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**The Pastor's Searchlight—Summer, 2024: "The Fifty-Word Masterpiece" (The One Year Book of Amazing Stories, R. Petterson)**



American education was in a state of crisis in 1954. Reading levels among grade school children were declining. Primers left over from their parents' school days were out of date and boring. When *Life* magazine came out with a scathing expose on the literacy of grade-schoolers, the public finally took notice. America was locked in a Cold War that would be won or lost in the dizzying new world of computers, space exploration, and high-tech weaponry. The future of the nation depended on American kids keeping up with Communist children. So a worried nation turned to Theodor Geisel. This skinny egghead was an unlikely savior. He looked more nerd than Superman. He surely had the smarts, having gone to Dartmouth and Oxford. Yet by some standards, this brainiac had wasted his Ivy League education as a cartoonist for the advertising department of Standard Oil. His one dubious claim to fame was producing a creative ad on an insecticide. In his spare time, Theodor created outlandish cartoon characters that were wedded to a mishmash of words and rhymes. He had written a quirky children's book that was rejected twenty-seven times before finally being published. Its sales were mediocre, causing Theodor to figure he would be consigned to the purgatory of corporate advertising for the rest of his dead-end career. But the world was about to discover the egghead in the back rooms of Standard Oil. After that blistering expose from *Life* came out, a concerned publishing house challenged Theodor to write a creative and fun book for six-year-olds using only 225 words out of the 348 in a standard first-grader's vocabulary list. He labored for nine months due to the word restriction, ending up eleven words over the publisher's request. Yet, in 1957, *The Cat in the Hat* came out to rave reviews and sales close to a million copies in its first three years. Theodor would go on to make history with a series of books using his mother's maiden name, Seuss. The most amazing challenge in his Dr. Seuss series was the time Bennett Cerf, the founder of Random House, bet the author that he couldn't write a book using only fifty words. Theodor Seuss Geisel won that bet when he created his masterpiece *Green Eggs and Ham*. Bennett never paid up, but it didn't matter. Theodor would produce five of the top one hundred children's books of all time, selling more than six hundred million copies in twenty languages. He would give us the Grinch, Sam-I-Am, Horton the Elephant, and a plethora of other iconic characters that are now deeply embedded in our cultural consciousness. But this genius of weirdness and wonder who never had any children of his own was proudest of the fact that he inspired generations of kids to enjoy reading. Some argue that Theodor Seuss Geisel just might have saved American education. When you consider your own legacy, you ought to remember something Calvin Coolidge said, "Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent....Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." The amazing story of Dr. Seuss challenges us to never forget this truth:

***Our greatest natural treasure is in the minds of our children.***

"Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him.  
Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands."  
(Psalm 127:3-4)

*As we head into the summer season, and kids are finishing up school before summer break, we know we are given the blessing of precious opportunities with our children & grandchildren that we need to take advantage of as time is so fleeting. But even as this story was focused on the USA's efforts to be the best educated nation in the world, we seem to be going backwards...banning books, banning actual history because we don't like "being woke" and on and on. God is not amused!*

**In Christ, Pastor Dave ([reved87@verizon.net](mailto:reved87@verizon.net))**



**We celebrate in-person worship services on Sundays, but we will also continue to live-stream** our Sunday morning worship experiences (9:30am @ "ErieEAPC" & 11am @ "belle.church" and the pastor's personal page "Dave Edmunds") and our Wednesday Live! devotional experiences (6:30pm) on the pastor's personal Facebook page: "Dave Edmunds" on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays. Know that we are all praying daily for you, for our ministries, our mission, those who have been especially hit hard by this crisis, our Ghanaian Mission Partnership, and our world!

**All Are Welcome to Join Us for an Adult Study Group on Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Letter to the Church in Corinth!**

We meet on Tuesdays (6/11, 18, 25) @ Grandview Manor Apartments in the Activity Room on the ground floor (Davison Avenue, near E. Grandview Ave.) @ 10:30am (refreshments & coffee are provided). On the first Tuesday of each month, we normally meet for breakfast and fellowship @ 10:30am: this month, 6/4 @ The Original Breakfast Place (McClelland & E. 38<sup>th</sup>).



