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## From the Pastor

Praying the Lord's Prayer often feels unique. What do I mean by that? When we usually pray, we are often asking God for things that we are not sure will happen. He always answers them in accordance with His will. Sometimes that means the answer to our prayer is yes, sometimes no, or sometimes (and I often find this is the case in my personal prayer life) the answer is not in a way that I expected it (and often when this happens, the answer is much richer than what I first prayed).

The Lord's Prayer (which we have been studying in these columns) is different in that everything that we are praying will happen. Take for example, "Hallowed Be Thy Name." God's name is always set apart with reverence in Scripture, and yet, when we pray as Jesus is teaching us to pray, we are praying that God's name be filled with reverence in the world and especially in our lives.

The same is true when we pray "Thy Kingdom Come." Revelation 11:15 states, "Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.'" So, in a sense, we are praying what we know will someday happen in full.

So why pray? I have heard some say that God wants us to pray not to change Him, but to change us. I do think that is true to a certain extent, and we will get to that shortly, but I also think that is a little too simplistic. We can see all over the Bible that God hears our prayers and acts accordingly to his Sovereign will. It is a bit of a mystery how all this happens, but I will try my best to work through this when it comes to praying "Thy Kingdom Come".

Jesus mentions kingdom 126 times in the Gospels. It seemed foremost on his mind, but what does the kingdom really look like? And how does it come? The word kingdom in the Greek is *basileia*, and the meaning of it points to a realm that has a King, so when Jesus used

the term Kingdom, he was pointing towards himself as the King over those who would come under his rule. How does one come under Jesus' rule? By turning away from your sin and receiving Jesus as King over your life as you accept what he did for you on the cross as payment for your sin.

So, when we pray that God's Kingdom come, we are literally praying that people come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We see this in Matthew 9:35-38: "*And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'*"

So, one of the striking things that I see in those verses is how we are to pray "earnestly" for God to send out laborers, and along with that, for the harvest to be plentiful of people to come under Jesus as King. Yes, I know that this will happen, that many people will come to know Jesus, but that should never take away my earnestness in praying for lost people.

So, how can we maintain that earnestness? Might I suggest that we seek to develop the same compassion that Jesus had? When we think of those outside of Christ, are our hearts broken the way Jesus' heart was? And in turn, will that translate into us praying more that God's Kingdom come?

Now, here is the really amazing thing, the more that I pray for those apart from Christ, I will become more compassionate, which will, in turn, cause me to pray even more. It's an amazing circle to be part of, and the perfect illustration of how prayer changes us.

*Pastor Brandt*



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Office Hours:

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

Tues & Thurs: 12 - 4 pm

Pastor's Hours:

Tuesday - Thursday

9:30 am - noon (flexible)

## Kid's Quest – Sunday Morning



So far, Kid's Quest has been smooth and successful for our congregation. We have engaged the students in fun,

energetic activities and calming spiritual exercises. We cover similar themes and give lessons based on what is taught in the service. The young students have built closer relationships with each other and the volunteers helping with Kid's Quest. We've covered important topics like "Being made in God's image" and "Being known by God." This past weekend (9/29), we discussed being made clean by Jesus, an essential aspect of the gospel.



Our current prayer is for more kids! If you know children in your family or amongst your circles, feel free to invite them or get me connected with them! If you have the ability to volunteer and check out our activities on a Sunday, please sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway to the fellowship hall.

## Young Life



Young Life/Wyldlife is starting back up. First meeting is October 4 at the church. They are trying a combined group, so middle and high school students will both be included this year.

Max Herbert (who spoke on Sunday, September 22) and Justin Pretko will be the leaders.

## Young Life Annual Pumpkin Sale

Partridge's house  
7860 Townline Rd.  
Bergen



## TAG – Teens After God

### REVERB!!!!

Our TAG youth group continues to read through, and reflect on, the Gospel of Luke each meeting. The life application of the scripture studied, which is developed by the teens in small groups each night, is always thoughtful, thought provoking, and demonstrates a high level of spiritual maturity. Keep it up teens! The annual REVERB (formerly "Superbowl") youth event takes place in Rochester on the 8th and 9th 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, Nerf wars, go-carts, arcade games, and more.

