

The Silver Lining

A LIGHT FOR BELIEVERS

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GOD CALLS ON MAN

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle

I often wonder what God is like—how He thinks and how He acts.

Of course, God is almighty. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1. But since He is almighty, is He arrogant and proud, domineering and revengeful?

God is righteous. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works." Psalm 145:17. Will He not then demand righteousness of us? Mere man often demands more of others than he does of himself. Will not God then demand at least as much of man as He does of Himself?

The shepherds on the hill that night suddenly saw an angel in the midst of a great light. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Sav-

our, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10,11.

Will this person who is called a Saviour help me to understand God? That is my question. Will He help me to deal with an almighty and a righteous God? "Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto Him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Phillip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and now sayest thou then, shew us the Father?" John 14:8, 9. If that's the case, in order to know what God is like, I may observe the Lord Jesus Christ.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Romans 5:6. So God is willing to pay a terrible price to help others. This is more than most men are willing to do.

He must be a reasonable God, to say the least.

"... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." I Cor. 2:9. Then God is not only humble (Christ was born in a stable), He is not only compassionate (Christ died for our sins), He is not only merciful (He forgives us our sins on the basis of Christ's atonement), but He is also generous (He has prepared for us a home and a state of affairs more wonderful than we have ever yet imagined).

This Christmas, as we celebrate Christ's birth, I know what God is like—how He thinks and how He acts—and I am grateful and content. When Christ was born, God called on man, and I need no longer wonder what God is like.

A TREASURE OF PRAISE

A History of the Zion's Harp Hymnal (Part I continued)

Ed. Note: We plan to print the entire volume of **A Treasure of Praise**. The complete book is available for \$2.00 from the Apostolic Christian Publishing Company in Eureka.

Countless other songs in this hymnal provide rich lyrical phraseology that have served to inspire the brethren during worship services. Some of these phrases go:

"He reconciled my wayward spirit Through His own blood and gave me light," No. 220.

"My Lord, an offering do I bring; My heart to give to Thee." No. 163

"Rise, oh soul, and break the bondage" No. 183

"Who is Lord like Thee, sweet repose for me" No. 19.

"Our song of praise to God ascend, And there with angels' voices blend" No. 7.

These verses are typical of many others appearing in the Zion's Harp. Strong, vivid, and meaningful lyrics are the rule rather than the exception in this songbook, the official and cherished hymnal of the Apostolic Christian Church. It is a book that is deeply appreciated.

To say the least, the Zion's Harp

is a classic. God is to be praised for allowing and preserving such a noted collection of songs for the brotherhood. The many words and phrases were written by men who had not only a close relationship with God, but a keen insight into everyday life, and into those things which tend to inspire and uplift the

SPECIAL NOTICE

On page five of the December issue of **The Silver Lining**, there was a discrepancy in the advertised prices of the Froelich tapes and the prices on the order form. The order form is correct.

seeking soul.

Too, this songbook is comprehensive and provides songs for all occasions: not only for joyful and happy times, but for times of sorrow and gloom as well. It also provides for reverent and serious times such as repentance, baptism, and holy communion. The verse and prose are ideally suited for whatever situation arises.

The historical background of this hymnal is a firm testimony to the talent that lies unseen behind the composition, both in the hymn text and hymn tunes. Even though today's brethren know little about the background and development of the Zion's Harp, nonetheless a rich and full history surrounds this great book.

The Zion's Harp covers a span of five centuries, from the 15th to the 20th. Aristocracy is included in its history. In fact, the person leading the initial effort to collect the first hymns was a Baroness. Moreover, a noted hymn writer whose hymns were included was a Count. Many other hymn writers were devout men of God trained as theologians in leading German and Swiss universities.

Also, a few of the tunes included in the hymnal were composed by such musical luminaries as Beethoven, Mozart, Handel, and Rousseau (however, they did not compose specifically for the Zion's Harp). But, perhaps the greatest thing of all is that a good many of these authors were men who surpassed the banal plane of nominal Christianity, had repented of their sins, and were converted men in the truest sense.

Interestingly, this hymnal contains a song written while the author was in a prison cell. Lacking adequate paper, he wrote on the prison wall. Moreover, another song was allegedly written during the culminating phases of the Thirty Year's War in Germany, and it graphically depicts the spiritual feelings of that era.

In essence, the Zion's Harp hymnal has an expansive lore of history and was made possible by men with a wide and notable array of talent. It is a book of measureless depth, written by the best of musical scholars, and it serves very well the singing needs of the Apostolic Christian Church. It is deeply cherished.

The early fathers of the brotherhood many times simply referred

to this book as "hymns for meetings of believers." It is nothing less, and nothing more. It is a sea of musical eloquence.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

Doug Kellenberger

We are preparing for the Christmas holidays. All of the children will be able to go home to their families, and they are looking forward to that. First, we are going to have our Christmas as a family at the Home, opening gifts and worshiping God for the gift of His Son.

The girls are now busy getting some ceramic pieces ready for gifts which they are going to give to some of the elderly people of the church and community. When they present the gifts, we plan to sing Christmas carols for them. We have all learned that it is more satisfying to give than receive. If we can involve our children in making others happy, that experience will linger with them a lot longer than the remembrance of all the gifts they received; and, hopefully, they will learn the true meaning of Christmas.

A number of people offered to give to the home this season—from meat to money. There was an offer to take the children shopping so that they could buy their gifts for others. We thank everyone who helped and donated their gift.

Last week, Karen came home all excited about asking Sue to come to her class to show slides and talk about Japan. They were studying Japan. Sue went and enjoyed it; the next day Mary made the same request. It was a wonderful opportunity for the girls to share Sue's experience. Even little Rachel went along and dressed up in a Japanese kimono. What at first might seem to be drudgery to us often turns out to be a great blessing to others and to us. Be a peculiar people by being "zealous of good works." (Titus 2:14)

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Christmas is again just a lovely memory. It is now that we file away the remembrance of the love of family and friends and turn our thoughts to the year ahead. Contemplative thoughts take deep root as word of situations in other lands come to our ears. In a recent con-

versation with friends who have close contact with a foreign exchange person from a Communist country, we were enlightened anew about some of our blessings. This adult person was honored with an appointment to spend one year in the United States, learning our methods of agriculture. (His wife and two small children were not permitted to come, because of fear they would not return to their country.) Among many other questions he was asked here was the obvious one, "What do you find most different about America?" His answer was that it seems so very unusual that everyone smiles. In his country, no one smiles. Life is a serious matter. To further substantiate this, close acquaintances recently visited the major Communist country. Being congenial in nature, many smiles were employed to promote good will at first. Almost without exception, whenever they smiled during conversation in public, they were asked by a suddenly-appearing authority to produce their passports for examination.

Think of it! A society without smiles! Here at the Home especially, kindness is a language even the deaf and blind can understand. Surely we will give thanks in prayer as never before for the privileges we have to love one another, as Christ loves us. And surely as we are made to realize that this precious privilege can be taken from us, we will try much more to utilize it.

Parents of some of the residents have helped decorate the Home for Christmas; carolers have come; various organizations have made

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our residents the objects of their benevolence; staff has planned the residents' Christmas party on Dec. 21, complete with program and gifts; and many are looking forward to spending time at home with family. An air of excitement prevails.

Elizabeth Caroline (Betsy) Aberle has been a resident of our Home for several months. Her parents, August and Lena M. Menold Aberle, were both from Mannheim, Germany, but have lived in this area while in America. The father is deceased; the mother is a resident of the Apostolic Christian Home in Eureka, IL. Brothers are Albert, Emil, Walter, Vernon, and Ernie. She has one sister, Ann. Birthday time is Jan. 8.

Benefit Day was again a worthwhile effort, and we thank each one for their time and contributions. A special thanks also goes to those from distant places who had a benefit locally and then sent the proceeds. This is commendable. "Words seldom go quite deep enough when thanks should be expressed to someone who has strewn your path with flowers of happiness. So when we thank somebody for some kindness, sweet and grand, we utter these small words, 'Thank you,' and hope they will understand." Raymond Orner (author)

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Julie Hoerr

On Dec. 10, we were privileged to have Elder Bro. Carl Kensinger (Altadena) and Elder Bro. Rudy Graf (Akron) conduct our services. After a potluck supper, they helped Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach read the memorandum of our Brotherhood Conference.

It was a joy to watch our Sunday School Christmas program on Dec. 17. What happy faces they had, and what a blessing to know that they were well aware of our dear heavenly Father. Their songs and verses bore witness to that.

Our deepest sympathy goes to Bro. Floyd Banwart and Sis. Mary Jo Schmidgall in the passing of their father.

Hospital patients have been Bros. Alvin Laukauf and Alphi Fisher. Your reporter required emergency surgery due to hemorrhaging following a tonsillectomy. Herb Mohrman had a hip prosthesis; he is able to be home but must be in a hospital bed. Bro. Ernest DeMille

and Sis. Evelyn Hoerr are still unable to worship with us. They thank everyone for their love-gifts and cards which mean so much to shut-ins. Paul Doolittle is able to worship with us again, as God has granted him renewed health. Bro. Roy Farney is also feeling better and is able to fellowship with us.

Our annual housecleaning was done in time to welcome our first winter visitors, and we pray that many more of you will join our warm, sunny climate for the winter.

We are grateful that Bro. Eldon Nussbaum was blessed with successful surgery. Truly, those who regularly spend their winters with us become quite dear to all of us.

Thought: Live to seek God, and life will not be without God. —Leo Tolstoy.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Caroline Kaufman

Kathy Knapp

Our Sunday School and young members plan to share the Christmas joy by making fruit baskets and caroling for the older members and various nursing homes. Our congregation will also hear Christmas messages and songs from our Sunday School. It is truly a blessing that we are still able to express our love for God and faith in the birth of His Son and teach this message to our youth.

"... 'tis not the manger but the cross that sets the spirit free." This verse is given to us in "The Babe of Bethlehem" in Hymn's of Zion. Our congregation rejoices as we now have one more soul seeking to free his soul of the past and live for the Lord. Bradley Bauer, son of Bro. Don and Sis. Gloria Bauer, has decided to walk with the Lord. We pray that he will receive an abundance of grace and strength during his repentance.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Shirley Witzig - Carol MacDonald

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall

have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 15:51-57. When reminded of this promise, we were able to rejoice rather than mourn the death of our dear Sis. Helen Klotzle who passed away on Dec. 1. We were thankful that she did not have to suffer long. Funeral services were held on Tuesday, Dec. 5. She is survived by her five children, Bro. John Klotzle, Theodore Klotzle, Sis. Lois MacDonald, Sis. Mary Witzig, and Sis. Edith Wieland; twenty-six grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. Her absence will be greatly felt by our small congregation.

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Psalm 127:3. We welcome with joy the birth of Sarah Jean Cooper, the daughter of Bro. Ken and Sis. Linda Cooper and little sister to Timmy Cooper. Her happy grandparents are Bro. Ray and Sis. Ginny Cooper of Silverton, OR, and Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary Witzig of the Altadena congregation.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Clarence Yackley of Phoenix, AZ, and Bro. Ernest Graf of Akron, OH.

At this time we would like to welcome Bro. Terry Fehr of Phoenix, AZ, into our Altadena congregation. We feel greatly blessed by his fellowship.

CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE

Carlton J. Lanz

Christmas and New Years have traditionally been a time for sending greetings to those we haven't seen or heard from for a long time. In that spirit, we hope to keep in touch with those whose love and friendship we hold dear. With the year 1978 ended, in which He graciously has blessed us, we approach the New Year with our hearts filled with thanks to our Lord and God. It is our custom to gather in our houses of worship in which we, together, praise and reverence our Great God for the endless blessings that come from Him.

Our life, indeed, is full of perplexities and various problems, as

many of us will agree; however, the Christian's life, with its warm family ties and love that is shared by one another, by far out-weighs its problems and woes.

Occasionally, we like to reminisce about the lives and customs of some of our early Pilgrims and settlers. We marvel at their foresight and wisdom when they formed some of those important documents, with carefully chosen words, leaving no doubt as to their ultimate meaning. A good example is "one nation or one people." And what did they mean by "one nation under God, indivisible?" They, our forefathers, meant that people of all creeds, colors, and origins are united in common respect and love for our Creator and country and compassion for their fellowman. We can, from time to time, see certain forces attempting to interpret these famous documents in ways other than what they were meant to be. They have stood the tests of over two centuries.

To be free to live in this beautiful land of ours is in itself a great blessing. During our autumn foliage coloring, we could look out over the evergreen covered fields and slopes stretching into the sunset as far as the eye could see. I was overwhelmed by the feeling that the glory of the Lord was truly reflected in the glory of this beautiful land of ours. The Psalmist's praises were endless in his reverence to the works of the Creator.

Having submitted to corrective surgery, Bro. Roy Luginbuhl is again at his home in Columbus, CT 06237. He was hospitalized for one week at the Hartford Hospital.

The engagement of Sis. Judy Moser, daughter of Sis. Glenna and Bro. Ben Moser, to Bro. Walter (Wally) Carlson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Carlson, Sr., both of Ellington, CT, was announced Sunday, Dec. 10. They have our best wishes.

Sis. Frieda (Fred) Zahner has requested that a note of thanks be made in this column in appreciation of the remembrances shown to her through cards, prayers, and other kind deeds during her illness.

Sis. Lena Limberger has reached the high age of 92 and is now bedfast. Her daughters, Sis. Anna (Limberger) Thompson and Sis. Emma (Limberger) Herzig have given their best and have cared

for her gently over the many years when she was no longer able to help herself. They are to be commended for their loyal service to their mother. She also has four married sons: Ernest, Jr., John, Henry, and Walter. Her husband, Ernest Limberger, Sr., passed away many years ago.

There was great reason to rejoice when four dear friends presented their testimonies before the body of believers. Two recently ordained elders, Bros. Norbert Steiner, Croghan, N.Y., and Robert Beyer, Naumburg N.Y., aided our Elder Bro. John Bahler in the provings and baptisms. The converts are Judy Luginbuhl, Donna Ballasey, Dean Reutter, and David Galat. It was a stirring event to witness as, one by one, they stepped into the baptismal water, affirming their vows to live for God, life-long. In one of the prayers that was offered, it was mentioned that this holy rite, which took place today, is accepted as one of the greatest of all miracles in this end-time.

FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE

John and Caroline Hejja

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." II Peter 3:8. God, in His perfection, needs no measure of time in which to accomplish His work. He existed before the beginning of time and will exist forever in eternity. He created the sun and the moon which measure our days upon earth. Man, being imperfect, is allotted only a certain number of days upon this earth. We do not know how many days have been granted to us, but they are limited in number. Therefore, we should use this time to repent and work for the Lord. If we spend our time totally in folly and are not within God's will, the end of our days may come upon us unawares; and we could then lose Heaven. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Ps. 90:12. "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." Ps. 90:15. We must be glad for all the experiences which God sends His children during their journey upon Earth because He knows what is good for us and what will draw us closer to Him. Bro. John Hejja arrived in Florida from Bu-

dapest, Hungary, on Nov. 25. We were married in a civil ceremony in Budapest this summer. On the evening of Nov. 25, John gave a short testimony to the Ft. Lauderdale congregation. We were joined together in a church wedding service the following day. We had experienced the Lord's leading in this matter and are so thankful for His guidance and direction. The wedding service was held by Elder Bro. Ben Maibach from Detroit, MI.

On Wednesday night the children presented their Christmas Sunday School program. It is encouraging to hear small ones reciting their pieces and to know that they are being taught, at a tender age, the story of our Lord. It is our prayer that these seeds may be planted deeply where they may later grow, take root, and yield fruit in their season.

We are thankful for all of the winter visitors who have attended the Ft. Lauderdale church. We sincerely appreciate the messages brought to us by Bro. Ernest Graf of Akron, OH; Bros. Ernest Luginbuhl and Al Schneider of Rockville, CT; and Elder Bro. Ben Maibach of Detroit, MI.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA

Kathryn Schroeder

The Prophecy is Fulfilled

St. Matthew 1:20-23

"... behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him (Joseph) in a dream... she (Mary) shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins... that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

St. Matthew 2:1, 2, 8, 11

"... behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him... he (Herod) sent them to Bethlehem... when they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy... they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down,

and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

We welcome Bro. Joe and Sis. Esther Schrock who have returned to their winter home. We are happy to have Bro. Joe with us in the pulpit again.

The Sunday School classes presented a beautiful Christmas program on Dec. 10 in glorification of the birth of Jesus. The Lord works in wondrous ways. He has brought young families to Sarasota to live. With these brethren and their well-mannered children, we see the promise of wonderful growth for our beloved church in Sarasota.

ILLINOIS, BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

Jean O'Shea

To discover the true riches of Christmas, we must penetrate beneath the surface; we must get inside of Christmas. And when we get inside of Christmas, Christmas will get inside of us. We will rediscover the GLORY of the day.

Wilfred A. Peterson

What a joyful feeling to rediscover the glory of Christmas Day! It happened to me the night of our annual Christmas program on Dec. 17. Sitting amidst the sounds of innocent voices reciting verses, listening to children, whose eyes shone with anticipation as they sang praises of our Saviour's birth, watching the satisfied looks on the faces of parents whose children's voices rang clear, and just feeling the closeness of families sharing something special—all those things really brought the true riches of Christmas inside me. Baby Jesus was born for me! I wanted to be alone with my God to praise Him for such a wonderful and blessed gift. My eyes flooded with thankful tears while driving home, and I had to think that even though there is so much going on around us we can still feel His glow and express the wonder when we listen with our hearts and really "get inside Christmas."

