
The Pastor's Searchlight—November, 2024: "Those Miracle Fruit Jars" (The One Year Book of Amazing Stories, R.



Petterson) Alexander was some kind of genius. In the age before supermarkets, when most Americans lived on farms or tended garden plots in town, preserving food for the winter ahead was a matter of life and death. That's why entrepreneurs like Mason and Ball became household names for mass-producing canning jars. But creating self-sealing lids for those jars became a vexing challenge. That's when Alexander Kerr's inventive mind discovered the secret worth its weight in gold. The problem for Kerr was in finding the capital to mass-produce his product. In 1903 he partnered with John Giles to found the Hermetic Closure Company of Chicago. A year later, he changed the name to the Kerr Glass

Manufacturing Company. He patented another of his inventions, the first threaded ring to hold the lid down—the same method used today. Alexander had mortgaged his home, and he borrowed heavily to finance his new start-up. The competition was stiff and the American economy fragile. Those early days were tough sledding. Yet Alexander Kerr, who had been converted under the ministry of evangelist D. L. Moody, had committed to test God's promise to bless those who tithed—even when he had precious little to give. That belief was severely tested four years after he started his company. It was 1906, and his fruit jars were being produced in San Francisco. On April 18 a massive earthquake hit. Some three thousand people were killed, and 80 percent of the city was destroyed. When Alexander received the news flash, his friends said, "You are a ruined man!" He responded, "I don't believe it. I know God can't go back on His promises!" He wired San Francisco, A devastating answer came back: "Factory in the heart of the fire. Undoubtedly destroyed. Heat so intense will be unable to find out anything for several days." Those were faith-testing days for Kerr's family. About a week later, a second wire came from San Francisco: "Factory miraculously saved." Everything for a mile and a half on all sides of the factory burned, but the factory remained standing! Kerr immediately left for the coast. It wasn't until he got to the site that he saw the amazing scope of God's miracle. His factory was made entirely of wood, containing huge tanks where the glass was melted at hot temperatures, fueled by oil. His building was the most flammable in the area. Yet the raging inferno came only to the edges of the Kerr factory, scorching its fences before jumping over his building to consume whole blocks around it. The fences were not burned, nor was the building singed. So complete was the miracle that not a single one of the thousands of jars was cracked by the massive earthquake or fires that followed. Alexander later spoke in churches, reminding Christians of God's promise to bless those who tithe. If you are tempted to withhold that which belongs to God, you might want to ponder this:

The most impossible task in life is to outgive God.

Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. (Luke 6:38)

One might be tempted to believe that if we can't outgive God, then what does it matter what we give? But God's Word gives us the formula for how our giving is like investing: the more we trust God, the more God entrusts to us; the more we give, the more God empowers us to give, and the more God surprises us with blessings; and we love because God FIRST loved us! God has always taken the initiative towards us...caring, loving, sacrificing, rescuing, and saving. God is always FIRST! That's why we cannot possibly OUTGIVE God. We have sent out this year's stewardship letter and estimate of giving card for 2025. We ask you to pray and consider how God is encouraging you to partner with Him in serving Christ, and the people of the neighborhoods around Elmwood Church. Please return your estimate of giving card to the office ASAP to assist the session in drafting 2025's budget for ministry and mission. Let's run toward joy...pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into our laps.

In Christ, Pastor Dave (reved87@verizon.net)

All Are Welcome to Join Us for our Adult Study Group on Paul's 1st Letter to the Church in Corinth! We meet on Tuesdays (11/5 @ Bob Evans) 11/12, 19, 26 @ Grandview Manor Apartments in the Activity Room on the ground floor (Davison Avenue, near E. Grandview Ave.) @ 10:30am (refreshments & coffee are provided).



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 2nd & 4th 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!



BVPC PRAYER CONCERNS: Roseanne Bliss (knee surgery, 10/28), Samantha Pendzich (infertility procedures), Ken Bliss (bone cancer), Crystal Gardner (cancer in lymph nodes), Harlan Magers, Denny Clemens (Leslie's cousin), Becky DeMarte, Anna Anderson, Mary Lee Swonger, Derf Hopsecger, Sarah Lepovsky, The Campbell's daughter [Maggie] & family, Jack Fischer, Walter Nunemaker Sr., Jerry Kennedy (hospice), Camille Jimerson, Joe Helsley, Jeanette Komorek, Dotty Hoover, Sandy McConahy, Tony Vacanti, Dixie Hartless, Fred Marshall Jr., Dawn & Bob Trojanovich, Jolene Carner & family, Jane Clinger, Kim Wurzbach, Steve (cancer), Sandra Sauder, Rebecca Stallard, Leonie Degnan, Scott Eddy's father & mother, Jack Larsen, Chelsie Belden, Linda Jarzynka,

