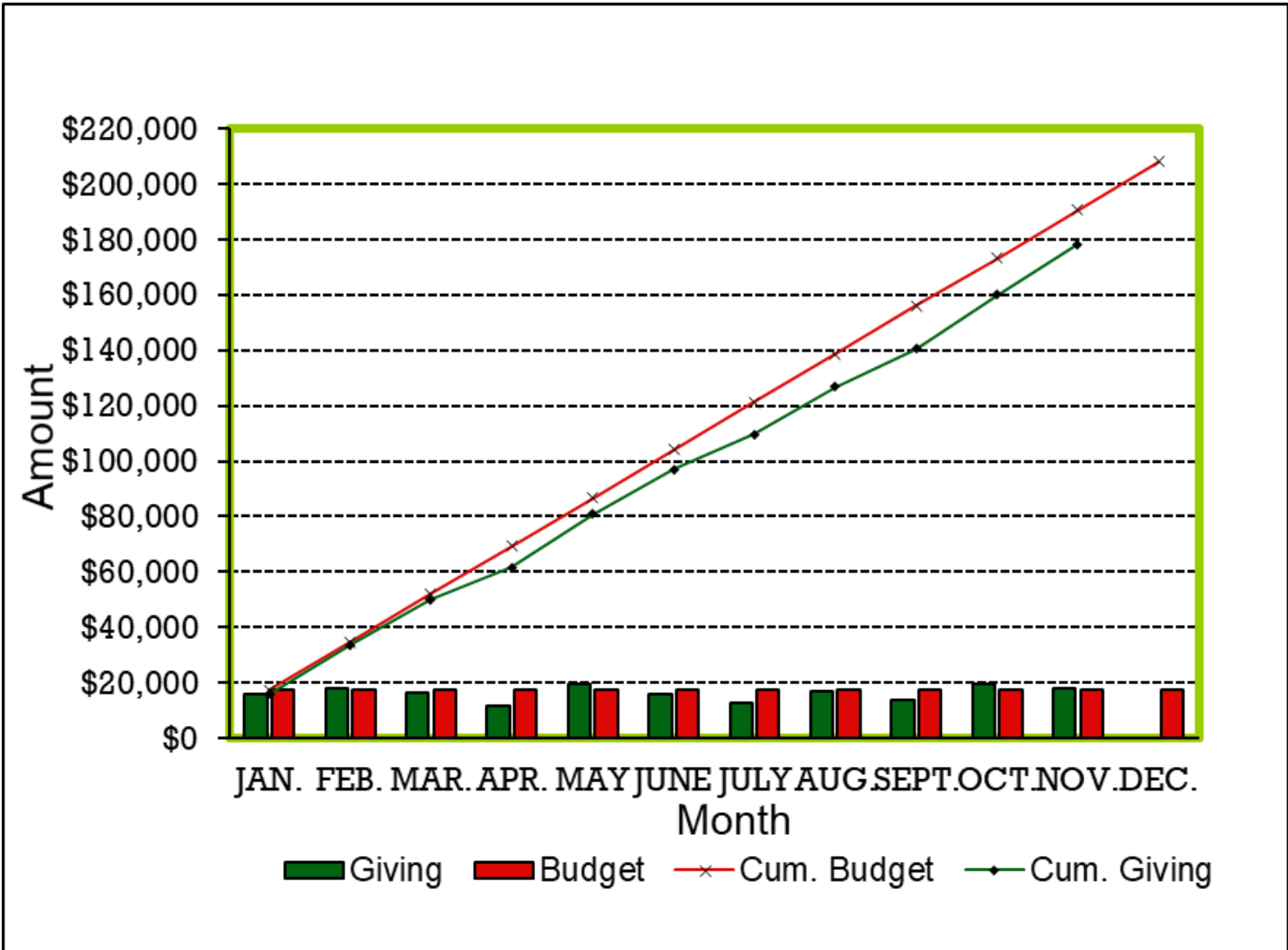
Church Finances

November 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

The November giving of \$18,183 was nearly a thousand dollars above our monthly goal and the third highest of the year. For the second month in a row, we have bested our goal, and that is a very rare occurrence. With this good income and average expenses, we did not have to take money out of the AIF to pay the bills. Overall, this year’s giving, which currently totals \$178,320, will I expect, far exceed last year’s total of \$181,754.



MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – NOVEMBER 2021

OPERATING FUND**Income**

Sunday offering:	\$14,324.00
Net Online Offering:	\$688.67
<i>*note – online offering reflects \$20.83 fee taken from gross donations from the vendor before deposit</i>	
Amortized one time gifts:	\$3,150.00

<i>Total New Receipts</i>	\$18,162.67
<i>Opening Balance (from previous month)</i>	\$3,120.73
Total Funds Available (opening balance + new receipts)	\$21,283.40

Expenses

Gross Expenditures for the month	\$16,995.57
Line Item Paybacks received this month that reduce expenses	
• Property Lowes Return	\$25.97

Net Expenditures for the Month	\$16,969.60
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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	\$3,150.00

OPERATING FUND BALANCE **\$1,163.80**

DESIGNATED FUND

Opening Balance (from previous month)	\$16,662.42
New Designated Receipts	\$15,044.90
Total Designated Expenditures	\$16,440.09

DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE **\$15,267.23**

TOTAL CHECKBOOK BALANCE (Operating Fund + Designated Fund) **\$16,431.03**

OTHER FUND ACTIVITY**Accumulated Income Fund**

• For November expenses	\$0.00
Current Balance (11/30/2021)	\$26,456.17

Tithe Fund

• Teen Challenge – Rich Lunghi	-\$300.00
Current Balance (11/30/2021)	\$39,608.75

Property Reserve Fund

• Transfer to Dedicated Fund for Flooring	-\$14,102.00
Current Balance (11/30/2021)	\$5,634.06