This year Christmas will hold some feelings of sadness and grief to a dear family in our congregation. We extend our deepest sympathy and understanding to Bro. Everett and Sis. Beverly Hari and their children in the loss of Sis. Beverly's mother, Mrs. Linda Seg-

gebruch of Cissna Park. Holidays are always so full of memories, and we pray that God's unfailing grace will help ease the sorrow during this time.

We miss our Bro. Alden Nussbaum and have a real longing to have him back in our midst again, as he is still hospitalized in Peoria. We pray for his returned health. We also pray that the hearts of he and his family might be lifted during this special season.

For Bro. Dennis and Sis. Bonnie Kaufmann, this holiday season has brought an extra-special gift. A new little boy, born Dec. 19, arrived just in time to be wrapped for Christmas. He has been named Matthew and is privileged to have a little brother, Andrew, 13½ months old, waiting for him at home.

Bro. Dan and Sis. Patty Roth also had a beautiful new bundle given to them this Christmas as little Jordan Elizabeth was born on Dec. 21. Justin, 2½, is thrilled that the new baby sister he has been waiting for has arrived. Congratulations to all.

We held two special Wednesday evening services on Nov. 15 and 29 to hear the tapes of the conference. We thank our Elder Bro. Dan Koch for being with us on those evenings and also on Sun., Dec. 10. We always appreciate hearing God's Word through him. We also enjoyed having Bro. Edwin Ringger and his wife with us on Dec. 10. We are thankful for the love and wisdom he shared with us.

On Saturday evening, Dec. 16, our church group carolled at the nursing homes in the area and later had refreshments at the church. "Peace on earth, good will to men!" May we open ourselves to the inflow of good will and joy and peace to all men, all year through.

We want to wish God's special blessings for Bro. Ron and Sis. Ellen Farney as they spend their first Christmas together. They were married in Morton on Dec. 3 and we welcome them warmly to our congregation. We also feel privileged to welcome back Sis. Marge Fehr from Phoenix, Arizona. May she also find a special blessing in worshipping with us once again.

As the new year approaches, we find ourselves in amazement that already another whole year has passed. Looking back, the year

was a happy one as I realize that all the the good, blessed things outweighed the trials and disappointments, by far. Yet, each year brings us closer to the end and closer to that great Judgment Day. Only the things we have done for Him are going to matter.

It reminds me of some words written by the same author that was quoted earlier, who said, "Live the New Year as though you had just come out of a dark tunnel into the light." If we can look back and see how we could've done better and start anew, striving to live more like Jesus would have us to live, we will experience a truly happy New Year.

The author, Wilfred A. Peterson also said, "One certain way of having a Happy New Year is to return to simplicity . . . to seek happiness in the simple riches that we can reach out and take without a struggle. Even kings and millionaires must turn to simple things for real happiness."

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD

Jane Leman

Among our many other blessings to be thankful for, we were happy to have many guests attend our Thanksgiving morning services. Among them were ministering Bros. Richard Aberle (Indianapolis) and Don Manz (Junction). We also thank Elder Bro. Edwin Ringger (Gridley) for ministering to us on a following Sunday.

We have missed the faces of our two loved ones, Sis. Eunice Klumpp and Bro. Louie Rumbold, who have had to spend many Sundays at home due to illness. May God grant each of them the grace to take one day at a time.

Sis. Margaret Tanner was a hospital patient for back surgery.

Following is a list of priceless gifts to give for Christmas:

To your enemy—forgiveness.
To your opponent—tolerance.
To your friends—your heart.
To your parents—conduct to make them glad you're their child.
To children—a good example.
To yourself—respect.
To everyone else—charity.

In closing I would like to introduce your new Silver Lining reporter, my neighbor, Sis. Evelyn Endress. Sis. Ev and Bro. Gary have a small son, Bruce, and like the majority of us in Bradford, they are farmers.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Kathy Schlatter

"Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Philippians 2:2. A "bone of contention" has no place in the Body of Christ! **Our Daily Bread.**

We are deeply appreciative of our visiting ministers' Spirit-led exhortations. Bro. Harold Emsch, Girard, OH; Bro. Russell Rapp, Morton, IL; and Bro. Ed Aeschleman, Union City, NJ, "gave of themselves" in our behalf. May He who knoweth all reward them and give the increase to their messages.

Our Sunday School Christmas program was on Dec. 20. It was an inspiration for those participating and for those listening. "Christmas News" was chosen as a focus, followed through from Christ the Babe to Christ our Savior, with the program's end including the Bible Class' reading and supporting with Bible verses, "One Solitary Life," the Sunday School singing "Joy to the World," and the Sunday School and congregation combining to give "The Babe of Bethlehem." (For anyone interested. "One Solitary Life" was just recently reprinted in the **Silver Lining**. Some Biblical supports, in order, are as follows: Micah 5:2, Isaiah 7:14, John 1:46, Matthew 8:20, Luke 23:20-23, Luke 23:32-34, Matthew 27:58-60, Philippians 2:9-11.)

Dave and Gloria Rinkenberger, son Matthew and daughter Theresa, have been in our midst for some time. Even though late, we do want to welcome them. We're thankful for their presence. Matthew will be in the Christmas program as a member of our large "youngest class."

Frank Milazzo, Sis. Marie Kulyan, and Bro. Frank Fisher have all been hospitalized. Our prayers for their swift recovery as the Lord wills, are many. May we take the comfort from **Zion's Harp**, No. 174:

"If a single fervent pray'r
Of a soul prevailing
On the tender heart of God
Brings its fruit unailing,
How much more is in store,
When whole congregations
Bring their supplications?"

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Romans 13:11. This verse particu-

larly struck me when read this past Wednesday evening, because seven years and one day ago my brother and I were baptized. In this verse, I felt both exhortation and comfort. May the Lord give us strength.

Working on a needlepoint article, watching as it seems to stretch too much out of shape, I thought about what blocking can do. The heat (usually damp) applied to the article, tacked to the appropriate size and shape, alternately stretches and shrinks the canvas to conform to the creator's intention. I rejoice that the Lord continually "blocks" my life, for without that, I would not be one of His own.

A number of us went Christmas caroling to several hospitals and a sheltered-care facility. As it often is, our blessings were made very clear to us by the contrast to the people we visited. Two memories were more striking than the rest. One of these was of Mike Ryan who worships with us when possible. He is a cerebral palsy victim, confined to a wheelchair, who finds it difficult to speak. He sang Christmas carols for others; it was a great effort on his part, mightily inspirational to me. The other was the sheltered-care facility which is in a not-so-special part of Chicago. It houses people with problems. They are able to walk, but otherwise, physical or mental handicaps impede their normal living. The smoke-filled room was perhaps more difficult to sing in, but they needed carols more than others. They looked like the forgotten, the downtrodden; almost, one would say the hopeless. They responded more openly than others because we remembered them. But we left after a short time. How long will our remembering last?

Sermon Notes:

Abraham's father left Ur of the Chaldees with him. Yet of Tehrah, it is only said that he died in Haran. What enticements caused him to stay, we do not know, but we do know he did not reach the land of Canaan, the promised land. Let us strive always onward toward that precious goal and not succumb to any similar Haran, no matter how beautiful it looks to our fleshly eye.

When Jacob sent his sons for corn in Egypt, he kept back his most precious son, Benjamin. Yet, before his sons could get that most

necessary corn, Jacob had to send his son, Benjamin, that last most precious thing in his life. Is there one among us who is still holding onto one thing he or she holds as most precious and missing out on the salvation, "the corn in Egypt?"

Let us clear away any cobwebs of unrighteousness that is touching our lives.

On our forefathers' trip to America, those who were the children of God took command, not because they were physically stronger, but, instead, because of their spiritual strength.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

Judy Bauer

Mary Anderson

We were thankful to have Bro. Frederick Knapp (Congerville) with us on Thanksgiving Day. May God bless him for letting himself be used for God's purposes.

Several from our congregation have been hospital patients. We're thankful that Sis. Caroline Hari, Bro. Walter Vogel, Sis. Alline Otto, and Dave Kupferschmid are now home. Sis. Esther Hodel is a surgical patient. Lillie Geyer suffered a broken wrist.

Elmer Young (75) passed away Dec. 9 at Carle Foundation Hospital. He is survived by two sisters, Lavina Young and Laura Young, and two brothers, Arthur Young and Jeff Young.

We are sorry to say that Bro. Bob and Sis. Leann Siegle have left our congregation to make their home in Oakville, IA. We have enjoyed blessed fellowship with them and wish them God's richest blessings, always. We know that they will be missed.

Bro. Dennis and Sis. Sharon Walder had a baby boy on Dec. 17. Nicholas Lloyd was welcomed home by Nathan, Adrea, and Amber.

We enjoyed hearing our Sunday School children tell the story of Christ's birth through song and verse. It's a familiar story, but one that touches our hearts anew each year.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Lillie Waldbeser on the passing of her sister, Sis. Mary Heutte of Morton.

TODAY

So here hath been dawning

Another blue day:
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Out of Eternity

This new day is born;
Into Eternity,
At night, will return.

Behold it aforesaid,
No eye ever did;
So soon it forever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue day:
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?
Thomas Carlyle

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Judy Wettstein

Gay Knapp

Amidst all the rush and confusion of the holiday season, we pause to spend an hour with our children as they provide our Christmas program. CHRIST, THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS was the title of the program. Their pieces were touching and meaningful, and we pray that they will remember these simple truths as they grow to the age of accountability.

We enjoyed the following visiting ministers this month: Bros Wendell Gudeman (Francesville), Bob Beebe (Bremen), Loren Knapp (Tucson), Jerry Kuntz (Oakville), and Ken Wertz (Cissna Park). May God bless them for their labors of love.

Our prayers are with Sis. Matilda Sauder who has been in and out of the hospital several times this year. Laura Schieber, daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Mary, was also in the hospital a few days.

As we go from home to home and sing Christmas carols to those we love who cannot get out as much as we do, we ourselves receive a great spiritual blessing. Surely we would be even more greatly blessed if we would take time to visit those more lonely than ourselves; and that probably includes a lot of people.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Ruth Ann Getz

Christmas. The beautiful story of peace on earth, good will to men is ever new in our hearts as we again commemorate the dear Saviour's birth. Many times in a day we cling to and trust in that great gift of love from our compassionate God; and so it is little wonder that there is great rejoicing during this season.

As a part of that remembrance, our young children brought us the

story of the birth of our Saviour in simple verse and song on Dec. 17 at our annual Christmas program. The childlike innocence and sincerity with which they spoke warmed our hearts.

Various groups spent several evenings caroling at local rest-homes and at the homes of loved ones who are shut-in. It's always a blessing to spend time with older brethren and others who are no longer as able to get around as they once did. We, in our hurrying, sometimes tend to forget how long the hours become to such dear ones.

Aaron Mathes joined the family of Mark and Barb Steffen on Nov. 21. What joy a baby can bring to a home; there to enjoy Aaron are Jennifer and Michelle. The grandparents are Leroy and Janet Elvin and Bro. Nathan and Sis. Marilyn Steffen.

George and Hildegard Schumacher, who have been converted since 1966 in the Apostolic Christian Church, Nazarene, brought their testimonies of faith before our congregation on Dec. 17 and thereupon entered our fold. They now join with us as our brother and sister in Christ. Bro. George and Sis. Hilde came to this country in 1958 to visit, and they then decided to stay. They sought out the church that they knew in the old country, and eight years later became converted.

We wish to express our sympathy to Sis. Rose Steffen and her family in the death of her sister, Sis. Elizabeth Sutter from the Taylor, MO, congregation.

Josephine Scranton, 84, passed away on Dec. 19. She was born in Elgin in 1894 and was the daughter of August and Elizabeth Schambach Fehrman. Josephine was the sister of our Sis. Libby Fehrman to whom our prayers for God's support are directed at this time.

Several in our community have suffered from illness this past month. These include Sis. Sue Braun, Sis. Gladys Weiss, Dale Tatoe, Frank Schaaf, Sis. Rose Viellieber, and Bro. Charles Graf. Dale Tatge, son-in-law of Bro. Nathan and Sis. Minnie Kellenberger, remains hospitalized at Sherman Hospital.

We are reminded of the great blessing of freedom of religion when visiting ministers are able to come, even from a distant community, and speak the pure gos-

pel. This month blessed us with the presence of Bro. Wendell Gerber and Bro. Carol Gerber (Bluffton, IN) and Bro. Virgil Metzger (Champaign, IL).

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Melba Mangold

Bro. Nathan Steffen of Elgin, IL, spent a weekend with us. On Sat. evening he helped Bro. Leroy Huber and Bro. Walter Anliker read and meditate on the conference conclusions. How nice it would be if we were all willing to follow their loving instructions. On Sunday we heard many good teachings from the Word by Bro. Nathan. We thank him for his labors in our behalf.

The engagement of Sis. Mary Beth Blunier and Bro. Jake Wettstein was announced Nov. 19. Their parents are Bro. Sam and Sis. Elizabeth Blunier and Harold and Loretta Wettstein, all of Eureka. They are planning a January wedding. We ask the Lord's blessings for this young couple.

Congratulations go to Bro. Jim and Sis. Janet Schlipf on the birth of Jennifer Jane, born Nov. 18. Justin is her little brother. The grandparents are Bro. Leroy and Ruth Stoller of Eureka and Bro. Loren and Sis. Mildred Schlipf of Gridley.

On Dec. 3, Bro. Art Anliker and Sis. Carol Kempf were united in holy matrimony by his father, Bro. Walter. We wish them many happy years together, hoping that God will continue to guide and bless them in their new life. Sis. Carol is the daughter of Bro. Bill and Sis. Clara Kempf; Sis. Nina is Bro. Art's mother. Bro. Leroy Hartman of Peoria and Bro. Virgil Metzger of Champaign were with us on that day.

It is always good news when souls, weary of the world, can turn to the Lord in repentance. Kent Leman and Dale and Leslie Leman have chosen to walk in this new way. Kent is the son of Bro. Roy and Sis. Wanda. Dale's parents are Bro. Gerald and Sis. Velma; his wife Leslie is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Reinman of Eureka. We wish them God's help and grace.

Bros. Roy Blunier and Tim Carr have been in the hospital for surgery. They are both getting along quite well and are home again. Sis. Esther Woerty of the "Home" has been hospitalized for medical rea-

sons. Steve Fehr was also in for tests.

We are sorry to have two families leaving our congregation, both feeling that they are led to new areas for work. Bro. Leroy and Sis. Bena Mae Rocke have moved to Elgin, IL, to work in the nursing home there. They plan to be gone about two or three years. Bro. Ervin and Sis. Sandy Knecht and their four children, Michelle, Mindy, Denise and Daniel have moved to Missouri. They will be assembling with the Lamar church. We will miss all of them and hope that God will be with them in their new endeavors.

Having chosen to walk hand-in-hand through life, Bro. Bob Prather and Sis. Marlene Wiegand were united in marriage on Dec. 10. Bro. Leroy Huber performed the ceremony. We again entreat God's blessing on this young couple as they start a new Christian home. Bro. Jack and Sis. Milly Prather and Bro. Bob and Sis. Helen Wiegand are the parents of the young couple.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

Joyce Huber

We praise the Lord that Walter and Rosetta Edelman gave their testimonies of their faith for their salvation and were baptized.

We are also rejoicing that Mrs. Ron Soper has given her heart to live for Jesus.

Bro. Ben and Sis. Carolyn Boliger were blessed with a new baby whom they named Alex. The little boy has a sister, Grace, and brothers Barry, Benji, and Andy.

The daughter of our ministering Bro. Duane Kilgus was married to Randy Stoller, son of Bro. and Sis. Elmer Stoller. Ronda and Randy will be at home in Forrest after their wedding trip.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. David Steidinger is a new baby boy, Derrick Lloyd. Other children are twins Dayton and Daniel, Darrel, Debby, and Davida.

Bro. Chester Maier, 73, passed away suddenly while sitting in his chair at home. His wife, Sis. Lydia (Bachtold), survives. Also surviving are a sister, Martha Maier, and two brothers, Bro. Sam and Alvin.

Sam Rapp passed away leaving his wife, Helen (Haab), surviving. Also surviving are a son, Ron; two daughters, Judy Cox and Kay Gray; two brothers, Carl and Ed-

ward; a sister, Sis. Ernestine Stoller; and five grandchildren.

We are sorry for those hospitalized: Bro. John Wiedman for surgery, Sis. Clara Zehr, Bro. Louie Wenger, Sis. Luella Sohn, Todd Kilgus, Margaret Sohn, and Sis. Elsie Peters.

The message Bro. Duane Metzger of Iowa brought us was enjoyed.

We were thankful for the ten baptisms in our church this past year and the addition of 14 new babies. There was one wedding in the church, our ministers performed wedding ceremonies for three couples in the Fellowship Hall. There were 12 funerals.

ILLINOIS, FORREST

Kathryn Steidinger

Beverly Eisenmann

The Fairbury congregation gathered with us as Elder Bros. Leo Moser (Lester) and Josh Broquard, along with Perry Zimmerman, read the memorandum and gave us loving admonition and instructions to help us walk the straight and narrow way. Bro. Leo stayed with us on Sunday, and thru God's Word we were led to the green pastures and fresh waters of life. Bro. Ken Schneider brought his family home for a Sunday. We appreciate his willingness to serve us.

Our Elder Bro. Perry Zimmerman was ill with pneumonia and spent some time in the hospital. Sis. Cinda Zimmerman (Bro. Al and Sis. Carolyn) and Lorelei Broquard (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Roberta) had ear surgery, and Aaron and Ricky Masters (Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary) had tonsillectomies. Other hospital patients were Bro. Ernie Gerber, Bro. Alf Kupfer-schmid and his son Chad, and Jaden Stoller (Stan and LuAnn). Bro. Paul and Sis. Edna Wiegand, who were injured in an accident in September, are improving and hope to get home soon.

