

The Silver Lining

A LIGHT FOR BELIEVERS

VOLUME 33

DECEMBER 1983

NUMBER 12

He was here once, but . . .

HE'S COMING BACK!



As we celebrate His first appearance, let's look forward to His Second Coming. What a contrast that will be!!

FIRST APPEARANCE

As a babe (Isa. 9:6)
Wrapped in swaddling clothes
(Luke 2:12)
Laid in a manger (Luke 2:7)

Very few knew of His arrival
(Luke 2:8, 9)
He had no home (Matt. 8:20)

Worked as a carpenter (Mk. 6:3)
He came to serve (Matt. 20:28)
He was deserted by friends
(Mk. 14:50)
His name has brought persecution
(Matt. 10:22)

SECOND COMING

As the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13)
Clothed in a vesture dipped in
blood (Rev. 19:13)
He'll sit on a throne (Matt. 25:31,
32)
Every eye shall see Him (Rev. 1:17)

He'll rule over New Jerusalem
(Rev. 21:23)
Rule as a King (Phil. 2:10)
He shall be glorified (Matt. 25:31)
The armies of heaven will be with
Him (Rev. 19:14)
His followers shall rule with Him
(Rev. 10:4)

Yes, His second appearance on earth will be much different from His first. It does little good to celebrate His birth and remember His sacrifice, if we fail to honor Him as Lord of our life. At this Christmas time, let's praise Jesus Christ not only for what He has been, but also for what He will be forever. Let's worship Him, not because He was born as a babe or died as a lamb, but because He is the Risen Christ, coming back as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. 19:16).

President Ronald Reagan and the Congress of the United States proclaim . . .



Year of the Bible 1983

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation



Of the many influences that have shaped the United States of America into a distinctive Nation and people, none may be said to be more fundamental and enduring than the Bible.

Deep religious beliefs stemming from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible inspired many of the early settlers of our country, providing them with the strength, character, convictions, and faith necessary to withstand great hardship and danger in this new and rugged land. These shared beliefs helped forge a sense of common purpose among the widely dispersed colonies — a sense of community which laid the foundation for the spirit of nationhood that was to develop in later decades.

The Bible and its teachings helped form the basis for the Founding Fathers' abiding belief in the inalienable rights of the individual, rights which they found implicit in the Bible's teachings of the inherent worth and dignity of each individual. This same sense of man patterned the convictions of those who framed the English system of law inherited by our own Nation, as well as the ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

For centuries the Bible's emphasis on compassion and love for our neighbor has inspired institutional and governmental expressions of benevolent outreach such as private charity, the establishment of schools and hospitals, and the abolition of slavery.

Many of our greatest national leaders — among them Presidents Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, and Wilson — have recognized the influence of the Bible on our country's development. The plainspoken Andrew Jackson referred to the Bible as no less than "the rock on which our Republic rests."

Today our beloved America, and indeed, the world, is facing a decade of enormous challenge. As a people we may well be tested as we have seldom, if ever, been tested before. We will need resources of spirit even more than resources of technology, education, and armaments. There could be no more fitting moment than now to reflect with gratitude, humility, and urgency upon the wisdom revealed to us in the writing that Abraham Lincoln called "the best gift God has ever given to man . . . But for it we could not know right from wrong."

The Congress of the United States, in recognition of the unique contribution of the Bible in shaping the history and character of this Nation, and so many of its citizens, has by Senate Joint Resolution 165 authorized and requested the President to designate the year 1983 as the "Year of the Bible."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in recognition of the contributions and influence of the Bible on our Republic and our people, do hereby proclaim 1983 the Year of the Bible in the United States. I encourage all citizens, each in his or her own way, to re-examine and rediscover its priceless and timeless message.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

"I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks, be made for all men, For kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and Honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Savior."

I Timothy 2:1-3

We are thankful for the President of our Nation, President Reagan, who is willing to take a stand and proclaim the need and importance of reading and believing the Bible, the Word of God.

We are thankful for the President's faith in God that sustained him during a grave and life threatening attack and injury. We are thankful for the freedom of worship that we have and can enjoy.