**BVPC PRAYER CONCERNS:** Linda Jarzynka, Matt (Marnie Wetzel's son) & his friends, Galli's family, Jack Larsen, New Hope Presbyterian & Pastor Clay Woodring, Umland family, Jack Donovan (Patty Smolinsky's brother-in-law), The Petrone family, Zach Napierkowski, Sandy McConahy & her brothers, Dave Arens, Friend of Nancy Marzka's who has 2 nieces needing major surgery/transplant & brother with glaucoma, Kim Potter, Tom Gaadt, Michelle Althof & family, Harry Krahnke's Son & Son-in-Law, Diana Marie, Chipper Langdon, Bea & Dan Reese, Maria Hodapp & Lorelai, Sherry Wolfe (Pastor Dave's sister-in-law's family), Jordan Kendzior & 112th Infantry Regiment, Becky & Sandra Fuller, Dale Teribery, Missy Zimmer, Kayla & Kendra Altadonna, Pam Crants, Mary Ann Straneva (friend of

Nottinghams), Sarah Richards (lung cancer), Judy Zytech & family, Tim Grant, Walt Hitchcock (pancreatic cancer), Tyco Swick, Timi Ricket & family, Sullivan Bruder (Rita's great-grandnephew), Rachel Fabrizzi, Nancy Marzka's niece (Helen), Patty Smolinsky's nephew (Adam), Albert Boorady's brothers (Andre, Tom, Roy), Jackie Roddy, Nohade Boorady. **BVPC Mission Efforts:** Girl Scout, OLOMC Food Pantry, BVFD, BVES (including Angel Tree, backpack food prog. & teachers' supplies effort), 1<sup>st</sup> Covenant Sunday Suppers & The Upper Room Lunch efforts; Ukrainian & Middle Eastern warfare; Systemic racial injustice; Senseless gun violence; The southern border refugee crisis; Current military services personnel; the Ghana mission partnership (*We pray especially for the Chereponi District: 11 churches, 528 members, and District Pastor M. L. Agbovi*); the Girl Scout troop mtg. at BVPC; Josh Heikkila (*our PCUSA W. Africa Liaison*); the Wapuli Health Clinic; The victims of the Taiwanese earthquake and the Nebraska/Oklahoma/Western PA tornadoes; The President, VP, Senate, House, Supreme Court—wisdom & justice; **Presbytery prayers:** Revs. Robin Cuneo, Rick Cepris, Rachel Johns, Jim Haas, Jim Rimmer, and Jim McCormack.

**BVPC Summer Birthdays:**

June 6<sup>th</sup> Marcy Edmunds, 8874 Ennis Drive, Erie, PA, 16509  
9<sup>th</sup> Joyce Sampson, 704 Edgewater Drive, Westfield NY, 14787  
25<sup>th</sup> Linda Wetzel, 10540 Sampson Road, Waterford, PA, 16441



July 3<sup>rd</sup> Rebecca Meyer, 2258 Delphos Drive, Erie, PA, 16509  
7<sup>th</sup> Clay Woodring, 3013 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Erie, PA, 16510  
14<sup>th</sup> Mary Ann Rice, 2189 Foxboro Court, Erie, PA, 16510  
28<sup>th</sup> Patty Smolinsky, Grandview Manor Apts., Apt. 329, 4210 Davison Ave., Erie, PA, 16504

August 2<sup>nd</sup> Pam Baker, 8822 Horseshoe Drive, Erie, PA, 16510  
3<sup>rd</sup> Paul Wetzel, 10540 Sampson Road, Waterford, PA, 16441  
4<sup>th</sup> Anne Seamans, 46697 Breannes Lane, Lexington Park, MD, 20653  
13<sup>th</sup> Kim Ragen, 6160 Appleman Road, Erie, PA, 16509  
14<sup>th</sup> Anne Campbell, 4105 French Street, Erie, PA, 16504  
28<sup>th</sup> Bill Simons, 330 Rosebay Erie, PA, 16509  
Bonnie Renaud, 2418 Pepper Tree Drive, Erie, PA, 16504

**Please Minister to Members Challenged by Chronic Health Issues** (cards, calls, visits, and prayer):

Dan & Diane Horton: Oil City, PA, 16301 (814-271-9882, -282-9944); Harry Krahnke: 4210 Davison Ave., 16504 (504, 814-315-8359); Paul (Doc) & Linda Wetzel: 10540 Sampson Rd., Waterford, PA. 16441 (814-825-2070); Ellie Logan: 819 W. 8<sup>th</sup> St., Apt. 211, Erie, PA 16502 (814-520-1190).