The engagement of Sis. Kathy Steidinger (Bro. Ivan and Sis. Kathryn) and Bro. Wendell Dotterer (Bro. John and Sis. Betty, Rittman) was announced, and they are planning a Feb. 11 wedding.

We enjoyed a blessed day when many friends and relatives gathered with us to share the joys with Bro. Mark Schlatter (Sis. Juliet, Junction) and Sis. Sherri Ifft (Bro. Harvey and Sis. Velma Jean) as they were united in marriage by Bro. Perry Zimmerman. Visiting

ministers that day were Bros. Bill and Sam Schlatter (Junction), Henry Dotterer (Rittman), Eugene Fetter (Toledo), and Marvin Schmidgall (Eureka). Mark and Sherri are making their home in Fairbury.

Elder Bro. Ed Hohulin (Goodfield) and Bro. Joe Zimmerman (Morton) were here for Bro. Carl Schieber and Sis. Mildred Traub's wedding. That evening the newlyweds had an auto accident and Sis. Mildred is in the hospital.

Our best wishes are extended to two couples who were recently married: Kevin Huette (Bro. Art and Sis. Velda) and Toni Lynch; and Randy Stoller (Bro. Elmer and Sis. Rosetta) and Ronda Kilgus (Bro. Duane and Sis. Arlene).

Curt and Cindy Zimmerman welcome their first child, Zachery Joel. Bro. Glen and Sis. Mildred are his grandparents.

In 1978 our congregation had 15 babies, 5 baptisms, and 5 funerals.

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Verna Hartter - Elna Grimm

A New Year is before us. To keep the peace of God in our hearts, we might heed verses 8 and 9 in Philippians 4:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: **and the God of peace shall be with you.**"

Bro. Dean and Sis. Jackie Knobloch were blessed with a new son, Andrew Alan, born on Dec. 12. The grandparents are Bro. and Sis. Jack and Laura Koehl, Peoria, and Bro. and Sis. Clarence and Emma Knobloch, Bradford.

We felt the love of God through the messages spoken by our visiting ministers, Bro. Henry Grimm, Morton, Bro. Ezra Feller, Cissna Park, Bro. Todd Feller, LaCrosse, Bro. Roy Grimm, Taylor, and Bro. Arnold Gerst, Chicago. We thank them.

Bro. Sam Heiniger submitted to eye surgery in November, and we are thankful to have him assembling with us again.

Sis. Hulda Witzig also submitted to surgery and is expected to return home today. May the love and

peace of God give her special strength.

Our sincere prayers are with Dave Wiegand (Bro. Simon and Sis. Mary) who became critically ill with meningitis while traveling to Texas. He was hospitalized there, is somewhat improved, and is expected to be flown home this week. We also feel a great love and concern for our two dear sisters, Sis. Esther Woertz, who is hospitalized, and Sis. Arlene Wyss, who is bedfast.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY

Mrs. Perry Klopfenstein

Sometimes we hear it said, "The little things that we do or don't do in our walk of faith are not too important." But these little things can mean so much. The farmer who tills the soil and plants many acres of grain, eagerly hopes for a bountiful harvest. When the earth is dry and the seedlings are young and tender, his comment will be, "If only we could just have a little shower, it would help so much." Likewise if we are conscientious about those "little things" in our spiritual life and are willing to be obedient, we can cause a "little shower" of blessings that will help so much and bring about a wonderful spiritual growth of love and harmony among the brethren.

This excellent illustration was described by Elder Bro. Don Sauder from Roanoke who was with us for the reading of the memorandum. We were encouraged in our precious faith as he and our Elder Bro. Edwin Ringger read and expounded upon the conclusions of the brotherhood conference. At the conclusion of the evening, Bro. Don gave us a final word of inspiration that went with us as we left and gave us all much food for thought.

He asked the question, "Who among us tonight will receive the greatest blessing?" There are those who have always found it easy to be humble and obedient. These no doubt will receive a blessing. This can be called "The purity of innocence." Then there are those who have a little different understanding or interpretation. Nevertheless, because they love the brotherhood, they are willing to change and make the necessary sacrifices for the benefit and preservation of the church. This can be called "The purity of love." These are the ones who will receive the greatest blessing.

Elmer and Marjorie Schlipf, Steve Schlipf, David Meiss, and Jeff Gramm have repented for their sins and received the peace of God in their hearts. Lord willing, they will give their testimony of faith before the congregation in the near future.

The birth of a new daughter, Megan Jill Ringger, brightened the home and lives of Bro. Gary and Sis. Marla. The happy grandparents are Bro. Edwin and Sis. Pat Ringger of Gridley and Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Loretta Bauer of Cissna Park. Megan was born Nov. 21.

We were blessed by the visits of ministering brothers Carl Weiss of Washington, IL; Russel Wuthrich of Pulaski, IA; and Ed Alt of Cissna Park, IL.

Bro. Emil Schlipf, Sis. Mary Martin, Sis. Hulda Yergler, and Todd Kiefer, son of Bro. Larry and Sis. Barb, were hospital patients this month.

Sis. Keri Ringger and Bro. Al Hany, both of Gridley, are looking forward to the day when they will become husband and wife. Their engagement was announced Nov. 25.

The joys of Christmas were reflected in the faces of the little ones as the Sunday School presented a program on Dec. 17. That evening, those who wished to and were able to, gathered at the fellowship hall and went caroling. The old familiar songs warm our hearts each year as we honor the Saviour's birth.

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Deanna Marti

"Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation." Psalms 25:5. As we start a new year in the Lord, we are not certain of what is before us. But we are certain that if we are truly submissive to the Lord's will, He will guide us every step of the way on a path which leads to heaven's gates. So let us each commit our lives totally into our Saviour's hands, and joyfully walk in the paths He sets before us.

We felt our Lord's presence when we commemorated His birth at our Christmas program. Despite the weather conditions, we were blessed to have many parents, relatives, and friends with us, and were especially thankful to have Bro. Wendell Gudeman of the Francesville congregation worship

with us. We also thank Bro. Duane Killgus of Fairbury for spending a Thursday evening with us. We are very appreciative for all the brothers who so faithfully support our gatherings.

ILLINOIS, MORTON

Joann Roecker

We were blessed and privileged to have the following visiting ministers on Sunday Dec. 3: Bros. Ron Heiniger, Bloomington; Ed Alt, Cissna Park; and Bob Grimm, Goodfield. The day was filled with joy as Bro. Ron Farney and Sis. Ellen Domnick was joined together in holy matrimony. Their parents are Bro. and Sis. Gerry Farney of Cissna Park and Bro. and Sis. Dale Domnick. We pray God's richest blessings on this young couple as they start their walk together.

Dec. 9 was a blessed evening as two young men brought their testimonies of faith. Allen Kaiser is the son of Bro. and Sis. Harry Kaiser and Dave is the son of Bro. and Sis. Harley Kaiser. We appreciated Bro. Roy Sauder's being with us in the same evening. Sunday, Dec. 10, Allen and Dave were baptized. God is still calling, and how thankful we are that souls are still answering.

Happy little faces all aglow! Precious little children (some wiggles and giggles) were so eager to present their special Christmas program for us on the evening of Dec. 10. Pausing to remember how anxious we were as children to say our part and sing our special songs, joy comes to the hearts not only of parents but to all during this time. Of times we hold valuable or precious, these certainly stand out. The evening was truly a blessing for all who attended.

Bro. and Sis. Warren Kaiser have been blessed recently. Their two daughters have presented them with beautiful grandsons! Nov. 24, Jeffrey Layne II arrived bringing joy to Bro. Jeff and Sis. Rhonda Kaufman. Bro. Jeff's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Cliff Kaufman. The second precious bundle to bless this family was Adam Michael, born on Dec. 6. Welcoming him was Bro. Roger and Sis. Dawn Spangler. Bro. Roger's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Spangler. This will be a special Christmas for these loved ones. May God richly bless them.

It is with joy that we announce

that Bro. Jon and Sis. Chris Zeller have been blessed with a fine son. Andrew Jon arrived on Dec. 6. Andrew's grandparents are Henry and Sis. Norma Zeller and Ralph and the late Verelda Meyering.

Our hospital list during December lists Bro. Ed Belsley, Bro. Joe Witzig, Sis. Hannah Strunk, and Sis. Hazel Ferguson. We are happy to report that Bros. William C. and William J. Roecker are both home from the hospital. Let us continue to pray for our hospital patients, shut-ins, and those on sick-beds at home. There is comfort in knowing that, come what may, God is always there caring for us.

Christmas will soon be here, and we truly rejoice in the birth of our Savior. We, here in Morton, send our love and greetings in the Lord and warmest wishes for a blessed holiday to all. May our Lord richly bless each and every one.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA

Mary Sue Rieker - Diane Hohulin

"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 21:9. On Nov. 19, Cindy Plattner (daughter of Bro. Ken and Sis. Edith Plattner), Ken Ober (husband of Sis. Pam Ober), Heidi Haefli (daughter of Bro. Ernest and Sis. Dorothy Haefli), and Anna Hoerr were baptized. It is so encouraging to see both the young and the aged give their hearts and lives to the Lord. We wish them God's richest blessings.

Bro. Greg and Sis. Beth Herman are the happy first-time parents of a darling baby boy, Chad Allen. His grandparents are Bro. Howard and Sis. Nancy Herman and Bro. Paul and Sis. Rhoda Meister.

Our congregation was very pleased to have Bro. Ed Lanz from Oakville minister to us on Thanksgiving Day.

We are sorry to hear that the following brethren have been hospitalized this month but are also happy to hear that they are on the road to recovery: Sis. Eunice Kammerer, Sis. Clara Bittner, Sis. Betty Binkele, Sis. Sophie Hybarger, Leland Swadley, Bro. Eldon Nussbaum, and Bro. Jack Koehl.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Psalms 23:4. Our Sis. Ida Schmidgall passed away on Nov. 19. We wish to express our sympathy to her sisters, Sis. Caro-

line and Kathryn Schmidgall. Bro. Nathan Banwart from West Bend passed away, and our sorrows are extended to Sis. Doris Banwart, Joyce Banwart, and Sis. Mable Weber and her family upon the death of their father. Our sympathy is extended to Sis. Anna and Rachel Hoerr upon the death of their brother, Bro. John Hoerr of Taylor. Bro. Joe Bittner of Roanoke was called to his heavenly home. We express our sympathy to Bro. Les Bittner, Sis. Barbara Hoerr, Sis. Priscilla Bittner, Sis. Preceta Eberhardt, and Bro. Walter Bittner. We pray that God will give each one added grace and strength in this time of great need.

Sis. Caroline and Kathrine Schmidgall wish to express their sincere thanks to those who were so kind to them during the loss of their loved one. The deeds, kindness, and comforting words will always be remembered..

Sis. Mary Berchtold wishes to extend her thanks to all those who sent cards and visited her during her illness.

Away in a manger no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down
His sweet head; The stars in the sky
Looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep in the hay.

Martin Luther

That was the first song sung to us by the pre-kindergarten through first grade classes at our annual Christmas program. It is such a blessing to listen to the young children and Bible class sing praises to His name. We pray that they will always enjoy singing praises to Him. At the end of the program, the congregation sang "Silent Night."

Also, we had the dedication of the new Sunday School rooms. All was donated from our brethren's time and talents. May God bless them for their labor of love. "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." I Thessolonians 1:3.

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

Ruth Ricketts

To live for self is vain; To live

for Christ is gain.

Author Unknown

Many were missing from our congregation on Nov. 19 because they were in Roanoke at the wedding ceremony of Bro. Daryl Waggenbach and Sis. Julianne Hodel. We heartily welcome Sis. Julie and trust she will be happy with us. May the Lord richly bless this marriage.

Many gathered Thanksgiving Day morning to give thanks for the blessings received during the past year. We were thankful to have Bro. Kennie Dietz of Bradford deliver the message for this special day. We were reminded of the hardships which the pilgrims endured; yet they found it necessary to set aside a day to give thanks to the Lord for the blessings they had received in the New World. We have very many more blessings, material and spiritual. Do we appreciate them enough? We have many benefits: our church, our beloved brotherhood, the material blessings so abundantly supplied, the comforts of homes and transportation, and the most precious of all, the love of God. We have unseen benefits too: grace, faith, and love. In the fear of our Lord, may we live so that we may all receive the blessed reward of eternal life with the Lord.

On the Sunday following Thanksgiving, we awoke to find the ground white. The day was dark, but we were warmly blessed with the visit of ministering Bro. Bob Meyer from Bluffton, IN. The Bible Class was in attendance to share the heart stirring, God given words. We were impressed with the quietness in the sanctuary even though there were many present. We could surely feel God's love and presence as we were drawn away from the world and filled with spiritual wisdom. We should always seek God's wisdom and not rely on man's wisdom which does not satisfy our needs. We sincerely thank our visitors for coming.

Several of our loved ones spent time in the hospital recently. Sis. Lillian Elsasser was a surgical patient; Cleo Gerst suffered great pain and tests showed she was suffering from acute arthritis. They are both at home and improving each day. Sis. Natalia Feucht has not been able to worship with us for several weeks and is confined to her home. Our prayers rise to God, asking Him to be merciful to

them, and, if it is His will they will soon be healed of their afflictions.

Bro. Dan Koch of Tremont came one Wednesday evening and helped Bro. Dave bring forth the conclusions of the memorandum from the recent conference held at Tremont. We are thankful for humble brothers whose concern is to preserve our precious heritage. Kindly, admonitions and encouragements were given to all. It is our duty to be obedient and adhere to the teachings brought forth from our pulpits. We are thankful for our elders who are not interested in man-made rules but strictly abide by scriptural teachings. We thank our brothers for their love and concern. We were glad to have the Bradford congregation share the evening with us.

Bro. Brad Baurer and Sis. Cheryl Rocke chose Dec. 17 for their wedding day. Many from our congregation went to Roanoke to share their special day. We wish them the Lord's richest blessings. Three of our ministers went to Roanoke to share in the marriage ceremony, so Bro. Nathan Stoller of Bradford came to assist Bro. Joe. We are always thankful to have Bro. Nathan and thank him for the words of encouragement he rendered. In closing, he quoted a few words his Bro. Lowell once spoke, "Do not be saying anything you would not want to be saying when the Lord comes; do not be doing anything you would not want to be doing when the Lord comes; and do not go anywhere you would not want to be when the Lord comes." If we keep these things in mind, we will be ready at any time that the Lord might come.

Many are busy preparing for the holiday season and some of us have been blessed when groups have come caroling. It stirs our hearts when young and old gather together and go to the shut-ins and older folks to sing the beautiful carols we all enjoy. The children in the Sunday School have been learning verses telling of the Saviour's birth, the star, the shepherds and the wisemen. Each class sings these precious carols that never get old. How we love to hear them and trust all, teachers, parents, and children, receive a blessing.

Our sympathy is extended to the Menold families in the recent death of their brother, Alphy. Our heart-

felt sympathy is also extended to the John Bitner families, including Bro. Art and Sis. Joy (Bitner) Baurer of our congregation. Bro. John was a frequent visitor here in past years and we know that he will be sadly missed. May they place their trust in the One who knows what is best and look to Him for comfort.

As another year quickly draws to a close, we review the past and think of all the blessings which we have enjoyed during the past year. The foremost treasure is Christ's love for us and His marvelous plan of Salvation, with grace to sustain us and faith to look to Him for all our needs. Sixteen souls were added to the fold this past year.

We thank our ministers who so willingly and untiringly proclaimed God's precious Word to us, and thank the Sunday School teachers who gave of themselves for the children. We believe that they also learn from the children for we are taught that our hearts should be like theirs, ready to forgive and forget, innocent, sincere, and trusting.

Our little children bring much joy to our hearts. Six families were made happy with babies; there were five girls and one little boy. How fortunate these babes are to be born to Christian parents who will teach them the truth.

We are so thankful for our blessed brotherhood; we share joys and sorrows, have sincere love and concern for each other, and hold one another up. We have had four funerals this past year, losing two dear sisters and two friends, one of whom was converted before the death angel called her.

We are thankful for our young people who add so much to the church. How good it is when souls are drawn to each other through helpmates with four coming from other congregations. We welcomed all the sisters who now make this their home church. May the Lord add His blessings to these marriages and fill their lives with peace, love, and joy.

We are thankful for all our countless blessings and pray that love and peace can be multiplied in the coming days. May we all live so that our lights will shine brightly and we can be a guiding light, a haven for seeking souls in this dark and sinful world. May we always be ready to do our part in whatever way opens to us. May

God's love be manifest in us, and may we strive more diligently to do His will. May peace and love rest on all.

Dave, Mary, Jake, Ona, Leonard and Marie Menold, Reuben and Nathalie Feucht, Nathan and Martha Stoller, and Joe and Emily Stoller wish to thank everyone for the many acts and deeds of kindness shown to them during the illness and passing of their brother, Alphy.

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

Edith Sauder · Mae K. Hodel

May God grant special blessings to four young couples who were united in marriage.

Sis. Julie Hodel (Ed and Helen) and Bro. Daryl Waggenbach (Bro. Ray and Sis. Betty), Princeville. were united in holy marriage.

Bro. Tim Sauder (Bro. Jack and Sis. Marlis) and Sis. Jennifer Gramm (Bro. Art and Sis. Ruth), Gridley, became husband and wife in the Lord.