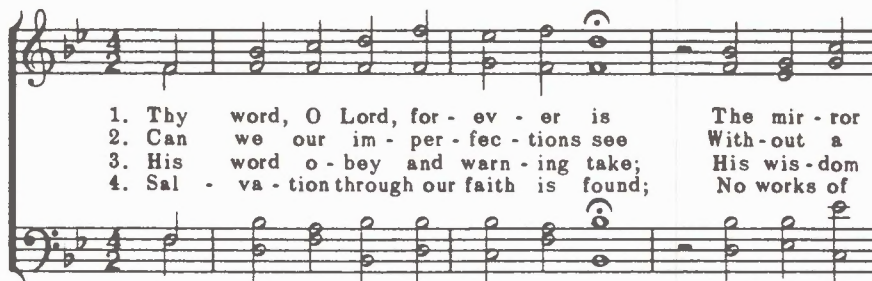
We are thankful for the many blessings for both soul and body that we can enjoy in this land and that we have opportunity to share the truths in God's Word, the Bible, with others, both by word and deed.

May we all give our prayerful support to our President, for the continued efforts, that we can live in a nation in peace and freedom.

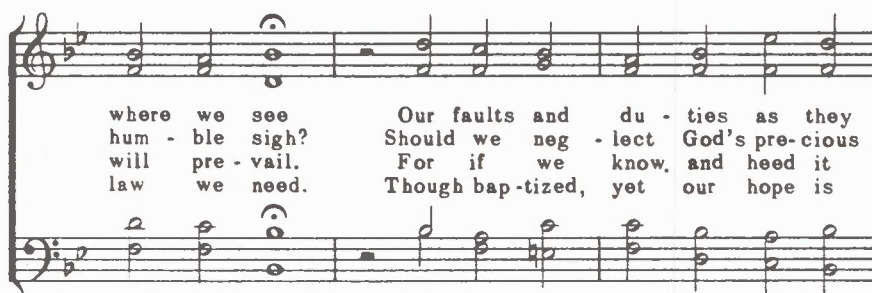
Elder Bro. David Bertsch

142. OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD

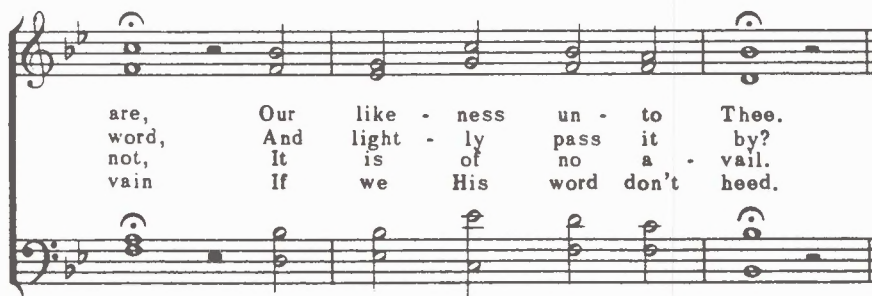
143, 163, 169, 216.



1. Thy word, O Lord, for - ev - er is The mir - ror
2. Can we our im - per - fec - tions see With - out a
3. His word o - bey and warn - ing take; His wis - dom
4. Sal - va - tion through our faith is found; No works of



where we see Our faults and du - ties as they
hum - ble sigh? Should we neg - lect God's pre - cious
will pre - vail. For if we know, and heed it
law we need. Though bap - tized, yet our hope is



are, Our like - ness un - to Thee.
word, And light - ly pass it by?
not, It is of no a - vail.
vain If we His word don't heed.

5. The wrath of God lies on the world,
On whom its ways pursue,
Yet grace enough is found in God
To live in Him anew.

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

Spreading the Good News

For several years there has been a lot of discussion in the brotherhood concerning the vast amount of money our faith has contributed to the various Bible societies and just how effective the results have been in getting the Word distributed to the proper peoples.

On October 16, 1981, there was a joint meeting of the Apostolic Christian Missionary Fund and World Relief Committees in Chicago, IL. A charge

was given to the Mission Fund Committee to further investigate the activities of the Bible societies and to make a recommendation to the elder body that considerations and guidelines should be given to establish our own Bible distribution system.

Bro. Henry Grimm had been very active for about twenty years in monitoring the collections and making a report on how the money was divided among the various Bible societies.