Over 1,300 teens will be attending and many will give their lives to the Lord for the first time. We will be traveling by bus with around 50 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.



*Teens Reflecting on and Discussing Luke 9:28-36  
September 15, 2024*

Our TAG youth group will be meeting on the following Sundays from 6:00-8:00: September 29th, October 13th, and October 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!

## Happy Fall!

Many thanks to all who contributed to our 9/15/24 coffee hour.

We will have another coffee hour, with the E&M committee, on Sunday, 10/6/24 to fellowship with Sarah Speer, a missionary that our church supports, and each other. Please join us for drinks and snacks.



*Mitch Johnson with David and Jonathan Snell during VBS*

We will have a loaded baked potato bar luncheon on Sunday 10/13/24, with cake for dessert to celebrate our new youth pastor Mitch Johnson. We would welcome potato toppings. Please contact the church office or one of the fellowship team if you are able to donate items.

Our annual Harvest Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, 11/10/24. We are looking for donations of cooked and mashed butternut squash. If you are able, please put prepared squash into Ziploc bags and put them in the church freezer.



## Open Door Mission Dinners

The Son Risers men's group has set a goal of raising money for 300 Thanksgiving Dinners for Open Door Mission. This is approximately the number of breakfasts that we enjoy during the year. Our goal is \$921 and as of 9/23 we had raised \$857!



## Harvest Fest

Coming October 31



The Fellowship Hall doors will be wide open once again on October 31 as we welcome the community to our annual Harvest Festival. Games, candy, cider, hot chocolate and snacks all contribute to the welcoming atmosphere as we seek to spread the gospel to our neighbors.

Specific plans are just being developed, so watch for notices in the bulletin and emails of donations that will



be needed. Everyone contributes to making this one of the largest events we host for the community.

If you have specific new ideas or can volunteer the night of the event, please let the church office know.



## Hayride & Bonfire

October 20 at the Seward Barn

Join the church for a night of fun, and fellowship along with cider and donuts. More details to come, check the bulletin and Life in the Church.



## From the Congo to Bergen

### Sarah Speer Visiting Us – October 6



Sarah Speer, who serves as a missionary at the Kimia Leprosy Center in the Congo, will be our special guest on Sunday, October 6. She will bring a message during the worship service. There will also be a coffee reception after the worship service

when you will have the opportunity to talk with her in more detail.

A couple of years ago we supported Sarah with our Lenten offering, which was used to purchase a large tent. Sarah had requested the tent because her team often makes trips into the jungle to search for AKA Pygmies who are especially susceptible to leprosy. All the tents her team had were old and leaky.

In addition to purchasing the tent, we worked directly with Mission GO, the sponsoring agency for Sarah, to have a volunteer carry the tent to the Congo when he was going there on a short-term mission. We have found that things sent by mail often don't arrive.

When teams from the Kimia Center identify lepers on those expeditions, they can treat them in their village. Some require more care and are brought back to the center.



Sarah loves the Lord and is always sharing the gospel with those around her. When John and Elizabeth Gay were missionaries to the Congo, they worked with Sarah.

Bandages were rolled one year as a VBS project and sent to Sarah. The Sewing with a Purpose team also rolled bandages and made pillowcase dresses and T-shirt shorts for Sarah to distribute.

We are very excited that Sarah will be here so we may meet her in person and learn firsthand what the Lord is doing through the Kimia Center in the Congo.

## Quilt Project

Sarah expressed a need for lightweight quilts. On Wednesday, October 2, at 9:30 AM the Sewing With A Purpose group will meet to tie two quilts for her. No sewing is involved – all are welcome.



## Foodlink

The need for food in our community continues to grow. The September Foodlink distribution provided nutrition to more than 200 families, the largest number in our church records.