David Fehr (Bro. Rich and Sis. Madlyn) and Linda Steffen (Bro. Earl and Sis. Kay), Elgin, exchanged wedding vows on Nov. 26.

Sis. Cheryl Rocke (Bro. Melvin and Sis. Mae) became the bride of Bro. Brad Baurer (Bro. Art and Sis. Joy), Princeville, on Dec. 17. We welcome them into our congregation!

A baby boy was born to Sis. Jan and Bro. Randy Martin. He has been named Rory Jason. Ryan Jar-rad welcomed him home.

The Bloomington-Normal choir was our special guest at our family sing. We always receive many blessings from hearing and singing our beautiful hymns.

Our visiting ministers this month have been Bro. Art Baurer, Bro. Joe Stoller from Princeville, and Bro. Ed Aeschliman from Union City, NJ. Elder Bros. Roy Sauder and Joe Braker assisted Bro. Don Sauder with the memorandum of the brotherhood conference. May God give us grace and wisdom to follow the Biblical teachings.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Bob and Sis. Cindy DeSigne because of the death of her father, Bro. John Hoerr, Taylor, MO.

Sis. Cindy DeSigne, Sis. Caroline Schafer and Bro. Kenneth Hodel are home from the hospital. Bro. Bill Sauder is hospitalized at this time.

Bro. John Bittner, Jr. passed away unexpectedly at his home. He

is survived by his wife, Sis. Dorothy, and four daughters; Sis. Luann Knapp, Sis. Joy Baurer, Sis. Judy Bittner, and Sis. Peggy Heinfeld. We will miss his smiling face and hearty greeting.

The John Bittner family expresses their sincere thanks to all for the love, gifts, and sympathy shown them at this time.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

Robert Wagenbach

As we approach this Christmas season, may we pause and think just what Christmas really means? It is not just Christ's birth, but it is His dying on the cross that bought our soul's salvation.

Bro. Joe Braker of the Morton congregation was our only visiting minister this month. We thank him for his efforts.

Martin Yergler (Bro. Gene and Sis. Betty) was injured when the semi-trailer truck he was driving hit a bridge. We are thankful that he is now at home recuperating.

Doug Sauder (Bro. Steve and Sis. Mary) was confined to his home with pneumonia. He has recovered at this writing.

Bro. Ernest Schaefer and John Schmid were both surgical patients. We are happy to say that they are "up and about" again. Bro. Christ B. Pflederer was also hospitalized for tests.

Ruth Endress (Fred) was a surgical patient and is now home again. Also, Bro. John Moser is in the hospital recuperating from surgery.

We are sorry that so many from our congregation have been sick, but we thank God that His healing power has reached out to all these dear ones.

Our sympathy goes to Sisters Rose Knapp and Anna Lehman in the passing of their brother, Willie Knapp.

Dec. 17 was our annual Sunday School Christmas program. We rejoiced in hearing the sweet little voices of our younger classes and then the blending of the voices of the Bible School group. May God richly bless each and everyone that took part, including the teachers for their love and patience.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

Valerie Kipfer

Prayer is the Key to Heaven,
But faith unlocks the door.
Words are so easily spoken—

A prayer without faith
Is like a boat without an oar;
Have faith when you speak to the
Master,

That's what he asks you for.
Prayer is the Key to Heaven,
But FAITH unlocks the door.

Author Unknown

On Dec. 6, we gathered to hear the reading of the memorandum. We must remember to take this all to heart and try to do the Lord's will in all things. Elder Bros. Roy Sauder, Peoria, and Don Sauder, Roanoke, had the services.

We are thankful for our visiting ministers this month. They were Bros. Walter Anliker, Steve Gutwein, Harold Schmidgall, and Ron Heiniger.

On Dec. 17, we had our monthly hymn singing. Our Sunday School students sang Christmas carols. Many times we have sung the familiar songs, but do we sometimes fail to actually think about the words we are really singing?

Sis. Kate Oertle wishes to extend a hearty "thank you" for all of the cards and gifts she received on her 90th birthday. May God richly reward each one.

John and Esther Schmid wish to thank everyone for remembering them in many ways while they were hospitalized and while they were convalescing at home. They ask that God will bless all for their love and kindness.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON

Joni Gerber - Shari Kaehr

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." Gen. 2:24.

Believing it is the Lord's will, Sis. Peg Neuenschwander (Bro. Bill and Sis. Mildred) and Bro. Jeff Yergler (Bro. Truman and Sis. Marcella) will become one in the Lord on Feb. 4. Also, Sis. Ann Fiechter (Bro. Carl and Sis. Mary) and Bro. Kris Frauhofer (Bro. Bill and Sis. Betty) will be united in holy wedlock on Feb. 25.

Many families in our congregation have been blessed with new bundles of joy. Bro. Richard and Sis. Rosie Kipfer brought home an addition to their family, Derrick William. Twin daughters, Amy Lyn and Amber Jo were double joy to their parents, Bro. Rick and Sis. Joyce Yergler. Bro. Steve and Sis. Myra Ringger are thankful for their second son, Michael Joe. Bro.

Kim and Sis. Sue Yergler welcome little Andrew Kim into their hearts and home. Jennifer Lyn is the first bundle of love for her parents, Bro. Michael and Sis. Carmon Bertsch. Bro. Allen and Sis. Terry Bertsch welcome home their newest addition, little Andrew Lee. A son, Michael John, was born to Dennis and Sis. Rebecca Caffee. A new daughter, Sue Ellen, is the fifth child given by God to Bro. Lee and Sis. Jenny Gerber. On Dec. 12, Bro. Bob and Sis. Mary Honegger welcomed little Justin Andrew into their lives. John and Becky Maggert are the proud parents of their first son, Joshua Adam. Bro. Roger and Sis. Pat Kaehr are the grandparents. Dave and Sharon Imel are very pleased with their first child, Joshua David. The grandparents are Bro. Ezra and Sis. Tillie Kaehr.

At 88 years of age, John Kehrn felt God's wondrous grace and has been baptized, and we now greet him as our brother. Also Jodi Ringger (Bro. Dave and Sis. Maxine) and Darlene Isch (Bro. Ernie and Sis. Lucille) made a covenant with God to love and serve Him always and were baptized on Dec. 10. We welcome these two new sisters into our congregation.

Hospitalized this month were: Bro. Dave Reimschisel, Bro. Russell Steffen, Sis. Teresa Kipfer (wife of Bro. Ted), Bro. Ken Aeschliman, Sis. Sylvia Gerber, Sis. Ida Gerber, Sis. Marge Baumgartner (wife of Bro. Truman), Sis. Flossie Stoller (wife of Bro. Ray), Sis. Joyce Baumgartner (wife of Bro. Howard), and Sis. Rose Mary Gerber (wife of Bro. Les). We trust that they may all feel God's healing power.

We thank our two visiting ministers, Bro. Art Ringger (Indianapolis) and Bro. Ben Manz (Junction, OH), who so willingly shared their Thanksgiving messages with us on Thanksgiving morning.

On Nov. 26, the annual Sunday School Program was given to our congregation. We appreciate the time our Sunday School teachers and students put into this blessed event. We lovingly thank them all.

United in holy matrimony in our Fellowship Hall on Nov. 4 were Mike Sumwalt and Aleda Gehring (Bro. Claren and Sis. Joyce). On Nov. 25, John Myers and Verona Troxel (Bro. Dwight and Sis. Beverly) repeated their vows, promising their love to each other. We

wish both couples much happiness as they share their lives together.

INDIANA, BREMEN

Norma Lehman

And suddenly there was the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. (Luke 2:13-14)

It seems that the Christmas season comes more quickly every year, but there are still many who don't celebrate the real meaning of Christmas. They exchange gifts and say some kind words, but they don't look to heaven and thank God for His precious gift, His Holy Son. It tells us further in Chapter 2 of Luke that the Child Jesus grew up, strong in the spirit, full of wisdom and the grace of God. We, too, should yearn to grow spiritually like Christ and work to be perfect in God's sight.

On Nov. 30 we had visiting ministers Bro. Joe Waibel from Bay City, Bro. Loren Stoller from Latty, and Bro. Wendell Gudeman from Francesville. We are very blessed to have such concerned elders. We thank God for them and ask Him to richly bless each one of them.

Ministering Bro. Walt Rager from Toledo visited us on Dec. 3. We thank him for his inspirational message.

Bro. Dave Gramm is still in the hospital; we ask for your special prayers for his recovery.

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. (Eph. 6:24)

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE

Linda Gutwein

Sharon Neihouser

A Thanksgiving Program was held on Sunday evening, Nov. 19. Bro. Walt Steffen (Milford) shared the precious Word with us on Thanksgiving Day. May we be thankful for our many blessings every day of the year and not just on Thanksgiving Day.

On Nov. 26, the engagement of Sis. Lorene Pfledderer (Bro. Bob and Sis. Norma) to Bro. Brian Furrer (Bro. Vernon and Sis. Jan) of Wolcott was announced. We wish them God's richest blessings. It was a joy to have Bro. Harold Gramm (Morris) minister to us.

Francesville had the privilege of assembling with the Purdue college students for their annual Christmas program. An inspiring

and blessed evening was felt by all through verse and song.

Hospitalized for surgery were Sis. Peg Gudeman and Bro. Harry Yaggie and for observation were Sis. Marion Gutwein and Sis. Lena Knochel, who is a resident at Parkview Haven.

Dec. 17, Sis. Wendy Gudeman (Bro. Wendel and Sis. Marcella) and Bro. Jon Schwab (Bro. Vernon and Sis. Arlene) of Wolcott were united in holy matrimony. May God richly bless them as they walk life's pathway together. Those who came to share the Word with us were Bros. Roy Wernli (Lamont), Vernon Schwab (Wolcott), and Edwin Bahler (Remington).

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS

Lynn Klopfenstein - Pam Frank

Bros. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott) and Ezra Feller (Cissna Park) shared the reading of the memorandum with us this month. We cannot appreciate enough the heritage of our faith.

Parents are laden with great responsibilities, especially when their children are young in age. Likewise, there is great responsibility for those of God's children who are more mature in the faith to nourish and support the "new babe" in Christ. In a recent sermon by our ministers, this was emphasized and should be of utmost importance to all.

Satan works so hard to keep souls from giving their lives to Christ. Once their foot is inside the door, Satan is fighting harder than ever to change that "young soul's" heart.

We would like to thank Bro. Jack Bollier (Leo) for being with us and ministering the Word.

INDIANA, LA CROSSE

Grace Heinold - Lois Bucher

On Thanksgiving Day we were blest with three visiting ministers: Bros. Marshall Heinold, Gene Lehman, and Bill Schlatter. Elder Bro. Herman Kellenberger and Nathan Steffen were with us Dec. 9 and 10 to help Bro. Ed in reading the memorandum. We thank all of these brothers for their willingness to serve us.

Our Sunday School children showed us through readings and songs their joy and love of the Christmas story at a program Sunday evening, Dec. 17.

Our friends, Patricia Bucher and Scott Frank, have been announced

for proving. Our prayers for them are for much grace and courage in their new lives ahead.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Roland and Sis. Josephine Meiss in the death of his sister, Vera Berkshire, who passed away Dec. 4 after an extended illness.

We are happy to see Dan Nuest back in Sunday School after being hospitalized as the result of an accident.

INDIANA, LEO

Mrs. Phil Schlatter

Mrs. Al Frautschi

"The flower of youth never appears more beautiful than when it bends toward the Son of Righteousness." One more young person, Marsha Stieglitz, has turned to Him.

On Dec. 13, Bro. Loren Stoller, Latty, assisted Bro. David Bertsch in reporting the Conference conclusions.

A NEW YEAR

He came to my desk with quivering lip—

The lesson was done.

"Dear Teacher, I want a new leaf," he said,

"I've spoiled this one."

I took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave him a new one all unspotted,

And into his sad eyes smiled,
"Do better, now, my child."

I went to the throne with a quivering soul!—

The old year was done.

"Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?

I've spoiled this one."

He took the old leaf all stained and blotted,

And gave me a new one all unspotted,

And into my sad heart smiled,
"Do better now, My child."

Sunrise, sunset; sunrise, sunset; and another year is gone! Let us remind ourselves:
Only one life, 'twill soon be past:
Only what's done for Christ will last.

INDIANA, MILFORD

Sandy Beer

Paula Haab

While cutting wood Alvin Haab had the misfortune of injuring his

leg and spent several days in the hospital. We are thankful that he is again able to go to work and attend our services. Sis. Andrea Stoller had minor surgery for a voice problem. She hasn't been able to talk for several weeks. Bro. Walter Steffen is hospitalized. May the Lord restore him to his home and our church pulpit soon.

The angels brought the good news of Jesus' birth to the shepherds on the hillsides of Judea centuries ago, and the "angelic like" voices of our little ones in the Sunday School told us once again of Jesus' birth. Their poems and songs also reminded us that it's not the birth of Christ but His death on the cross that makes us free. Oh, how we pray that this Word will be kept in their hearts so that someday they will not miss this great Salvation.

INDIANA, PURDUE UNIVERSITY (Lafayette)

Candy Wuethrich

Our fall semester is soon coming to an end. We are all looking forward to spending the Christmas season with our families and loved ones.

And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love. I Cor. 13:13. We want to express our sincere congratulations to Brian Furrer (Bro. Vernon and Sis. Janet) of Wolcott and Sis. Lorene Pfladderer (Bro. Bob and Sis. Norma) of Francesville. Their engagement was announced on Nov. 26, and a wedding is being planned for Feb. 18. We wish them the Lord's blessings.

We are so thankful for the ministering brothers that give of their time to come to our Purdue church services and share God's Word with us. Our visiting ministers have been Bro. Joe Schrock (Congerville), Bro. Virgil Metzger (Champaign), and Bro. Vernon Schwab (Wolcott).

Our Christmas Program was given on Dec. 14. We were so happy that so many loved ones could come and share the evening with us. Bro. Steve Gutwein (Francesville) gave the message. We were also favored by the Francesville men's choir as they sang some beautiful Christmas hymns. The Purdue group also sang many Christmas songs. We hope that everyone can come again throughout the next semester. It is always

such a joy to fellowship with our families, brothers and sisters in the Lord, and friends!

INDIANA, REMINGTON

Amelia Schini

Mildred Clauss

O sing unto the Lord a new song: Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Sing unto the Lord, bless His name; shew forth His salvation from day to day. Ps. 96:1-2.

New Year's Day will have come and gone into history by the time this is in print. Our wish remains that throughout the year we will all praise His name and that from day to day we will show forth His wonderful salvation in our walk.

Bro. Jacob Bahler was hospitalized and had surgery but is again able to assemble with us.

He would like to thank all who sent cards, flowers, and gifts, and thanks all for the prayers that were offered in his behalf. He wants to thank all who came to visit him while he was in the hospital and since he returned home.

Our news is scarce this month, but as I write this, I can say we are looking forward to hearing our Sunday School children present their Christmas program tomorrow evening. We trust that these teachings will become memories that will bring good fruit into the children's hearts and will touch their souls when they reach an accountable age.

We are also looking forward to Sunday, Jan. 7, when Annette Mathew will give testimony of her faith and how God has led her to our church. She is very dear to us, and we will gladly welcome her into our flock.

KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER

The oldest member of our congregation, Sis. Eunice Knochel, will soon be 90 years old, and we are thankful that one of her daughters, Luella Glick, so kindly wrote the following tribute to her mother.

Eunice Nussbaum Knochel, daughter of Emma Zimmerman and Nicolas Nussbaum, was born in Fairbury, Livingston County, Illinois, on Nov. 23, 1888. She had five sisters and three brothers.

The family migrated to Remington, Indiana, and it was here that she married Gust Knochel on Dec. 29, 1909. Seven sons and five daughters were born to their union. On her 90th birthday, her family

also includes twenty-one grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren.

Much of her married life was spent on the family farm west of Remington, and nine of the children were born there. During the period between 1912 and 1918, Eunice and Gust lived in Latty, Ohio. Two daughters, Lucile and Helen, and a son, Fern, were born during this time. However, Helen died at the age of five months. It was in Latty that Eunice and Gust were converted and became members of the Apostolic Church.

In 1918, they returned to Remington, and the years between 1918 and 1954 were spent on the same family farm they had left to go to Latty.

Work is no stranger to Eunice; she has toiled long and hard to raise her family, but through it all she has kept her faith and has maintained a beautiful sense of humor.

In 1954, Eunice and Gust retired from the farm and moved to a new home in Remington where she still resides. Gust died in Dec., 1969, two weeks before his sixtieth wedding anniversary. As Eunice celebrates her ninetieth year, nine children are living—Raymond, Fern, Allen, Lucille, Maurice, Arthur, Dorothy, Marjorie, and Richard. Glen was killed in Okinawa in 1953 during the Korean Campaign, and Sis. Lucile died in 1956. One grandson was killed during the Vietnam War. Eunice has two brothers and three sisters who are still living.

While the years may have taken their toll on her physical strength, she has maintained her zest for life. Eunice attends church regularly; still does some quilting; enjoys her church-related activities; and is always ready to entertain her friends and family in a joyous manner. She is, indeed, a treasure.

Sis. Marie Schini has been her live-in companion for the past many years.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Marie Heinold

—How can you make this the happiest Christmas of your life? Simply by trying to give yourself to others. Put something of yourself into everything you give. A gift, however small, speaks its own language. And when it tells of the

love of the giver, it is truly blessed.—

Norman Vincent Peale

A blessed Sunday for our little flock was when a large group of Bluffton folk came and brought with them Bro. Phil Stettner, our only visiting minister this past month.