From August 1980 to August 1981, fourteen churches reported contributions in excess of \$39,000. Many other individuals and congregations also forwarded funds of which we have no record. The American Bible Society reported that from January 2 to July 31, 1981, our churches had contributed in excess of \$20,000 which was immediately identifiable, and we're inclined to think that much more than that was donated.

Our investigation revealed that the Northern Bible Society, which our brotherhood had contributed to regularly for some years in the past, had lost their devoted secretary in November 1978, and they had ceased further distribution of Bibles or Testaments in 1979.

There was further concern as for many years several of our churches had written to the various societies directing them to not use their gifts to distribute such translations as "Good News for Modern Man" and other translations which were actually misleading or were an incomplete interpretation of the Word.

Generally, there was favorable response. However, recognizing current trends, it was felt our objectives were not fully being met and that we should seek substitute or alternate methods of distribution which would be more effective.

With the growth of our activities, especially in World Relief where they have had direct contact with many people who are in great need both materially and spiritually, it was strongly felt that we should exercise as many opportunities as possible to supplement with the Word of God the donations of food, clothing, etc.

We are greatly encouraged to see that some of the local congregations have long had an active program in their own communities of sharing the Holy Scriptures with those in nursing homes, hospitals and other such institutions. It was noticed that many motels and hotels no longer provide Bibles which many of us have used in our travels throughout the world. Here is an opportunity to involve many of our brethren, and particularly our young people, in a most worthwhile pursuit. Some congregations have even gone so far as to advertise in the local media the availability of Bibles upon request. Bibles are then personally delivered by some of our brethren.

Just as an example, on our recent trip to India, the Peoria congregation provided money to buy in India the Word of God printed in the local dialect of the area. The children and loved ones in the homes on the Mission and in the community gladly received these gifts of love.

It is further felt that when our brethren who have been active in World Relief activities have the opportunity, this vehicle should be used to supply

the Word of Life and Light. We can see the possibility of many avenues being opened, and also the answer to the many who inquire, "what can I do to further the Lord's work here upon this earth?" Actually the opportunities are unlimited and we want to encourage them through the proper channels.

We are agreed that, wherever possible within the framework of our own brotherhood, we should lend ourselves in further distributing the Holy Scriptures and also in expressing our beloved faith and doctrine.

Contributions can be sent either by congregations or individuals to the Mission Fund so identified. We intend to diligently pursue all avenues possible to provide Scriptures wherever a need is brought to our attention. We hope that in each congregation, under the direction of the shepherd and ministers, brethren will be available to share the teachings of our heavenly Father.

Congregations and individuals who still want to make their contributions directly to the various societies have that privilege, but it is hoped that we will be able to establish the proper network within our own brotherhood to see that we get full value for money donated.

Brethren are available from the Mission Fund Committee to visit the various congregations to explain how this work is being accomplished in many areas. When we have once had the privilege of seeing first hand the thrill and the joy with which this Holy Book is received, we have a much better understanding of why we are encouraging better supervision and control of the vast amount of money being forwarded.

Let's all try to work together to share what we have with those who have not been so fortunate.

Humbly submitted,
Ben Maibach, Secretary-Treasurer
Apostolic Christian Mission Fund

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION REPORT

"So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17

With the great need of placing a Bible or Testament in the hands of many who want one, The Missionary Committee has established and implemented a plan for distribution and a source of supply for Bibles to all our churches.

Sources have been established for the purchase of both Bibles and Testaments in the King James version. With large quantity purchases, considerable savings in cost are realized and adequate inventory will be available so immediate shipment can be made for your needs.

The purchasing, inventory and shipping will be from the Bible Distribution Center at Leo, IN. Either written or phone requests can be given to:

David Bertsch
Route 2, Box 157A
Grabill, IN 46741
Phone: 219-627-2923

Representative costs, plus shipping will be given for each request and contributions can be sent to:

Ben Maibach
14726 Fox Road
Detroit, MI 48239
Phone: 313-531-3536

A representative group of Bibles and Testaments have been sent to each elder or church correspondent. Since our 1983 Brotherhood Conference,

THE SILVER LINING

Grabill, Indiana 46741
USPS 496780

EDITORIAL STAFF:

Lynn Stieglitz
Albert Frautschi
David Bertsch

The editorial staff wishes to acknowledge and thank all of the volunteers from the Leo Apostolic Christian Church who willingly give of their time to handle the many address changes, help mail the monthly issues and spend hours in editing. May God reward you.