At times, the line of persons seeking food started at the back part of the church parking lot and curved around to the street.

The statistics:

- 221 families served, consisting of:
  - 210 individual senior citizens
  - 332 individual adults
  - 189 individual children
- 731 total persons receiving food



Thank you to all our volunteers, including young ones who served with their mom, to mature seniors. This truly is an inter-generational mission.

Our next distribution will be October 17. We will also host a distribution on November 14, our last one before our winter break. Because we are a totally outdoor distribution site, we will not host distributions in December, January and February.

## Operation Christmas Child (OCC)



As the **new local OCC shoebox drop-off/collection location and the Central Drop-off location for the Genesee Valley Region**, BEPC will play a key role in the collection of the OCC shoeboxes.

These simple shoebox gifts along with ministry partners all over the world enable children to hear the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the greatest gift of all. Each shoebox= a 'Gospel Opportunity'- aka G O boxes

During **National Collection Week (November 18-25)** through prayer and training of volunteers, we want to ensure that every person dropping off a shoebox will have a 'transformational' experience, experiencing the love and care of Christ through our team. Without dedicated volunteers and donors, the mission of Operation Christmas Child would not be realized.

Collection Network Volunteer Roles:

Volunteers will show a positive representation of Christ: Volunteers represent Samaritan's Purse and our church.

- Central Drop-Off Team Leader: Julie Foeller- develop and lead a team of Collection Network Volunteers.
- Host/Greeters: Serve at the front table welcoming shoebox donors and collect donor data.
- Unloaders: Unload shoeboxes from vehicle and transport into the fellowship hall.
- Cartonizers: Pack shoeboxes into OCC cartons and count and label each carton.
- Prayer Leader- organize people to lead a prayer time each day.

These are some of the main volunteer roles that will be needed during collection week. See the OCC website for a more complete description of each role:

<https://www.epcbergen.org/occ>

Each volunteer will be trained ahead of time and will have the opportunity to choose the days/evenings they are willing to serve.

Please see Julie Foeller with any questions. Be sure to look at updates on the bulletin board as well as the foyer display.

## Shoe Boxes - October

'SOCK'-tober is here. For this month we are requesting donations of new socks for girls and boys ages 10-14. We will continue to collect hygiene items, school supplies, small games/toys etc. for this age group. The youth Sunday School classes will be packing shoeboxes with donated items in early November. Thank you all for your generosity.



There are a few different ways you can be a part of the shoebox packing experience:

1. Pack shoeboxes on your own at home. Stop by the OCC display in the foyer to pick up an empty box; have fun shopping for a child: girl or boy ages 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14. Bring your packed shoebox back to church by Nov 17. Please note the cost for shipping is \$10 per shoebox. You can include this in the box or pay online. If you pay online you can track where your shoebox is sent. We would like to encourage every person/family in our congregation to pack a shoebox. Remember that you have the opportunity to bless a special child with a tangible gift, but most importantly that child will get to hear about the Best Gift of All—JESUS!
2. Purchase items for our Sunday School youth to pack boxes- The collection box is in the foyer until early November.
3. Build a Shoebox ONLINE : You can bless a child around the world without leaving home !  
Select fun items from the OCC collection and personalize your gift with a letter and photo. A box will be packed for you and sent on its way for a suggested donation of \$25. To start building, visit [samaritanspurse.org/buildonline](https://samaritanspurse.org/buildonline). There will be information in the foyer as well.
4. Donate money toward shipping. If you would like to contribute to the cost of shipping for the shoeboxes the youth pack in Sunday School, please place your donation in the offering box with the envelope marked/designated for 'OCC shipping'.  
Thank You!

A result of each shoebox packed and sent is a child who will be blessed with the Gospel of Jesus Christ- families will be reached, churches started, and communities will be transformed by the power of the Gospel.... Now that is GOOD NEWS, GREAT JOY !