Bro. John Heinold wishes to thank the many who remembered him with cards, gifts, and visits during these past months.

Bro. Willis Feller is slowly gaining strength after heart surgery and is hoping to be strong enough to again assemble with us by mid-January.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT

Laurel Widmer

Christmas is a time of love. This is an emotion experienced by all people, and yet, it is not all Christmas love, or in other words, Christian love. Without Christ, the love humans express for one another is as temporary as life itself. The kind of love to strive for is Christ's because it lasts through eternity. Though we give material gifts at this season, we should also share our spiritual gifts with those around us.

The announcement was made on Nov. 26 that Bro. Brian Furrer and Sis. Lorene Pfladderer were to be married. We wish them the best gifts in life that only God can give.

Bros. Wendell Gudeman and Earl Zeltwanger spent the weekend of Dec. 10 with us for the provings of and baptisms of Bro. Neal Widmer and Sis. Suzanne Schwab. We welcome them into our fellowship and wish them well in the life before them. For these two, life is just beginning, but others must pass through the valley of death.

Sis. Priscilla Anker passed from this life on Dec. 5. She was 81. Surviving are her children, Robert, Willis, James, Mrs. Loretta Dunker, and Mrs. Joyce Miller. She also has 24 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren.

Hospitalized were Bro. Dan Reel, for surgery, and Robbie Lehman. Robbie is "out and about" again. We hope Dan will soon be back with us, too.

Bro. Jon Schwab and Sis. Wendy Gudeman were united in holy matrimony on Dec. 17 at Francesville. We wish them God's blessing and every happiness in their life

together. We welcome Sis. Wendy to her new home.

IOWA, BURLINGTON

Mayme Gerst - Judy Gehring

Sis. Rekie Anliker is home from the hospital and has been back in church.

We attended the funeral of Bro. Hoerr who is Sis. Rosie Massner's father. We offer our sympathy to Rosie and also to our dear Sis. Joyce Pohl, whose mother was buried this past week at Taylor, MO.

We had our Christmas program Sunday afternoon. It's amazing to think that the children who participated are the future church. Sunday evening about 80 went Christmas caroling and then returned to the church for a chili supper.

It was announced to the church that Mindy Taeger and Laverne Salek have received peace and will be taken into the fold in the near future.

The Christmas season is upon us, the time of year when most of the world celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

One of the big factors of the Christmas season in America is the giving of gifts to loved ones. I assume that giving of gifts by the wise men for the baby Jesus started this tradition. In reality, though, the giving of Jesus to the world by God, the Father, was the great gift of God. The presentation of Jesus to the world was just the beginning of a new era of hope for the entire world, thus fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament patriarchs.

Jesus also had to "give" something to the world to fulfill the Father's will. He willingly gave His life so that we might receive the gift of God, eternal life, through Him. Truly, then, the Christmas season is filled with thoughts of unselfishness and the spirit of giving.

We also must "give" to receive the gift of eternal life. We have to give ourselves over to the will of God, which is in contrast to our former lives when we lived for our selfish motives. I hope that, amidst the hustle and bustle of our present Christmas season, we will not forget the intent and purpose that God attaches to the birth of His Son, Jesus.

We look forward to our annual Christmas caroling for the older folks and shut-ins; we look forward to being with loved ones at

Christmastime; and we look forward to giving and receiving gifts.

Many things come and go, but that is not true of eternal life; it shall eventually come and will never pass away. The beginning of the hope of all true believers was instituted by God at the first Christmas, nearly 2,000 years ago. Truly, it is a precious heritage, a gift from God. How precious is it? We are informed in Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among man, whereby we must be saved."

What name is referred to? None other than the name of Jesus Christ, in whom lieth our hope.

Sis. Rekie Anliker would like to thank everyone for all their prayers and concern for her.

IOWA, ELGIN

Eleanor Butikofer

Silent night! Holy night! All is dark, save the light where they sweet vigils keep o'er the Babe who in silent sleep rests in heavenly peace, rests in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Peaceful night! Darkness flies—all is light; shepherds hear the angels sing, Alleluia, hail the King. Christ the Saviour is born, Jesus the Saviour is born.

Tabernacle Hymns, No. 256

We find in the second chapter of Luke that after the angel of the Lord had told the shepherds not to fear for he brought good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, a Saviour, which was Christ the Lord, was born. He said that they would find Him (a babe) wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger in Bethlehem. Then there suddenly was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God in the highest, and singing, On earth peace, goodwill toward men.

So now, we too can sing our Christmas carols with deep meaning, knowing full-well that God's love for man has not diminished.

We are looking forward to this coming Wednesday evening when our Sunday School pupils will present us with our annual Christmas program, consisting of appropriate songs and verses. It is always such a pleasure to listen to the children's voices. We thank them and their teachers for their efforts.

Sis. Marie Butikofer has been

in the hospital for a number of days due to minor leg trouble. She was able to return to her home yesterday, for which we are thankful.

Bro. George Butikofer, my husband, is doing fairly well. He became ill in November with kidney trouble, spent some time in the V. A. Hospital at Iowa City, and is now being cared for in a care center.

From time to time, we have visitors from various points in Iowa, Minnesota, Indiana, and Illinois who usually are with us for Sunday services. It is always a pleasure to meet them and we wish to thank them for their efforts.

Mr. and Mrs. Luis Oviedo, who formerly lived in Bogota, Colombia, So. America, have moved to our area. They live in Clermont, IA, and assemble with us from time to time. They have a sweet three-year-old daughter named Carolina. Mrs. Oviedo is the daughter of Mrs. LaVerne Schneider and the late John Davidhizer.

As one gazes out over the landscape with its snow cover and ice, it reminds one of a picture on a Christmas card, awe-inspiring and beautiful. That is especially true if one captures the scene at sundown when the sky is splashed with colors of rose, gold, and blue.

This morning the wild birds are quite busy helping themselves to the suet and sunflower seeds which have been placed for their disposal. When the cardinals and the blue-jays appear at the same time, the contrast in color is resplendent. The various woodpeckers, too, in their colored feathers are a feast to the eyes.

God is so very good to us. He offers a simple plan of salvation and gives us such a beautiful world in which to live. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the work." Psm. 19:1.

We, the Elgin, IA, congregation, hope all of you readers will receive many heaven-sent blessings in this coming year.

Do keep the love of Christmas, for this alone can be more precious than the greetings bright; for joy and love forever live in hearts that kneel and pray.

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE

Verle Funk

As we reflect on the past year, we find many reasons to say,

"Thank you, Dear Father, for your countless blessings."

We have been using our new church building for just one year. We very much appreciate having this house of worship. Our only debt at this time is one of eternal gratitude to our God and to each one who helped in every way to make our dream a reality. We were often amazed how mountains were brought low and our needs were met.

We have enjoyed many blessed hours of fellowship with those who have stopped to worship and visit. We thank the brothers who have shared God's precious teachings with us, the most recent being Bro. Russell Wuthrich, Pulaski, Clarene Yackley, Phoenix, Loren Strahm, Gridley, KS, Karl Feucht, Lester, Ron Heiniger, Bloomington, and John Steiner, Oakville. May God bless their labors of love.

A new little daughter, Jessica Jean, is welcomed into the hearts and home of Bro. Gene and Rachel Smith. Jeremy, Eric, and Court are very happy with a baby sister. Bro. Tony and Sis. Eileen Funk say two-year-old Joshua (foster son) has brought lots of love and lots of learning into their home.

There is still a lot of opportunity in this area for people interested in farming. Land prices are up but not as high as in most areas. We would be happy to have you come and look around.

Yes, we are thankful that 1978 was a good year. With the love, spirit, and mind of Christ, the New Year will be happy.

IOWA, IOWA CITY

Connie Gerst

THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM

The blessed story of the Christ,
The babe of Bethlehem,
Is worthy of our song and praise,
And stirs the hearts of men.
The fullness of God's love divine,
Surrounds the Christ so mild
Alas how many only know
The Saviour as a child.

Our saving hope is all in vain,
If here our love should cease,
For in the man of Galilee,
We find the gift of peace.

'Tis not the babe, but Christ, the man

Who walked in Galilee;
'Tis not the manger, but the cross,
That sets the spirit free.

Be not content this babe to know,
Nor stay at Bethlehem,
But go with Christ to Calvary's
brow,

Beyond Jerusalem.
'Tis there men learn to know the
Christ,

For there He bore man's sin.
Then open wide the door of heart,
And let the Saviour in.

Bro. Henry Beer.

As the Christmas season draws near, let us not forget the true meaning of this joyful time. We should also remember that our Lord not only was born and lived upon this earth as an example for us, but He died and shed His blood that we might have a precious hope of salvation.

Our visiting ministers have been Bros. Ezra Feller (Cissna Park), Harold Schmidgall (Gridley, IL), and Harvey Heiniger (Oakville). May we pray, sincerely, for our brothers who speak the Word so that the "Truth" might come forth.

IOWA, LESTER

Alice Metzger

Although we will be into our New Year when you read this, we here at Lester wish for all our readers peace and contentment in this season and through the New Year. May the love of God reign within your heart.

Elder Bro. Gene Marti, Lamar, was with us for a most blessed weekend when five dear souls were taken into the brotherhood. The testimonies brought forth anew the power of God's salvation and love. Our new sisters-in-faith are Barbara Metzger, Jane Metzger, Lois Knobloch, Lexia Wysong, and Beverly Leuthold. Among the many visitors here for the occasion were Bro. Tom Lehman, Elgin, and Bro. Roger Aberle, Sabetha.

Elder Bro. Lester Hartter, Bern, was here to assist Elder Bro. Leo Moser in bringing us the memorandum report.

We welcome the bride of Bro. Brad Kellenberger into our congregation. Sis. Theresa is the daughter of Bro. Virgil and Sis. Marie Hartter of Sabetha.

Several homes have been blest with precious new babies. Ethan Jay was born Nov. 18 to Bro. Harvey and Sis. Mary Metzger. The grandparents are Bro. Ernie and Sis. Ella Metzger and Mr. and Mrs. Bud Bush. On Nov. 24, Bro. Rod and Sis. Twyla Bajema became the

parents of Tammy Jean. Her grandparents are Bro. Freddie and Sis. Esty Metzger and Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Bajema. A little girl was born Dec. 3 to Bro. Raymond and Sis. Twyla Meyer. Jana Lou's grandparents are Sis. Emma Meyer and Bro. Lou and Sis. Norma Bauman. Tim and Lois DeHaan became the parents of Nathan John on Dec. 15. The grandparents are John and Sis. Ione DeHaan and Mr. and Mrs. Almond.

Several have been ill and hospitalized. Those we know of are Sis. Karoline Doorneveerd, Sis. Emma Feucht, Sis. Esty Metzger, Ben Feucht, and Ernie Feucht. We pray for the Great Physician's healing touch.

IOWA, OAKVILLE Phyllis Siegle

As the new year again has come, we find another year of our earthly span of life is gone. We know not if we will see the rising of the sun tomorrow, so let us all live TODAY as we shall one time wish to have lived. Let's let our hearts shine out as brightly as the sun on newly-fallen snow.

Beth Waggenbach and Kent Steffen were recently united in marriage. Beth is the daughter of John and Sis. Marilyn Waggenbach and Kent is the son of Bro. Jerry and Sis. Mary Steffen, Congerville. We wish them God's blessings in their future years.

A son, Doug Jared, was born to Bro. Craig and Sis. Michelle Waggenbach. They also have a son, Kirk Allen. The grandparents are Bro. Paul and Sis. Dorothy Wagenbach and Bro. Al and Sis. Martha Wiegand.

We express our sincere sympathy to Peter and Sis. Luanne Beyer. His mother, Sis. Nina, from Naumburg, passed from this life to that better land.

Elder Bro. Ed and Sis. Joan Lanz have announced the engagement of their daughter, Sis. Kathy, to Bro. Curtis Frank, son of Bro. Ernest and Sis. Bernice Frank. May God bless them in their life together.

The responsibility of helping in the ministry has fallen upon Bro. Jon Schmidgall. We wish him and his wife, Sis. Julie, much grace and help from above in this new, serious undertaking.

We extend our sincere welcome to Bro. Robert and Sis. LeAnn Siegle and their two children, Lau-

ra and Jason, who formerly assembled at Cissna Park, IL. It is so nice to have them back in our Oakville community where Bro. Bob plans to farm, although we know that they will be missed in Cissna Park.

IOWA, PULASKI Mary Jane Knapp Ginny Wuthrich

On Thanksgiving Day we were blessed with several visitors from various congregations. May we count it a blessing that we can go to and fro and worship as we please in this country.

We are now looking forward to the Christmas Season with the Sunday School program and Christmas caroling, but we should never forget the true meaning of Christmas.

HE CAME FOR ALL

He did not come for just a few,
But everyone the whole world
through;

It matters not to Him, I know,
If I am rich, or funds are low;
Or if I'm black, or red, or white—
He came for all, to be the Light.
And what He asks of everyone
Is to accept Him as God's Son,
That He may live in us each day
And lead us on salvation's way.

Esther Johnson

IOWA, WEST BEND Mrs. Raymond Anliker Becky Banwart

Psalm 84, verse 2 reads: "My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the Living God." It was granted to Bro. Alfred Fehr on Nov. 19 that his longing heart could find its eternal rest. He was 92 years old, and having served 36 years as a faithful minister, was known and loved by many. Surviving Bro. Alfred are: his children, Henry Fehr, Sis. Hulda (Fred) Wirtz, Bro. Elmer Fehr (all of West Bend), and Elder Bro. Paul Fehr of Morris, MN; 33 grandchildren, 106 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. We were grateful that Elder Bro. Leo Moser could be with us to conduct the funeral services. He mentioned that if there was one thing Bro. Alfred would want said to the whole family as they were gathered together, perhaps for the last time, it would be about the need for repentance through Christ's shed blood. The

family of Bro. Alfred wishes to thank all who remembered them and assisted them at the time of their loss.

Soon after Bro. Alfred's death, another dear soul was relieved of his earthly bonds. Nathan Banwart passed away on Nov. 29, reaching the age of 83 years. How often he expressed his willingness to go! He is survived by his children: Glen Banwart, Rankin, IL; Sis. Florence Banwart of West Bend; Sis. Gladys Koehl of Morris, MN; Bro. Floyd Banwart of Phoenix, AZ; Sis. Lucille Schmidt of Humboldt, IA; Sis. Doris Banwart, Sis. Joyce Banwart, Sis. Mabel Weber, and Sis. Mary Jo Schmidgall all of Peoria, IL; Lydia Jean Payne of Pulaski, IA; and Bro. Joel Banwart of Eureka, IL. Nathan is also survived by 32 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Local ministers officiated. The family wishes to express their thanks for the kindness shown to them at the time of Nathan's death.

Mary Schmidt, daughter of Sis. Betty, and Bill Berg were united in marriage by Bro. Noah Gerber at the Apostolic Christian Fellowship Center on Nov. 25. We wish them God's blessings as they start together through life.

Krisa Jean is the new daughter of Mark and Sis. Lori Skogland. She was born Dec. 9. The grandparents are Bro. Don and Sis. Verda Bruellman.

We were thankful to have Bro. Elmer Schmidt of Winthrop, MN, Elder Bro. Sam Anliker of Lamont, KS, and Bro. Albert Wuthrich of Pulaski, IA, as our visiting ministers this month.

Our hospital patients were Sis. Ruth Fehr and Sam Mogler. We are thankful that they have both returned home.

We recently held our annual meeting for the church. Newly elected Sunday School teachers are Sis. Ruth Fehr, Sis. Deloris Gerber, and Bro. Leland Metzger. We wish all who have new duties the grace and guidance of God. Surely God's grace is sufficient.

Both young and old are looking forward to our Sunday School program which is to be held Dec. 17. It gives us new zeal to hear the beautiful Christmas story and sing the beautiful Christmas carols.

ADDRESS CHANGED?
TELL YOUR REPORTER.

JAPAN, SHIODA

Jane Weiss

"Enter into His gates with Thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless His name." Ps. 100:4.

This year, we Americans living in Japan were blessed when we could get together at Sis. Sally Gramm's house for a good old American style Thanksgiving feast. We have so very much to be thankful for, don't we? Especially, we can never stop praising our Lord for the most wonderful gift of Salvation!

Recently on a Sunday afternoon after services a group of us went to an old peoples home not too far from us, and we sang both hymns of praise and Christmas carols to the people living there. We were especially touched by an elderly lady, 92, who followed us as we went down the halls from the time we entered until we walked out the door, and even then she followed us out. Several times I noticed tears swelling in her eyes that would soon start pouring down her wrinkled but bright face. Just before we got into our cars, I noted her trying to stuff some money into the hand of one of our older Sisters. When I saw that, I could predict what would happen next; she didn't want the dear old lady's money and insisted on returning it to her, but at the same time the dear elderly lady seemed quite desperate, insisting on giving such a generous gift to our church. "We had brought so very much joy to her and she had no family and no need for money in that Home, anyway." What little time or effort we took and what great amounts of joy it gave to those in need of both our love and His.

As I listened to the American Armed Forces radio station, I heard news that some schools in the United States are requiring that Christ be left out of CHRISTmas!! How can this possibly be done? Is not Christmas the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Let's do what we can to let those that don't know the true meaning of Christmas hear what it is really all about.

In Japan, Christmas is acknowledged and celebrated by few, as it has only been brought into Japan in recent years and is not a national holiday. Business men and families work the same on Christmas Day as on any other day of

the week. You may see some decorations around, such as Santa Claus and Christmas trees, and you can buy greeting cards, but there is no chance of buying a nativity set. I get a shiver of panic when I see and hear these things and wonder. "How can we let them all know the Good News?" Our job (Sis. Sally Beutel's and mine here at the Shioda American Kindergarten) is to give these children the proper education that they need to believe in God and His Son Jesus so that they may grow to give their hearts and lives to Him and teach the next generations to do the same.