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Grabill, IN 46741

Second class postage paid at Grabill, IN 46741. The subscription rate is \$6.00 per year. Send zip no. with address. Remember to send changes of address. Send both old and new addresses (with both zips).

IN MEMORY — EDITORS:
HENRY SOUDER
EDWARD SOUDER

orders have been placed for 8603 Bibles and Testaments. Of this quantity, 5825 Bibles and Testaments have been shipped to our churches for distribution by our brethren. Bibles have been given to individuals through ads in the paper, placed in hotels, motels, jails, optometrist's offices, rest homes and hospitals. Often, during the visit to the homes to give a Bible, our statement of faith, Missionary or World Relief brochure may be shared and given to the individual. Also, material needs may be noted and help from World Relief brethren can be given.

Humbly submitted,
David Bertsch
for the Missionary Committee

THE USE OF THE BIBLE

Bro. Carlton Lanz — Rockville, CT

How greatly do you value your Bible? To what extent do you feel that it is essential to your well-being and to that of your children? These questions you will answer largely by your own use of this Good Book within your family circle and church.

Surely this country was founded and developed upon the Scriptures, and you no doubt consider it to be a Christian country. If you look back over the great moments in its history, you will find the Bible not only in evidence, but conspicuously so, and most frequently in use. The Gospel needs to be the foundation of our national life.

From a most dominant place in our lives, however, the Bible tends to slowly but surely to recede in importance until today in many homes and communities it shows little evidence or use. This is in part due to indifference, and beyond this indifference, there is growing opposition.

As good Christians and good citizens do all that you can at every opportunity to counteract the forces of evil. These forces are at work attempting to bar the use of the Bible and religious instruction from our schools and public places. Do not forget that our country was founded upon and grew great through free access to the teachings, guidance and revelation of this Book of Books. Men through the ages have laid down their lives willingly so that its sacred pages might pass to us. Cherish it as the foundation of your home life, and teach its eternal truths to your children.

As we gather with our families and friends for Thanksgiving, the truly

American Holiday, let us remember that we are the "One Nation under God" and be thankful. No nation in the history of the world has worked so hard to make life better for such a large number of people.

SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

**Bro. Harvey Heiniger
Burlington Congregation**

Sacrifices were made from the beginning of the human family. Cain and Abel offered sacrifices. Gen. 4:3, 4. Every sacrifice was assumed to be connected with the spirit of the worshipper. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats." Isaiah 1:11. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;" Isaiah 1:16.

In offerings under the law, the blood symbolized the life of the offerer represented by the victim's blood. The passover lamb's sprinkled blood represented its life substituted for the people's life, who therefore escaped. "Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, draw out and take you a lamb according to your families and kill the passover. And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and strike the lintel and the two sideposts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two sideposts the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." Exodus 12:21-23.

The sin offering was first introduced by the law. The law was to awaken in man the consciousness of sin. The law showed that sin must be removed before the sinner can be accepted. Atone means to cover. The offerings of blood of animals were to cover their sins.

The children of Israel gave offerings for several things — sin offerings, peace offerings, etc. These were given to appease the wrath of God for their wrongdoings. The law spelled out what kind of offerings were to be made. For example, the animal was to be without blemish as well as other requirements.

Those who offered these sacrifices felt in a sense that the animal was paying the price for their sins, serving as a substitute for their own guilt. The pattern of those offerings very well portrays and serves as a foreshadow of the true Lamb, pure and spotless, without blemish that was someday going to be offered for the sins of the people.

God accepted the offering of the offerer on the basis of attitude and recognition of wrong doing, when their sacrifices were the blood of animals. The sinner's attitude of penitence for the errors of his past life and his recognition, by faith, that God gave His Son and allowed His blood to be shed as the atonement (covering) are essential for God to forgive him.

Under the law, the people came every year to make offerings and sacrifices. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Heb. 10:1. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin." Heb. 10:4. "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will O God, He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Heb. 10:9 "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:14. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we could be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor. 5:21. "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:17. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Heb. 10:12. "And having a high priest over the house of God let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)" Heb. 10:21.