Janine Johnson, Jack Donovan, Char & Zach Napierkowski, Diana Marie, Bea & Dan Reese, Jordan Kendzior & 112th Infantry Regiment, Becky Fuller, Dale Teribery, Missy Zimmer, Pam Crants, Sarah Richards (lung cancer), Judy Zytech & Family, Tim Grant, Tyco Swick, Sullivan Bruder (Rita's great-grandnephew), Rachel Fabrizio, Patty Smolinsky's nephew (Adam), Andre Boorady, Jackie Roddy, Nohade Boorady. **BVPC Mission Efforts:** Girl Scouts, OLOMC Food Pantry, BVFD, BVES (including Angel Tree, backpack food prog. & teachers' supplies effort), 1st Covenant Sunday Suppers & The Upper Room Lunch efforts; Ukrainian & Middle Eastern warfare; Victims of Hurricane Helene; 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*); Josh Heikkila (*our PCUSA W. Africa Liaison*); the Wapuli Health Clinic; The President, VP, Senate, House, Supreme Court—wisdom & justice; **Presbytery prayers:** Revs. Robin Cuneo, Rachel Johns, Jim Haas, Jim Rimmer, and Jim McCormack.

BVPC November Birthdays:

November 2nd Mike Cauley 851 East Street, Waterford, PA. 16441
6th Laurie Glass 3790 Stone Quarry Road, Waterford, PA. 16441
10th Stacey Simons 940 East 34th Street, Erie, PA. 16504
27th Ken Beebe 4801 Conway Street, Erie, PA, 16509
28th Leo Marzka 957 East 29th Street, Erie, PA. 16504
29th Rita Postlewaite 8670 Kuhl Road, Erie, PA. 16510



Please Minister to Members Challenged by Chronic Health Issues (cards, calls, visits, and prayer): Dan & Diane Horton: 5 Little Pine Place, Franklin, PA, 16323 (814-657-2663); 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. 8th 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 September, 2024: Operating Revenues YTD Received: \$90,036.02; Operating Expenses Paid Out: \$91,040.84; Leaving a shortfall of \$1,004.82.** Please reach out to **Albert Boorady** (treasurer, 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 world-wide 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, Chris Tombaugh; *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:

- **Joint Women's Fellowship:** The Annual Christmas Party will be 12/3 @ the Shrine Club @ 6pm. Call Kim Ragen, 814-392-5831 to RSVP.
- **DST: "Fall Back"** Turn your clocks back 1 hr.
- **Session Boundary Training Seminar:** Nov. 3, after worship (12:15-2:30pm, lunch included).
- **II Corinthians Study Group,** Nov. 5 @ Bob Evans (upper Peach), Nov. 12, 19, 26 @ Grandview Manor Apartments (Davison Ave.), Activity Lounge.
- **Joint Confirmation Classes:** Sundays, Nov. 3, 10, 17 @ 4pm @ BVPC; Nov. 24th Confirmation Sunday!
- **BVPC Session,** Nov. 11 @ 6:30pm.
- **Thanksgiving Eve Service:** Nov. 26, 7pm @ Community Christian Church (1911 Norcross Rd.).
- **Thanksgiving Day:** (Nov. 28).
- **Dec. 1, 1st Sunday of Advent:** "Hanging of the Greens" after worship (decorating our church for the Advent/Christmas season).
- **Dec. 8, Blue Christmas Svc.:** 6pm, New Hope Church (If you'd like to add the name(s) of any loved ones lost in the past year to the service memorializing them, please call Clay @ 814-431-4475).



Harvest-Fest 2024!! We would like to thank everyone who provided donations for our Harvest Fest. It was a great turnout despite the rain. There were around 20 kids who enjoyed the costume parade, games, pinata and the hayride. Thanks to all the members who helped out with the games and costume judging.

The Deacons would like to be told if any of our members are turning 80 or older. Membership and Fellowship committee likes to honor these folks with a special coffee hour. Please let Kim know (814-392-5831).



Thanks to all who volunteered to serve the Sunday Supper on 10/27 @ 1st Covenant Church to the homeless (from BVPC: the Glass family, Tom & Judy Gaadt, Chris Tombaugh, Becca Meyer, Megan Kavala, and Pastor Dave), and all who donated desserts for that meal! Jesus said, "...as you did it to the least among us, you did it to me."