As the temperature drops and the snow falls, we pray that the warmth of God's love and the comfort of His Spirit will dwell in your hearts and lives. We send Christmas blessings and greetings to all of you from all of the friends and brethren here.

Our friend, Sumiko Takei, was hospitalized, but we are happy to report that she is "up and around" again.

From Elder Bro. Willis Ehle and wife Lois:

Lois and I had our Silver Wedding Anniversary on Nov. 8, and many of you found out about it as indicated by the cards and gifts we received. Thank you for your kind remembrances and your good wishes. "Rejoice with them that rejoice." Romans 12:15.

JAPAN, TOKYO

Yoshio Yamazaki

Marie Inoue

The Scriptures are so wonderful and always encourage us. I Peter 1:22-25 tells us, ". . . all flesh is as grass . . . withereth . . . but the word of the Lord endureth forever." A few weeks ago my landlord's mother, 86, passed away. I had communicated with them for about 17 years. I told them about our living God and true repentance through Jesus Christ. However, it was so difficult for them to accept such a wonderful salvation because their customs and traditions have captured them for such a long time. Her funeral was held two days after she died, and quite a few neighbors and relatives came together and followed and did Buddhist customs.

I told my landlord I'd do anything to be helpful in the funeral preparations except to participate in the Buddhist system because I am a child of God. So I cleaned and

swept their porch and windows and took some pictures. I hope and believe they understood my Lord's testimony. Probably it's not easy to understand, as such pagan customs are strong and stick with our people here in Japan. They need our real prayers. Our lives are very important and short, and we should be more faithful.

We have just passed another holy Christmas season, and all of us feel that we received renewed blessings through our church services, children's program, and carry-in supper held on Dec. 24. Actually, Christmas is celebrated by quite a few people in Japan with Christmas parties, cakes, and merry making, with the true meaning of Christmas not included.

Some of the children received awards for good attendance this past year, and it was a special joy to hear the story of Christ's holy birth recited by them in verse and song. Children don't seem to have many cares or problems, but I was sitting in the back and noticed that one had a slight fever, one an abscessed tooth, and another was taken outdoors and reprimanded by his mother.

So as another year is drawing to a close, we reflect over the past year and remember many joys and trials—sometimes sickness and sorrow. We have possibly been admonished or corrected, for which we can be thankful. All of the above has helped us to grow more perfect in the Lord. We would like to close by reminding you to refer to Rev. 21:3-7, and we wish all the brethren and friends a blessed new year in the Lord. We remember all of you in our prayers and especially thank those who sent us greeting cards.

KANSAS, BERN
Esther and Stella Moser

**GIVE US THIS DAY
OUR DAILY BREAD**

Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour the mill,
And back of the mill is the
Wheat and the shower,
And the sun and the Father's will.

D. Robertson

Sis. Pearl Meyer has a new grandson, Dominic Eugene, born Dec. 2 to Earl and Darlene Meyer. A sister, Rhoda, welcomes him.

Jonathan Wade arrived Dec. 9 to make his home with Bro. Terry

and Sis. Mary Farney, Amy and Shara. Bro. Louis and Sis. Mavis Meyer are the maternal grandparents.

Bro. Virgil Metzger (Champaign) was our guest minister for Thanksgiving services. We had many visitors and also shared services with the Sabetha congregation.

The annual bazaar at the A.C. Home was well attended and rewarding in spite of the ice storm that moved into our area during the late morning hours on Dec. 2.

Dec. 5 was the date chosen for the Kansas churches' Fall World Relief Workday. A "goodly number" from Bern attended. It was a long, hard day's work. However, the blessing and fellowship, therein, is rewarding. The men packed canned meat for shipping, and the ladies prepared clothing for bailing and shipping.

Bro. Vernon Esslinger is hospitalized for hip surgery.

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT Jan Kraft

So many times we do not understand or ask why. Where is our faith?

LIFE'S WEAVING

My life is but a weaving between
my God and me;
I may not choose the colors, He
knows what they should be
For He can view the pattern upon
the upper side,
While I can see it only on this, the
under side.

Sometimes He weaveth sorrow,
which seemeth strange to me;
But I will trust His judgment, and
work on faithfully;
'Tis He who fills the shuttle, He
knows just what is best;
So I shall weave in earnest and
leave with Him the rest.

At last, when life is ended, with
Him I shall abide,
Then I may view the pattern upon
the upper side;
Then I shall know the reason why
pain with joy entwined.
Was woven in the fabric of life that
God designed.

Author Unknown

Timothy Michael was born Nov. 27 to Bro. Charles and Sis. Karen Sinn. To welcome Timothy home is Tammy, Rebecca, and Chucky. Our sympathy is extended to

Bro. Harvey Smith and family on the passing away of his mother.

Visiting ministers were Bro. Sam Huber (Sabetha) and Bro. John Lehman (Bern).

During the Christmas season I looked around at so many and wondered just what Christmas meant to them. I'm so glad that to us it is the birth of Jesus Christ. To us it is so real, where to others it spiritually means so little.

KANSAS, GRIDLEY

Julie Strahm - Doris Bahr

Our dear sister in faith, Ella Paaf, passed away Dec. 12, following ill health for the past three years. Sis. Ella was preceded in death by her husband, Samuel Raaf, in 1933. The duty was laid upon her to raise her three children alone. Also preceding her in death was a sister, Mary Miller, and a brother, Louie Knapp. How we rejoice that our dear sister could go in peace, knowing that her Father in heaven has now led her home. The following poem seemed to be most fitting and was read during the service for Sis. Ella.

LIFE

Think of—
Stepping on shore and finding it
heaven;
Taking hold of a hand and finding
it God's;
Breathing new air and finding it
Celestial;
Feeling invigorated and finding it
Immortality;
Passing from storm and tempest
to an unknown Calm;
Waking up and finding it Home!

Author Unknown

KANSAS - MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

In the back of my Bible, I found this little "prayer for the day":

Lord, set my life in order, making me to know what I ought to do, and do it in the way that I should. Amen.

"In quietness and in confidence shall be our strength." Isaiah 30:15.

Bros. Loren Strahm, Gridley, Ed Alt, Cissna Park, Joe Aberle, Sabetha, and Gene Marti, Springfield brought us messages of God's love and encouragement, reassuring our confidence in our decision to follow him.

We extend a sincere welcome to Bro. George Bahr, Ft. Scott. George is making his home with

his sister, Sis. Anna Lou Mattix, who along with her son, Mark, has just moved into a new home in Olathe.

Besides moving, Sis. Anna Lou had the misfortune of a bad fall at work and is currently taking therapy treatments for her back. We wish her a special measure of God's grace and love.

Bro. Terry and Sis. Mary Farney, Amy, and Shara have been blessed with a new baby in their family. Dec. 9 was the birthday of Jonathan Wade.

KANSAS, KIOWA Janice Bahr

The first Christmas gift ever given
Wasn't bought in a mart or a shop,
And it wasn't encased in gay
wrappings

With a bright ribbon bow on the
top.

The first Gift of Christmas was
given

In a manger lowly and bare,
And a blanket was the lone
wrapping

Of this Gift so priceless and fair.
God gave the First Gift of
Christmas,

A most Holy and Wonderful One,
When He looked down in mercy
and goodness

And gave us the Gift of His Son!
—Jon Gilbert

The pricelessness of this precious Gift was brought close to our hearts on the 17th when our Sunday School classes related the beautiful Christmas story and sang deeply moving songs of praise in honor of Christ's birth. In a time when Christ seems to be left out of Christmas, it touches us deeply to hear our children retell the old, old story, and again put Christ back in Christmas.

Our friend, Floyd Schupback, underwent open heart surgery this month, but we are very thankful that the Lord brought him through safely and that he is now at home.

I would like to apologize to Bro. Sam and Sis. Minnie Schrock for failing to mention the celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary. They were united in marriage on Sept. 21, 1928. Many of their dear friends and loved ones came to share in this joyous occasion, and we say, "God bless you, dear Bro. Sam and Sis. Minnie; may He grant you many more years of sharing and caring for each other, if it is His perfect will."

KANSAS, LAMONT**Susan Emch**

And the angel said unto them,
Fear not: for, behold, I bring you
good tidings of great joy, which
shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in
the city of David a Saviour, which
is Christ the Lord.

St. Luke 2:10, 11

The Sunday School children have
been rehearsing in anticipation of
their Christmas program on Dec.
20. This is a very joyous time for
all of the children who love to hear
the way Jesus came and was born
into the world. They surely are
reminded of the true meaning of
Christmas in a time when many of
those in the world leave "Christ"
out of Christmas.

Christmas caroling has been en-
joyed by many in the past weeks,
as we joyously remember the birth-
day of our Saviour and King.

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His Heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him
still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O Holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell,
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

From "O Little Town
of Bethlehem"

KANSAS, SABBETHA**Mrs. Joe Steiner**

Our Sunday School children pre-
sented their annual Christmas pro-
gram this noon in verse and song.
Hopefully, they are our future
church. Bro. Alpha Strahm, Bern,
was present today. He reminded us
that it is not the Babe in the man-
ger but the Man on the cross that
sets us free.

Sis. Teresa Hartter was united
in marriage on Dec. 3 to Bro. Brad
Kellenberger of Lester by Bro. Sam
Huber. A reception was held at the
Fellowship Hall following the cere-
mony. We wish them the Lord's
blessings as they begin their new
life together. Bro. Gene Marti and
Bro. Lester Hartter were also pres-
ent for the wedding.

A reception was held at the Fel-
lowship Hall on Dec. 10 for Ron
and Sis. Lynette Menold who were
married a few weeks ago in Tre-
mont. May the Lord also bless their
union.

We once again are holding mid-
week services on Wednesday eve-
nings at 7:30, alternating with
Bern. Everyone is welcome. Our
Sunday evening song services have
been discontinued for now.

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY**John Wernli**

As the semester comes to an end,
the time for final exams has again
arrived. All of us on campus are
looking forward to a holiday break.

In this season of rejoicing and
well-wishing, we are reminded by
the Word to give God all of the
glory. "But he that glorieth, let
him glory in the Lord. For not he
that commendeth himself is ap-
proved, but whom the Lord com-
mendeth." II Cor. 10:17-18.

We were richly reminded of the
love of God and his concern for us
by ministering Bros. Roy Wernli
and Sam Anliker, Lamont, KS.
Their efforts are deeply appreci-
ated.

Our group recently enjoyed sing-
ing to the elderly and infirmed at
several local hospitals and manors.
May we, as well as those in the de-
clining years of life, take comfort
in the Word of God. "For we know
that if our earthly house of this
tabernacle were dissolved, we have
a building of God, an house not
made with hands, eternal in the
heavens." IICor. 5:1.

KANSAS, WICHITA**Judy Langhofer**

As we go about preparing
for the Christmas holidays, we
hear conversation reported among
the shoppers, such as, "Just not
enough time," "Not enough mon-
ey," "Should have started sooner,"
or "I'll be glad when this is all
over!"

This was somewhat my feeling
last evening as I shopped for a pair
of shoes for my fifteen-year-old
son. Being from a different genera-
tion, we were not seeing eye-to-eye
and agreed to try one more store.

As we hurried down the mall to
beat the closing hours, we were
abruptly confronted with a sight
that approached us—two wheel
chairs being pushed, one by a man,
the other by a woman. Those in
the wheelchairs were males, were

dressed alike, looked alike, and
were apparently in their late teens.
My mind turned quickly, with many
thoughts, as I tried to put to-
gether their story. They were prob-
ably twins, born prematurely and
crippled from birth. They had lov-
ing parents who for many years
had cared for them with a great
deal of devotion and sacrifice. They
did not appear distressed, certainly
not in a hurry.

I thought about our mid-week
service. The message was about
Jesus who was standing in the
synagogue and opened up the book
and started to read: "The Spirit of
the Lord is upon me, because he
hath appointed me to preach the
gospel to the poor; he hath sent
me to heal the brokenhearted, to
preach deliverance to the captives,
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty them that are
bruised." Luke 5:18.

The thought came to me, "Are
they the forgotten ones?" Or,
perhaps, we are the lame, the blind,
and the captive—captive of the
cares of this life, business, the
holiday rush, and worldliness; and
they are free. Their eyes have time
to see the beauties of Christmas,
and their ears are tuned to the
laughter of the children and the
sound of the carols. Their hearts
are leaping with the pure God-giv-
en joy of the season.

The weekend of Dec. 17 was a
busy one for our church, as our
children presented songs and rec-
itations to honor our Saviour. Tues-
day, Dec. 19, some from our church
went Christmas caroling in 60 de-
gree weather—warm for this time
of the year, but enjoyed by all. We
were happy to find that several of
our northern brethren had sent
Christmas cards to a friend in a
nursing home here in response to
our Silver Lining column last
month. Our friends, Rick and Rose-
mary Franzen became first-time
parents in late November. They
named their son Robert Alden.
Rick and Rosemary are from New
York but have resided here for
more than a year. Rick is in school
at the University. We became ac-
quainted with him because Wi-
chita is the home of McConnell Air
Force Base.

Our Wichita brethren send their
New Year's greetings to the four
corners of the world to wherever
anyone is laboring in the vineyard
of the Lord.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON**Cathy Knobloch**

The rush of the holiday season is gone. We are beginning a new year. Our congregation had a pleasurable time of fellowship together at Christmas. Everyone went Christmas caroling one evening. We went singing at various homes—some folks we visited were elderly, some lame, and some ill. Yet, in each situation, the joy of the Christ child rang out.

The children shared many memorized scripture verses at a Christmas program one Sunday evening. What a joy to see the children declare the Christmas story. About four years ago several Vietnamese refugee families began attending services. The small children could not speak English, nor had they ever heard of Jesus. This Christmas, four years later, the children stand before the congregation with pride and quote their memory verses. They not only know about the babe in the manger; they have discovered the risen Lord and Savior, too! Have you walked the road from the manger to the cross?

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY**Patsy Knochel**

One of our dear elderly sisters recently went on ahead to be in that beautiful haven of rest with her Lord. Sis. Anna Ruegsegger will surely be missed by her family and loved ones. Her surviving children are Eleanor Munsel (Paul), Bro. Frederick (Sis. Winifred), Bro. Glenn (Sis. Margaret), and Ben.

Those hospitalized were Sis. Catherine Wieland and Sis. Lydia Wieland. May God bless and be near them during their recovery.

"And be not conformed to this world: But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:2. A Wednesday evening was set aside for the reading of the memorandum by our elder brothers. It surely is necessary to be reminded of our duty to continue and grow in the way of the Living Word of Life and not be attached to this world and time.

Two souls who were lost have begun to walk a new road; repenting are Sue Ann Wieland (Bro. Don and Sis. LuAnn) and Yvonne Arnold (Bro. Floyd and Sis. Marion Knochel).

MY BIBLE

In times of stress and sorrow,
In times of joy as well,
The Bible lifts and strengthens me
Much more than I can tell.
For if God can see each sparrow
fall,

Then surely He can see
All my cares and worries
And is watching over me.

Kay Andrew

MICHIGAN, DETROIT**Bonnie Popp**

O come, little children. O come one
and all;

Kneel down and adore Him with
shepherds today;

Lift up little hands now and praise
Him as they

Rejoice that a Saviour is living
today,

And join in the praise, in the
heavenly ray.

O Come Little Children

No. 823, Gospel Hymns

We have much to remember,
much for which to rejoice. Our
Sunday School and choir presented
a Sunday School program in mes-
sage and song about the beautiful
Christmas story.

Throughout the story of our
Lord's birth, we can find examples
of true humility and obedience to
God's will. As we remember this
blessed event, may we search for
the gifts of grace, peace, and joy
to help us be more humble—more
obedient.

Elder Bro. Andy Virkler assist-
ed our Elder Bro. Ben Maibach in
sharing the memorandum with us.
Here, again, God uses His will and
way to remind us to be more obe-
dient so that our lives may be
pleasing in His sight.

Dec. 2 was the wedding date for
Richard Weber and Sandra Karry.
Rick is the son of Joe and Donna
Weber, grandson of Sis. Lucile
Maibach. We wish this couple
much happiness.

Our young friend, Durrell Ger-
maine, will be hospitalized for a
short while with a knee problem.
We pray for a swift recovery.

At this special time of the year
1978, and with the approach of the
new year, we in Detroit pray that
each and every one will find a spe-
cial blessing in life and that God's
love will remain in everyone's heart
in the days to come.

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS**Carol Virkler**

God has blessed Bill and Barbar
Holbert with a second daughter,
born Nov. 11. Cherisse Desiree will
be a new playmate to her 21 month
old sister, Margaux. The grand-
parents are Bro. Howard and Sis. Vi
Greiner of Cissna Park and Mrs.
Bernice McBride of Bloomington,
Minnesota.

We were thankful to have Bro.
Vernon Leman (Eureka) with us
on Thanksgiving Day. On Dec. 10,
Elder Bro. Harold Messner (Win-
throp) brought us God's precious
Word. We thank these brothers for
their inspiring messages.

Christine Schmidgall (Bro. Ray
and Sis. Millie) has found peace
with God and man and wishes to
give her testimony in the near fu-
ture.