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## Susan Will Be Out of Office

Susan, our church Administrative Assistant, continues to recover from back surgery. Please keep her in your prayers. Sandy and Rob are covering the office while she is gone. The hours that one of us is normally in the office are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from noon to 2 PM. Please continue to send all communications to [office@epcbergen.org](mailto:office@epcbergen.org).

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## Calendar Online calendar:

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

### Recurring Weekly/Monthly

- Sundays, 10:30-11:45 am – **Morning Worship**
  - Normally the first Sunday of the month, **Communion will be on October 13.**
  - First Sunday of the month – **Salvation Army Food Collection**
- Sundays, 9:15-10:15 - **Sunday School**
- Tuesdays, 2 pm – **Ladies Bible Study** (every other week – meets 10/1, 10/15, and 10/29)
- Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 am – **Son Risers**
- 25<sup>th</sup> of each month - **Newsletter** deadline
- Last Saturday of the month – **Door of Hope** Coffee House at 6 pm

### Other Events in October

- **Fellowship** committee meeting, October 6, noon
- **Coffee Hour**, October 6, noon with Sarah Speer
- **Session** meeting, October 9, 7 pm
- **Coffee Hour**, October 6, noon with Sarah Speer
- **Luncheon and Reception for Mitch Johnson**, October 13, noon
- **Foodlink**, October 17, 4 pm
- **E&M Meeting**, October 20, noon
- **OCC Area Leaders Meeting**, October 20, 1 pm
- **Deacons** meeting, October 22, 6:30 pm
- **Worship Committee** meeting, October 27, noon
- **Hayride and Bonfire**, October 20, details to come
- **Harvest Fest**, October 31, 6 pm

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## 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 (8 years)
- 26 - Dick and Cheryl Saville (50 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 and Julie Foeller (31 years)
- 29 - Joe and Deb Heukensfeld (54 years)

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*Yes, you have been with me from birth;  
from my mother's womb  
you have cared for me.  
No wonder I am always praising you!*

*My life is an example to many,  
because you have been my strength  
and protection.*

*That is why I can never stop praising you;  
I declare your glory all day long.*