Please do your best to continue your regular giving, and for those able, please increase your giving to cover those who have been negatively impacted by this pandemic's financial hardships. **Financial Report YTD thru April, 2024: Operating Revenues YTD Received: \$38,935.64; Operating Expenses Paid Out: \$41,982.36; Leaving a shortfall of \$3,046.72. Please reach out to Albert Boorady** (treasurer, [bvp16510treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:bvp16510treasurer@gmail.com), 814-218-2544) if you'd like to learn how to set up BVPC as a regular payee with your bank automatically! And **be aware that you can always donate online at BVPC's website as well** (though there will be a small fee charged by the online donation service—something your bank won't do if you use them to set up BVPC as a regular payee). *Please continue to pray for BVPC's ministries and your financial giving! The next few years will be a real test of our faith, our obedience to God, and our endurance during very thin financial conditions!*

**"Per Capita" Giving:** For those who are able to pay their Per Capita for 2024 (**\$34 per member**), use a pew offering envelope. Your "Per Capita" giving supports many significant mission efforts throughout our presbytery and the worldwide Presbyterian Church. Pray about your gift to our larger church mission efforts!

## **2024 Slate of Officers:**

**Elders:** Dave Sickles, Sandy McConahy, Leslie Sickles, Doug Ebert, Stacey Simons; *Clerk: Kim Ragen, Treasurer: Albert Boorady*

**Deacons:** Kathy Simons, Joann Barber, Maryann & Corey Rice, Becky Cousins, Kim Ragen

**Audit Committee:** Stacey Simons, Rita Postlewaite, Chris Tombaugh

**Memorial Committee:** Bonnie Renaud, Bonnie Marshall, Melody Lewis

**At-Large Nominating Committee:** Bonnie Marshall, Chris Tombaugh, Leslie Sickles, Becky Cousins

## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- **Communion & Joint Worship Service & Picnic w/Elmwood Church**, 6/2, 11am @ Beach #1 Pavilion (Runners' Pavilion)—take first left when you enter the Presque Isle Park entrance. Communion will be served. Picnic following worship: please bring a dish to share! Smith's hot dogs and beverages will be provided.
- **II Corinthians Study Group**, 6/4 @ The Original Bkft. Place (E. 38<sup>th</sup> & McClelland); 6/11, 18, 25 @ Grandview Manor Apartments (Davison Ave.), Activity Lounge
- **BVPC Session**, 6/10 @ 6:30pm
- **Men's Fellowship Gathering** w/Elmwood Church, 5/31, 6pm (@ Elmwood Church), traveling to the White Turkey Drive-In
- **Faith & Film series:** 6/29, @ EPC (parlor), 4:30pm, featuring the film: "The Miracle Club".  
8/3, @ BVPC, 4:30pm.



**Faith & Film series:** June 29 (Sat.),  
4:30pm @ Elmwood Church, featuring the film:  
**"The Miracle Club"**

Ballygar, Ireland, 1967: a hard-knocks community that marches to its own beat, rooted in traditions of loyalty, faith and togetherness. There's just one tantalizing dream for the women of Ballygar to taste freedom and escape the gauntlet of domestic life: to win a pilgrimage to the sacred French town of Lourdes. And with a little benevolent interference from their cheeky and rebellious priest, close friends Lily, Eileen, Dolly and her son Daniel are the 'lucky' few to win this ticket of a lifetime at their riotous local raffle night. They each need a miracle! A very funny and moving story.

**Bring your favorite snack to share!**

### **Joint Worship Service & Picnic w/Elmwood Church,**

**6/2**, 11am @ Beach #1 Pavilion (Runners' Pavilion)—

take the first left when you enter the Presque Isle Park entrance.

Communion will be served.

Picnic following worship:

Please bring a dish to share!

Smith's hot dogs and

beverages will be provided!



### **SHEA BUTTER WORKSHOP EVENT: Saturday, June 1, 2024, 10 am - 1 pm;** Church of the Cross (Gymnasium) - 5901

Millfair Road, Fairview. You are invited to a FUN SHEA BUTTER WORKSHOP. Learn how to turn raw shea butter from Ghana, into amazing shea butter creams, lotions, and soaps. No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome! Following the workshop there will be a DELICIOUS LUNCH and a short presentation on Ghana and the Lake Erie Presbytery Ghana Partnership led by Donna Cammarata. Shea Butter finished products will be available for donation and to distribute at your Church or group. Funds raised from the shea butter products will go to support two rural Health Clinics in Wapuli and Bladjai in Northern Ghana, West Africa. There is no fee for the event, but registration is **requested by May 25, 2024**, to help with preparations.