On Dec. 17, a Sunday School
Christmas Program is planned
when the children will tell us in
verse and song of the birth of our
Lord and Saviour.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Help us rightly to remember the
birth of Jesus, that we may share
in the song of the angels, the glad-
ness of the shepherds, and the wor-
ship of the Wise Men. Close the
door of hate and open the door of
love all over the world. Let kind-
ness come with every gift and good
desire with every greeting. Deliver
us from evil by the blessing that
Christ brings, and teach us to be
merry with clean hearts. May the
Christmas morning make us happy
to be Thy children, and the
Christmas evening bring us to our
beds with grateful thought, for-
giving and forgiven, for Jesus'
sake. Amen.

Robert Louis Stevenson

MINNESOTA, MORRIS**Pam Sutter - Lili Koehl**

"Be ready in the morning, and
come up . . . present thyself there
to me in the top of the mount, And
no man shall come up with thee."
(Exod. 34:2,3)

The morning watch is essential.
You must not face the day until
you have faced God, nor look into
the face of others until you have
looked into His.

You cannot expect to be victor-
ious if the day begins only in your
own strength. Do not meet other
people, even those of your own
home until you have first met the
great Guest and honored Com-

panion of your life—Jesus Christ.

Meet Him alone. Meet Him regularly. Meet Him with His open Book of Counsel before you; and face the duties of each day in this new year with the influence of His personality definitely controlling your every act.

Bros. Ed Frank of LaCrosse and Harold Messner of Winthrop were with us the evening of December 2 when three young friends gave their testimonies of their conversion and new-found faith. We joyfully greet Jerry and Linda Wulf (Bro. Leonard and Sis. Violet) and Beverly Sauder (Virgil and Mildred) as our brother and sister in the Lord.

Bro. Ferd and Sis. Pauline Tohm wish to thank everyone who remembered them with cards and gifts on their 50th wedding anniversary. They also express their thanks for the many prayers, visits, cards and gifts extended to them during their stay in the hospital. Bro. Ferd is back home again, while Sis. Pauline is convalescing at the Villa of St. Francis in Morris. We wish them both the Lord's nearness.

Mary Spohr is also a patient at the Villa of St. Francis at this writing. May God watch over her and give her renewed strength every day.

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

Delores Messerli - Mary Thiem

Hebrew 13:17: Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

We rejoice because Nancy Messner was "announced" as having peace with God and man and awaits baptism in His name. Her parents are Bro. Marilyn and Sis. Lois.

God's plan fulfilled as He had willed, Then came the Christ on earth;

The star so bright in deepest night Foretold His blessed birth.

The angels' throng with joyous song Appeared to shepherds meek;

The angel's word the shepherds heard Then went they forth to seek.

Hymns of Zion

Our young people presented the Christmas story in word and song on Sunday eve, Dec. 17. We wish to thank our teachers and students for their time and effort. Truly, God will be the rewarder.

Sunday has been set aside to collect home-made "goodies" for the residents of the State Hospital. Our sisters who work with World Relief are constantly providing the opportunity to help the needy; for this, we are most grateful.

Convert, Mildred Simonton, is hospitalized with a heart attack. She recently underwent surgery. May God be her Comforter in this time of great need. Millie's mother is Sis. Celina Schmidt.

Todd, son of Bro. Dennis and Sis. Carol Messner, had knee surgery and has returned to his home. Bro. Ray Messner has returned to his home. Bro. Raymond Messner entered the hospital for observation.

MISSOURI, LAMAR

Janice Braker - Sandra Marti

Away in a Manger, No crib for a bed,

The little Lord Jesus Laid down His sweet head;

The stars in the sky Looked down where He lay—

The little Lord Jesus, Asleep on the hay.

Hymns of Zion

It's just a simple song, but it holds so much meaning—to think that our "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords," (Rev. 19:16) should have nothing but a bed of hay. We truly have so many blessings for which to be thankful.

At this time of year we have a special blessing for which to be thankful. Our little congregation has increased once again. We wish to welcome Bro. Ernest and Sis. Sandy Knecht and their family who have moved into the area from Eureka, IL. We wish them God's blessings.

We would like to thank Elder Bros. Som Anliker, Raymond Banwart, and Eugene Marti for spending the weekend of Dec. 9 and 10 with us. On Saturday, we heard the minutes of the conference. Then, on Sunday, we once again gathered to remember our Lord's death and suffering as we were served Holy Communion. We were reminded of how so much pro-

phesy has been fulfilled and that this might very well be our last time to partake before our Lord's appearing. May we always seek to be ready for the blest return.

Sis. Judy Braker was a hospital patient this month, but she is now home to await a blessed Christmas. May each and every one find much joy in this Christmas season.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Lena M. Haerr

Bro. John Hoerr was laid to rest on Nov. 21, 1978. He was born May 16, 1899, to Rudolph and Lydia Zurlinden Hoerr. He married Rose Frieden in Taylor, and she survives with: three sons, Robert, Louis, and Donald; four daughters, Barbara Plank (Buddy), Taylor, Irene Riney (Gene), Taylor, Rosemary Massner (Alien), Burlington, and Cindy DeSigne (Robert), Metamora; one brother, George Hoerr; three sisters, Anna, Lydia, and Rachel Hoerr, Peoria; twenty-four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Bro. John was preceded in death by his parents, a son, Wayne, and four brothers.

Two dear souls were "announced" to give their testimony of repentance. We are happy for Steve and Pam Kiefaber. Another new convert, Scott Hoerr, son of Bro. Robert and Sis. Em.

Bro. Roy and Sis. Donna Grimm had their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary on Dec. 6. On Nov. 25, both families met at Jammers Restaurant in Peoria for this happy occasion. We congratulate them and wish them many more years together.

We sympathize with the Mike Knapp family as Sis. LuAnn's father, Bro. John Bittner, passed away in Eureka, Dec. 7.

A son, Benjamin Eric, was born Dec. 3 to Bro. Eric and Sis. Penny Kncchel. The grandparents are Bro. Al and Sis. Evelyn, Remington, and Bro. James and Sis. Lois Sutter, Taylor.

A son, Jeff Everett, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Jim Gottman on Dec. 12. The grandparents are Mrs. Thelma Gottman and Mr. and Mrs. Gene Riney.

Sis. Elizabeth Sutter was hospitalized, came home for almost a week and then had to return to the hospital on Nov. 28. She steadily grew weaker and could "go Home" on Dec. 11. The funeral services were on Dec. 14 by two of

her nephews, Bro. Nathan Steffen, Elgin, and Bro. Roy Grimm, Taylor.

Elizabeth E. Grimm (Sutter) passed away on Dec. 11 at the age of 75. She was born at Elgin, IA, on December 4, 1903. She is the daughter of Edward and Anna Burki Grimm. She married Eli Sutter on June 5, 1923, at Elgin, IA. They moved to the Taylor, MO, vicinity in February, 1926. To this union were born: four sons, Edward, James, Gerald, and Richard; and two daughters, Mrs. Naomi Moser, Wapello, IA, and Mrs. Joyce Pohl, Burlington, IA. They also had a foster son, Robert Frieden.

This poem was read at the funeral.

To Grandma,
As we all say farewell and say our
goodbye's,
It makes our hearts heavy and
brings tears to our eyes.
We will never forget the concern
on your heart,
That we'd all know the Saviour,
before you'd depart.

How can we say thanks for the
light you have been,
In a world that's dark and so full
of sin.
You always seemed ready to offer
your hand,
So we could be together in that
promised land.

How often we'd set at your small
kitchen table,
And you'd wonder, when they'd
be able,
To harvest the ears that looked ripe
and heavy,
So you could again see the "church
on the levee."

Here it's almost Christmas and
what a change it will be,
As we read about Jesus, your face
not to see,
We'll never forget how you would
help sing,
About the birth of Jesus, soon to
be King.

As the tears roll, we can't help but
smile,
The victory is yours, as you went
the last mile.
So Grandma; please save us a
gold chair,
So when, "The roll is called up
Yonder," we too, can be there.
Your Grandchildren

NEW JERSEY, UNION CITY (and Philadelphia, Pa.) Ed Aeschleman

We are saddened to report the death of our dear sister-in-faith, Emily Schoenleber. Sis. Emily mercifully passed on in her sleep shortly after undergoing surgery on Nov. 27, 1978, at the age of 83. She leaves one son, Dr. Louis, in New Jersey, five grandchildren, a brother, Henry, in New Jersey, and a sister, Freida, at the church home in Eureka, IL. She was predeceased by her husband Louis in 1976 and a daughter some years before that. We offer our sympathy and pray for God's ultimate consolation for those who are remaining. Funeral services were held at Leber's Funeral Home in Union City on Nov. 30. Sis. Emily was layed to rest beside her husband in Washington Cemetery.

Through the miracle of birth, a beautiful baby boy was born Nov. 14 to our faithful Bro. and Sis. John and Kathy Clough. At this writing we do not have his name, but he is fortunate to come into a loving family, joining two sisters and one brother.

Our children performed with verse, song, and reading at our Christmas program on Sunday, Dec. 17. Their innocence, sincerity, and simplicity reminds us of the Lord's efforts to teach us to be exactly that way throughout our lives.

NEW YORK, CROGHAN Alice Virkler

Our Sunday School children are preparing the Christmas program which will be presented on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 24.

We assembled with the Naumburg congregation on a Sunday and were privileged to hear the report of the recent Brotherhood Conference read and commented on by our Elder Bros. Robert Beyer and Norbert Steiner.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Bro. Jerome and Sis. Cora Farney. Cora's brother, Reuben Streeter, was taken from this life.

Sis. Irene Farney was a medical patient for a few days.

NEW YORK, NAUMBURG Corrine Virkler

Wilson Merz has been transferred from the Bender Nursing Home to the Lewis County Hospital. Sis. Esther Wallace is in the

Lewis County Hospital. She underwent surgery after fracturing her hip.

Bro. Elmer Taube has been transferred from the House of the Good Samaritan to the Carthage extended care facilities. Sis. Florence Herzig underwent eye surgery at the Carthage Hospital.

Union services were held at the Naumburg Church on Dec. 3 where the report on the Conference was read.

Elder Bros. Robert Beyer, Naumburg, and Norbert Steiner left Saturday, Dec. 16, to participate in the proving and baptism of four converts at Rockville. They also attended church on Sunday evening and returned home on Monday.

OHIO, AKRON Gail Spangler

We appreciated the visit on Sunday, Nov. 26, of ministering Bro. Ed Aeschleman and his family from Philadelphia. What a privilege it is to meet and greet those from other congregations and feel the tie of faith and love that binds us together.

Sis. Marie Dakovich is a hospital patient, and Sis. Katherine Novatny and Ann Francis have had surgery. It is our prayer that the Lord will heal and strengthen them, if it be His will. Sis. Anna Von Gunten is recuperating at home after her hospitalization. May all of our shut-ins feel His nearness.

Sunday evening, Dec. 17, our Sunday School program was held. It is always such a joy to hear the young voices blend in song and praise to God. Earlier in the day, the girls fixed boxes of fruit to be distributed during the caroling that is planned for Dec. 19.

On Dec. 16, we offered congratulations to Sis. Janice Greenbank (Bro. Gordon and Sis. Emily) upon her graduation from Akron City Hospital School of Nursing. The next evening we bade her farewell, as she is moving to Phoenix, AZ. We will really miss her in our congregation. Sis. Janice felt very strongly that this move was the Lord's will, and we know that He will be with her and provide for her.

OHIO, GIRARD Kathryn Emch

The Lord left us the instruction, "Love one another!" We felt this love as a large group of brethren

from Rittman and Akron came to sing with us one Sunday evening. It was such a blessing to see the church fill up and to hear the harmony of many voices. Bro. Paul Gasser read and spoke on the Word.

Bro. Henry Dotterer of the Rittman congregation served in our pulpit when Harold and I spent the day in Milford. We thank Bro. Henry.

We enjoyed another special Sunday as Bro. Gary Maibach (Rittman), Bro. Kenneth Indermuhle (Sardis), and many who accompanied them worshipped with us. Many good teachings were brought forth from God's Word.

Sis. Helen Emch broke her hip and is confined to the hospital at this time.

Let us enter the new year with the confidence that Jesus will never forsake us. Praise Him!

OHIO, JUNCTION

Gwen Manz

We spent Thursday evening, Dec. 7, listening to a portion of the conference tapes. We're thankful for the good teachings we heard, and in two more sessions we intend to hear the entire conference.

Hospitalized this month was Bro. Henry Manz. We are glad to see him in his home again and wish him much grace in his hours of pain.

OHIO, LATTY

Karen Klopfenstein - Susie Sinn

"I am going to a city where the roses never fade." (Gospel Hymns) Bro. Carl Laukhuf has passed out of this life into all eternity. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Sis. Louise, and children, Sis. Janet Williamson (Robert), Carl, Jr., and Dave. His brothers are Sam and Eli. His sisters are Sis. Rosie and Tillie (Toledo).

"The Lord again has given His council and His will." (Zion's Harp). Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott) assisted in the reading of the memorandum. Let us consider these teachings and take them to heart, because this is the only way we can enter into the "Promised Land."

The fourth daughter has arrived in the home of Bro. Bill and Sis. Lou Ann Rager. Welcoming Andrea Marie home are Lisa, Krista, Kara, and grandparents Bill and Sis. Elsie Rager and Bro. Melvin and Sis. Doris Fiechter (Bluffton).

First-time parents are Doug and Joyce Laukhuf, as Amy Marie has arrived. The grandparents are Eli and Lola.

Douglas Allen Wenninger is the new addition in the home of Bro. Larry and Sis. Joyce. Larisa and Erica are pleased to have a little brother. The grandparents are Bro. Don and Sis. Josephine and Bro. Art and Sis. Mary Gudeman (LaCrosse).

Visiting ministers were Bros. Bill Schlatter (Junction), LeRoy Hartman (Peoria), Ben Hartzler (Rittman), Jesse Beer (Milford), Art Gudeman (LaCrosse), and Carroll Gerber (Bluffton). We want to thank these brothers for so willingly and untringly bringing us the truth in all sincerity.

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." (I Cor. 2, verse 28) On Dec. 2, Bro. David Bertsch (Leo) helped Bro. Loren serve Holy Communion. In this very solemn hour we were reminded of the Lord's suffering for us. May we be more willing and more obedient to follow in our Savior's ways.

Hospitalized were Ross Laukhuf (Larry and Charlotte), Rick Schlatter (Bro. Ben and Sis. Helen), and Sis. Gloria Grant (Bro. Phil). We are thankful that all of them are improving.

"Ring the bells of Heaven, there is joy today, for a soul returning from the wild. See the Father waits them, out upon the way, welcoming his weary wandering child."

(Gospel Hymns)

We are so thankful that Betty Klopfenstein (Bro. Raymond and Sis. Catherine), Patti Riggenbach (Harlan and Sis. Delores), Laurie Stoller (Bro. Darl and Sis. Iva), and Curt Rager (Bill and Sis. Elsie) have answered the loving Savior's call. May grace be given to each of these souls so that they can go through a "true" repentance.

OHIO, MANSFIELD

Lucille Groh

A joyous weekend was spent when Bro. Aaron and Sis. Loretta Steffen (Alto) visited here Nov. 24. Bro. Aaron shared the living Word with us.

The Bible says, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 26:40. A group enjoyed an evening of fellowship and pack-

ed fruit baskets for the aged and shut-ins. Also, different groups shared His love by singing carols.

On Sunday evening, Dec. 17, our Sunday School presented their annual Christmas program. It is a joy to see the love for the Saviour in the eyes of these precious children.

Our dear Sis. Esther Streitmatter Sabo is now confined to her home, suffering from emphysema. In order to breathe, she must use oxygen, continually. She is a wonderful example of love and patience. Sis. Esther loves everyone, and her husband, Joe, is such a good help to her. She loves company, and I am sure a letter or card from all her friends would help to encourage her as well as help pass her time. Her address is: Apostolic Retirement Center, 455 Logan Road, Mansfield, OH 44907.

The following writing was sent to us a few years ago from dear Bro. Otto Norr, who has since gone on to glory. This would also be our wish for all of you:

OUR WISHES FOR YOU THROUGH THE NEW YEAR

Health enough to make work a pleasure.

Wealth enough to support your needs,

Strength enough to battle with difficulties

And overcome them.

Patience enough to toil until some good

Is accomplished.

Charity enough to see some good in your neighbor.

Faith enough to make real the things of God.

Hope enough to remove all fear of the future.

OHIO, RITTMAN

Florence Hartzler

"Farewell, Farewell" was sung at the funeral of our dear Sis. Lula Bachman, which was held on Saturday, November 18. She lived at the Apostolic Christian Home for the past two years and was ill for a long time. She will be missed by her sister, Sis. Esther Bachman, who unfailingly waited on her and spent many hours sitting by her bedside. Our sympathy is also extended to her other sisters, Sis. Emma Ramsier and Sis. Elizabeth Ramsier, and many nieces and nephews. May the family be comforted to know that she is "Safe in the Arms of Jesus."

New-born lambs of our Lord that were omitted in November issue were Bro. Bob Klotzle and Bro. Dale Gasser. I am sorry for the error.

New births for the month are two boys and one girl. A son was born to Bro. Matt and Sis. Gail Steiner, named Luke Matthew; to welcome him home are Joel and Nathan. The grandparents are Bro. Alvin and Sis. Eldora Steiner, and Sis. Doris Gasser. A son was also born to Bro. Ken and Sis. Martha Steele and was named Kevin Michael. Little brother Bradley is glad for a playmate. The grandparents are Bro. Herb and Sis. Ruth Hilty. A very welcome little girl was born to Harold and Sharon Bauman and named Stephanie Lee. One brother, Bryon, welcomes his little sister. Bro. Ben and Sis. Jenny Bauman are the grandparents. We pray that the Lord will bless these families with their precious little babes.