*Psalm 71:6-8 (NLT)*

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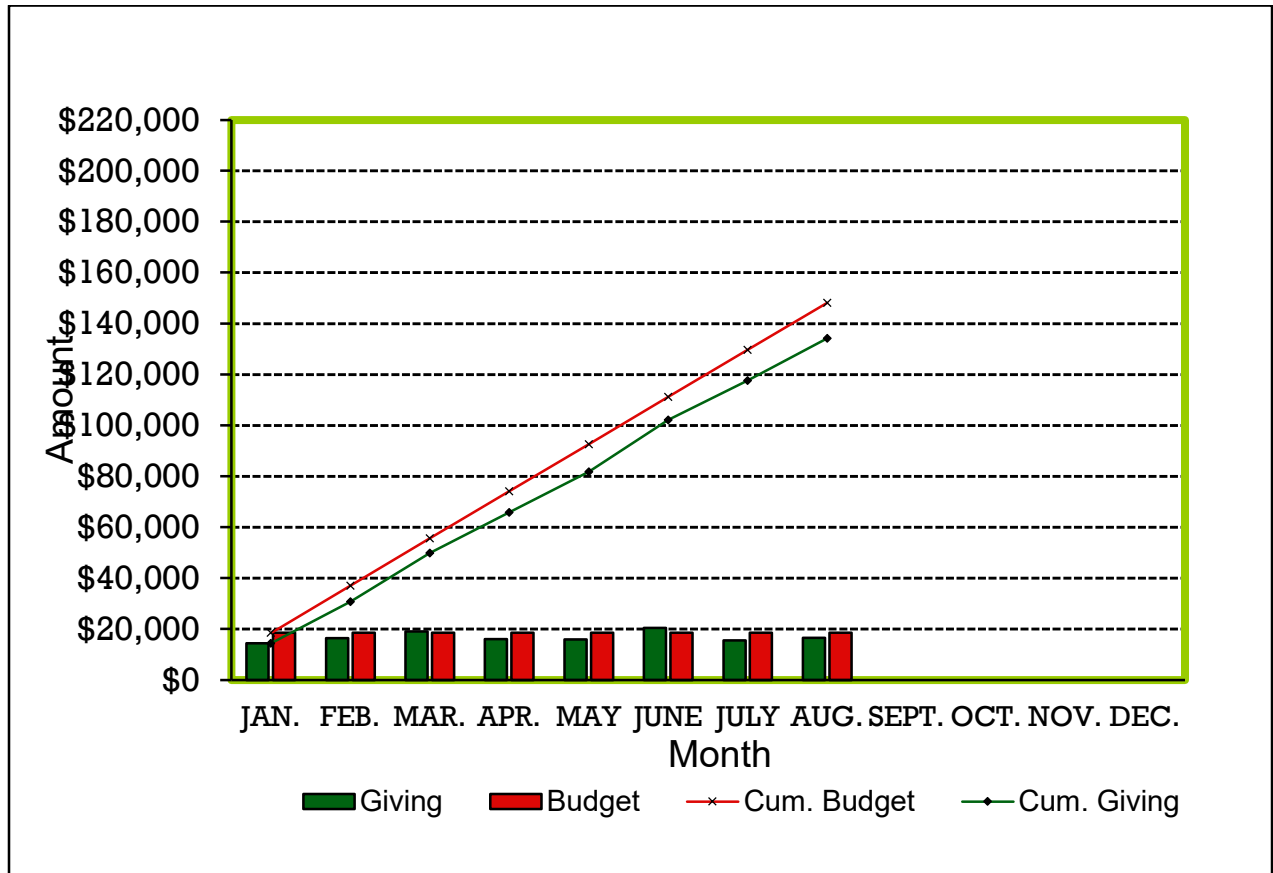
# Church Finances

## August 2024

*"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*

August's giving was \$16,535 for the monthly financial support of the annual budget. This was closer to an average month so far this year. Based on the approved 2024 annual budget, the monthly support needed is \$18,521 per month. Overall, giving is still slightly lower than actual spending for the entire year by about \$3,000.



**MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT – AUGUST 2024**

**OPERATING FUND**

**Income**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Sunday offering:  | \$12,817.00 |
| Net Online Offering:  | \$787.47    |
| <i>*note – online offering reflects \$19.85 fee taken from gross donations from the vendor before deposit</i> |             |
| Amortized one time gifts:   | \$2,931.00  |

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|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <i>Total New Receipts</i>                                     | <i>\$16,535.47</i> |
| <b>Opening Balance (from previous month)</b>                  | <b>\$16.64</b>     |
| <b>Total Funds Available (opening balance + new receipts)</b> | <b>\$16,552.11</b> |

**Expenses**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Gross Expenditures for the month                            | \$16,648.02 |
| Line Item Paybacks received this month that reduce expenses |             |
| • None  | \$0.00      |

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|                                       |                    |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Net Expenditures for the Month</b> | <b>\$16,648.02</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Accumulated Income Fund Transfer Needed to cover Expenditures | \$2,931.00 |
| Extra Monthly Amortized Gift Overdrawn from the AIF           | \$569.00   |
| Monthly Amortized Gift Left in Accumulated Income Fund        | \$0.00     |

**OPERATING FUND BALANCE **\$473.09****

**DESIGNATED FUND**

|                                       |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Opening Balance (from previous month) | \$18,848.97 |
| New Designated Receipts               | \$440.00    |
| Total Designated Expenditures         | \$2,195.55  |

**DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE **\$17,093.42****

**TOTAL CHECKBOOK BALANCE (Operating Fund + Designated Fund) **\$17,566.51****

**OTHER FUND ACTIVITY**

**Accumulated Income Fund**

|                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| • August withdraw                  | \$3,500.00         |
| <b>Current Balance (8/31/2024)</b> | <b>\$17,476.00</b> |