We enjoyed our many visitors the past month, and we especially want to thank Bro. Al Schneider, Rockville, Bro. Marvin Stieglitz, Leo, and Bro. Ben Stavenik, Mansfield, for the many good teachings we were privileged to receive. Our cups were filled to overflowing. We pray that the Lord will bless them and their families.

Again the Lord has called another dear soul from this life to eternity. We were saddened at the sudden passing away of Chester Winkler. Our sympathy is extended to: his wife, Sis. Marie; his sons, Daryl and James; his daughters, Ann Shumaker and Susan Jackson; his brothers, Harold, Ben, and Bro. Alvin; and his sisters, Nina Steiner, Sis. Velma Hartzler, and Sis. Caroline Emch. May each one feel God's abiding love and nearness in their lonely hours.

We are glad to see that Sis. Carolyn Gasser is again able to attend church following her stay in the hospital. Also, Sis. Mary Stoller is able to worship with us following eye surgery. We are so thankful for God's healing powers.

Another year has passed. Never to be heard of again is the year 1978. Let us take inventory of the past year and see if we have come out on top, in the black, or way down, in the red. We have a new year, never before tried. We should make up our minds to do

better this year, striving to live lives that are more like the Lord would have us live, so that by the end of 1979 we can say that our ledgers are in the black, with nothing in the red.

Another year is dawning,
 dear Master, let it be,
 In working or in waiting,
 another year with Thee.
 Another year of mercies,
 of faithfulness and grace.
 Another year of gladness
 in the shining of Thy face.
 Another year of progress,
 another year of praise,
 Another year of proving
 Thy presence all the days.
 Another year of service,
 of witness for Thy Love;
 Another year of training
 for holier work above.
 Another year is dawning,
 Dear Master, let it be,
 On earth, or else in heaven
 another year for Thee.

Hymns of Zion

OHIO, SARDIS Joyce Indermuhle

As we enter the new year of 1979, we stop to reflect upon the past year. For some it was a year of hardships, for others it was a year of only joys and blessings; but for most of us I trust it was a year in which we were blessed for our struggles and uplifted in our joys. May we enter the coming year, placing our trust in our Lord and Savior.

We want to thank, at this time, all the elder and ministering brothers who served us so faithfully in the past year. Recently, we heard the memorandum read and expounded on, and we were reminded that every decision made by our elders and ministers is taken first to the Lord in prayer. This should encourage all of us to pray for them that only the Lord's Will will be carried out. We all should follow that pattern in our own lives, taking every step of our life to the Lord in prayer and doing only His will.

OREGON, SILVERTON Mary Jane Winkler

We were privileged to have the Portland congregation gather with us on Thanksgiving Day. We were taught about giving thanks in all things. No matter what happens, we should try to have a thankful heart. May we all strive to that

end. We want to thank Bros. Garth Steffen and Robert Miller (Portland) for lending themselves in the Lord's service.

December 2, a little bundle from heaven arrived to bless the home of Bro. Jim and Sis. Joan Dietrich. They have named her Kristy Ruth. Two happy sisters, Becky and Lori, welcomed her home. The grandparents are Bro. Gus and Sis. Martha Feucht (Lester, IA) and Bro. Clarence and Sis. Mildred Dietrich. May the Lord bless these dear ones.

As Christmas approaches, do we really think of the real meaning? Looking around us, we see all of the decorations: Christmas trees and, of course, Santa Claus. It makes my heart cry to think that this is all that some people think of at Christmas. Truly, we should think of our dear Savior's birth in a manger in Bethlehem. How lowly a birth for our Savior!

The glory of that night was shown to the shepherds abiding in the fields with their sheep. I'm sure that their hearts were thankful to know that their Savior was born, for they went to see the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. May we also be thankful in our hearts that God loved us enough to send His only Son to us. That is why we have Christmas. May we also tell our children why we have Christmas so that they too may think about little Jesus who was born in a manger so many years ago.

PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA

(See New Jersey, Union City)

TEXAS, ZAPATA Tillie Kellenberger

Bro. Phil Sauder and his wife left on Dec. 5 for their home in Cissna Park, IL after spending several weeks here. We are thankful to God for his labor of love.

Bro. Pete Eslinger and his wife, Sis. Esther of Sabetha, Kansas, and Mr. and Mrs. Martin Eslinger of Bern, Kansas, spent the weekend here. Mrs. Martin Eslinger stayed here so that she could drive with her daughter, Bonnie, who has been working in Zapata for the past two years.

We welcome anyone coming to this area. Our Sunday services begin at 10:30 A.M. and 12:30 P.M.

Wednesday evening services begin at 7 P.M.

Our new telephone number at church is 512-765-6436. Anyone coming to McAllen, TX, may call Lloyd Nohl, 1501 Wisteria, telephone 682-0219.

Sermon . . .

(Continued from page 28)

and it ran out. Then they were in the dark, weren't they? But it says here, "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight . . ." in the middle of the night, the darkest possible period of the night, a cry came out, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." Mt. 25:5, 6.

No doubt they were awakened and were scrambling around trying to start their lamps. Of course, those five wise virgins who had oil in their vessels could start their lamps, trim the wicks maybe, and start out to meet the bridegroom. But think of the frustration of the five who were foolish. Evidently, they were trying hard to light their lamps and couldn't do it because they had no oil. They couldn't see.

Faith, beloved ones, is what enables us as believers to see our way clearly as we walk here upon the earth. We are living in dark, perilous times. We don't want to be pessimistic but, according to the Word, as we approach the end times, there will be times like this. We can read of things that our forefathers might have said would almost "scare them to death". Some things come on gradually and we accept them, but many of these things aren't according to the will of God at all.

In the parable, in the middle of the night, the dark of the night, the crying went out. Of course the wise were able to trim their lamps and were ready to go. Then the foolish said, "Give us of your oil." It is the same, beloved ones, in the spiritual way; we can't repent for our son or our daughter. We can't repent for our husband or wife, our mother or father. It is an individual thing.

We must come to the Lord as individuals. We must humble ourselves. We must repent. We must recognize that we need the Lord. Then we can find help. We can find the "oil of faith." We can tell Him our troubles and our problems. He can help us; He can sus-

tain us. Then it seems that our light, our lamp, grows a little brighter and we can see again as we walk along the path.

I know that many older brothers and sisters remember the old lantern that they used. I'm not too familiar with it, but I remember a time when we visited Bro. Don's wife, Sis. Martha's folks—it's been a few years ago. It was toward evening when we arrived. They are Amish people, and have only a kerosene lantern in one room. They were very friendly and we had an enjoyable evening visiting with them. When she wanted to show us something in another room, she took the lamp from the hook in the ceiling and we walked into the other room and could see. Otherwise, it would have been dark and we couldn't have seen anything. This was the lamp that they used.

I believe that their kerosene lamp is comparable to those in the parable. Now we have a light switch to turn on. We don't realize what our forefathers went through. We have things almost too good for us. Maybe we are like the church in the Book of Revelation who had everything in abundance and then forgot the Lord. They had to repent for that.

So we have to be careful and always look into the Word and try to see what the Lord wants us to do in life.

"And while they went to buy," (of course they had to go and purchase oil) "the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Mt. 25:10. This is the sad part, that when they went to purchase oil, the door was shut. The door of grace, beloved ones, is going to be shut some day. Those who are still outside trying to find the way are not going to find it. Many scholars do feel, though, if individuals living in the tribulation period give up their lives for the Lord, they also can find salvation.

But the door will be shut, as the door was shut when Noah built the ark. God shut the door and the people—so many of them were outside—perished. Only the eight souls who were in the ark were able to live. God provided for them.

When Noah preached righteousness to the people, they ridiculed him and made light of what he said. But those who were outside

were not able to enter in. I often think about how so many people wanted, and probably put forth tremendous effort, to get into the ark, but they couldn't do it. The door was closed.

The door of grace, beloved ones, is going to be closed someday. That's why we feel that it is so important to think about our salvation.

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Mt. 25:11, 12. If they had gathered their oil while they had the opportunity, they would have been saved. They would have been taken care of, but they neglected to prepare themselves.

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Mt. 25:13. Peter says that ". . . the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." 2 Pet. 3:10. A thief comes when he is least expected. We can also read in the Word, ". . . when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh . . ." I Thess. 5:3. But it comes only upon those who have rejected the Word. Those who have believed, who are children of God, are going to live and reign with the Lord forever and ever.

The Lord Jesus in another parable said that ". . . the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one: to every man according to his several ability: and straightway took his journey." Mt. 25:14, 15.

Again, beloved ones, God doesn't expect any more of us than we are capable of. I was deeply impressed by Bro. Kenny's explanation last Sunday morning. He mentioned that as he was driving fast in his air-conditioned pick-up, he passed some Amish people and wondered who was on the right way. Then he said that the Lord revealed to him, ". . . unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Lk. 12:48.

Much is given to us today, beloved ones; we have so much—so many good things. We have many Bibles in our homes. I know that for my part, I don't look into the Word nearly as often as I should. I wish that I would do better and

try to understand more fully what the Lord wants out of my life.

In this parable is a wonderful thing that I often think about; this "several ability." He gave something to each one of them. We don't have to feel that we don't have anything to contribute. We can pray for each other as Bro. Jesse read in Thessalonians on Wednesday. It is a wonderful chapter. So many good things are in that chapter: "Pray without ceasing. Rejoice evermore. Quench not the Spirit." I Thess. 5:17, 16, 19. There are many wonderful teachings. Paul even mentioned toward the end, "Brethren, pray for us." I Thess. 5:25. We can pray for each other.

Do you remember how Abraham prayed and interceded for Lot? He knew that Lot went the wrong way. He knew about the wickedness in Sodom and Gomorrah, and he interceded for his loved ones. He prayed and the Lord and two angels came. We know that story—we've heard it many times.

Abraham pleaded with the Lord and said, "Wilt thou . . . destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Gen. 18:23. The angels went to Sodom and the Lord talked with Abraham. The Lord said that He would not destroy the righteous with the wicked if there were only fifty righteous souls in those cities. Then Abraham asked whether for the lack of five He would destroy it. The Lord said he wouldn't destroy the city for forty-five; then Abraham went down to forty, and thirty-five, and thirty, and down to twenty; even down to ten souls. Abraham kept pleading with the Lord and the Lord was compassionate.

You can see what a wonderful Lord and merciful God He is. If there had been only ten righteous souls in those cities, He would have spared them. They would not have had to be destroyed. But the angels went into the city and learned that there were not even ten righteous souls. Lot and his wife and his two daughters, I believe, were the only souls who left the city. We know that Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. She shouldn't have looked back, but she had her heart set on something there; we don't know what it was. This is an example of the effectiveness of prayer: Abraham interceded for Lot.

Even the Lord told Peter. "I have prayed for thee." Lk. 22:32.

I often think of this. The Lord interceded for Peter. He said, ". . . when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Lk. 22:32. How wonderfully Peter encouraged the brethren, and how diligently he worked for the Lord after the Lord was gone.

The Lord Jesus Himself, in the high priestly prayer, interceded for you and me. He did not pray that we should be taken out of the world, but that we should be kept from evil. He wanted a people to stand for what is right: "I in them, and thou in me . . . that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." John 17:23.

In the parable in Matthew, after the man had delivered his goods to his servants, he took his journey. "Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same." Mt. 25:16. He used what God gave him and he gained five others. Likewise the one who had received two gained two more.

We read that the one who received one talent dug in the earth and buried it. Maybe he felt as though he didn't have anything to contribute. He thought he would hide it and then, when his lord came back, he would give it to him.

It continues, "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other 5 talents, saying, Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more." Matt. 25:19, 20. His master was satisfied with him. The servant had tried. He said to him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Mt. 25:21.

"He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliverest unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them." And the same answer was given to him: ". . . faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Matt 25:22, 23.

Then the one who had received only one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed." Mt. 25:24. When the servant was given the one talent, he had felt that this

was a hard man, and wanted to be sure that he had something to give him when he came back, exactly what he gave him to begin with.

But "His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received my own with usury." Mt. 25:26, 27.

This is what the Lord wants all of us to do, beloved ones. He wants us to use what He gives to us. Even though we feel that we don't have much, we should still use what we have to the honor of God. If we can be helpful in a small way, some soul may feel that "There is a God-fearing individual—I only wish I could be like him." Maybe you can cause someone to go to the source, which is the Lord, and find salvation.

One soul gathered in, one soul saved, is worth more than the riches of the entire world.

I received a letter from Bro. Carth this past week and he spoke of Bro. Martin Reuter, the oldest brother there; he is a brother of Bro. Mike Reuter who used to live with us here. He said that Bro. Martin's age has taken its toll, that he is slipping fast; but he said what a wonderful and faithful brother he has been and how the little church of Portland is going to miss him. I sometimes wonder what individuals will think of us when we leave.

Maybe, sometimes, people leave and feel that they won't be missed, that there are others who can take their places. Maybe they haven't been as kind and loving as they should have been. Maybe we don't sorrow too much when they are gone. But God knows every heart. God knows our hearts . . . He knows your heart . . . He knows mine. He knows whether we love the Lord. He knows whether we love the brothers and sisters of the faith, and the friends. So, beloved ones, let us all encourage each other and pray one for another that the Word of God can go forth and that salvation can be obtained.

We know that the door of grace is still open. How we wish and pray that our friends would come to the Lord. There is saving power, there is peace, there is pardon, there is eternal life for those who ask.

SERMON SPOKEN BY BRO. WALTER STEFFEN OF MILFORD, IN.

Text: Matthew 25

Beloved ones, as we come together on the Lord's Day, I often feel that it is the Spirit which brings us together around the Word. The Spirit leads us in this life; It is a Guide; It is a Comforter; It reveals many things to us.

But my thoughts now turn to a book which is in a cabin along the Oregon coast. It refers to logging and it has many articles and pictures of men at the turn of the century cutting huge trees and bringing the timbers out of the woods. It was a tremendous amount of hard labor. I think the men were hardened, too, and they went from one camp to another, going, perhaps, where the food was the best.

One article that was interesting told about how oxen were used to pull the heavy logs. It mentioned, I believe, that pound for pound an ox is stronger than a horse, and I never realized that. One man, possibly the hardest and meanest of the group, would drive the animals. He had a weapon, the article mentioned, and he cursed and beat the animals until they pulled their utmost trying to move the huge logs.

I thought about how different it is for us as believers—as Christians. We have the Holy Spirit which goes ahead of us to guide us, to lead us, and to encourage us. We are not driven. We should not have to be driven. The Spirit leads and guides us in life.

In the Old Testament David, in the twenty-third Psalm, mentioned that, "The Lord is my shepherd," and that He leads us in green pastures and beside still waters. The Spirit does this: He leads us to the Bible; He leads us to prayer; and He leads us to the church where we can sit and listen to the Word; where we can sing together hymns of praise to the honor of the Lord; and where we can be uplifted and encouraged in our faith and in our walk of life.

We all need the Spirit, we who are the children of God. We need to listen to the Spirit. The Spirit doesn't shout at us. The Spirit speaks in a small, still voice, and we need an open ear to listen to Him. Then as we walk through life, we know that the Lord will, through the Spirit, direct us, encourage us and reveal things to us, even the way that we should go. We know that the Spirit is going to lead us to eternal life—everlasting life.

This is why we are gathered together. It is the hope of every believer that someday he can live with the Lord and with those who have loved the Lord in this life and have gone on.

There are many disappointments and discouragements in life and I am sure that all of us have them. But we won't have them in heaven. We will enjoy each other. There won't be any hatred, envy, or strife. There is so much of that today, so much of one trying to out-do the other, maybe even trying to acquire things to which they have no right to.

Wasn't it Naboth who had a vineyard and King Ahab who desired it because it was next to his palace? King Ahab wanted it so badly. He wanted to buy it from Naboth or trade something for it. Naboth said he couldn't do that because his forefathers had given it to him. The vineyard was his and he wanted to keep it.

We know that King Ahab set his face to the wall and, I believe, was pouting about it. Then wicked Queen Jezebel told him that she could take care of this easily. She wrote letters in the king's name and stamped them with the king's seal. A fast was proclaimed and false witnesses said that Naboth had blasphemed. Then Naboth was stoned to death and King Ahab took his vineyard. This didn't belong to King Ahab. He had no right to it and yet he wanted it

too badly. He took it and then he had to pay for it.

The prophet Elijah came and told him that the dogs would lick up his blood for what he had done, taking something that didn't belong to him. This happened and even Jezebel was thrown down to her death. After King Ahab was killed, his blood was in the chariot and the dogs came and licked the blood. I Ki. 21 and 22.

We have many wonderful accounts in the Word of God. We come together to encourage each other and to remind each other of the seriousness of living upon this earth because we have no promise of tomorrow; but today we have moderate health and many of us are gathered together around the Word.

In the 25th chapter of Matthew which we read today, we have an account of some parables which the Lord Jesus spoke to the people. He began, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven . . ." (He is illustrating what entering the kingdom of Heaven would be like. In this particular parable He told the people that "the kingdom of heaven (will) be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went to meet the bridegroom." Mt. 25:1 Evidently they had instructions to go forth and each one had a lamp.

But we read that five were foolish. It says, "five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them." Mt. 25:2, 3. I often think of what Bro. Mike Zimmerman has mentioned in his prayers about gathering the oil of faith which we need as we walk here upon this earth. That is why we come together, to gather the oil. It will sustain us; it will keep us until the time when the Lord comes.

But the five who were foolish didn't gather any oil. Maybe they started and took what they had

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