FOOD FOR ROMANIA

Bro. Andy Hunyady

We doubled the number of food packages on our last order with the hope that more people will receive something extra for the year-end holidays. Thus far nearly 80 letters from individuals and families indicate that

the food packages are coming through in good condition. Most of these letters are very brief and simple expressions of appreciation and gratitude to the American brethren, who's love and compassion extend across the great lands and seas, to offer help and relief in times of adversity. As the cold winter brings added hardship upon all, especially those who are in great need, may we remember them and share our blessings.

Your gift offerings, great or small, should be transmitted through the World Relief representative in your church and so designated.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, . . . As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. 6:9, 10.

Here is an excerpt from a letter just received from an aged, retired elder brother in Yugoslavia:

"Very Dearly Beloved American Brethren in the Lord! Though unknown in person, yet we know each other thru Jesus Christ, our Lord. May the blessings of grace and the loving care of our very good God be granted unto you in rich measure, so that you may rejoice together with us in the life to come. My dear brother in the Lord, with great spiritual desire I want to visit you in the faraway land, for your love toward the Lord and us, for we have received the fruits thereof both in the past and again recently. We give much thanks to our gracious God and to you, who have remembered the poor, the needy and the elderly in Yugoslavia, in whose name I thank you! We feel very unworthy of it.

May our very good God and heavenly Father bless you for your good deeds. The Lord loves a cheerful giver and will reward those who do according to His word.

We greet you all my beloved American brethren in the Lord with much love from Horgos and Yugoslavia.

I remain as your very weak brother in the Lord,"

Mihaly Kissak

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

Uriel Gehring — Jane Stieglitz

As we glance out of the window of the office here at the Home, we observe the once brilliantly colored leaves, flashing in all their glory, have been replaced by the barren brown of the trees that have

URGENT NEED FOR A MARRIED COUPLE AT CHILDREN'S HOME

To be able to continue the operation of the Children's Home, there is an urgent need for a married couple to serve as alternate houseparents at the Children's Home at Leo, Indiana.

This is an exciting and challenging opportunity for our brothers and sisters to put to use their God-given talents in working with young people and bringing out the best in them.

"Train up a child in the way he should go and, when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

The qualification requirements for the alternate houseparents are:

1. Must be a brother and/or sister sound in faith, upholding church doctrine and order.
2. Must have the support of his/her home church elder.
3. Must be able to command respect of children, as well as adults.
4. Desirable age between 21 and 60 years. Consideration will be given to all applicants.
5. A resume is required to be sent with your request for an interview.
6. This position is full-time.
7. Training or studies in child care, social work, nursing profession, counseling or teaching would be helpful. We have a staff development program and

now been stripped of their gorgeous colored leaves, and we sense that winter is approaching. The timber ground is now clothed with leaves that cover the soil, giving a beautiful rug covering effect to mother earth. The tall, stately trees now stand as soldiers on a battlefield, ready to meet the foe, the long winter ahead. May we "Stand Up For Jesus, as soldiers of the cross, and hold high His mighty banner, may it never suffer loss. From victory unto victory, His army shall He lead, 'til every foe is vanquished and Christ is Lord indeed." Hymns of Zion #219. This victory can be ours through Him. Every season has its wonders that reveal to us the creativity and beauty of our Maker's hand. How great is our God who maketh all things well. What a privilege to allow Him to make us new creatures in Christ Jesus, and then be called His children. May we walk worthy of that vocation to which we have been called.

On Thursday evening, Oct. 27, both

"on the job" training to help you carry out your duties.

8. Additional information concerning duties, salary, insurance and other compensation, can be obtained by writing or calling:

Bro. Uriel Gehring
Box 423
Grabill, IN 46741
(219) 627-5468 or (219) 627-5138

Bro. Oliver Stieglitz
Route 3, Box 321
Grabill, IN 46741
(219) 657-5168

Elder Bro. David Bertsch
Route 2
Grabill, IN 46741
(219) 627-2923

All requests and resumes will be promptly and prayerfully answered.

"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." (Psalm 27:10) There is an ever increasing great number of children who have been forsaken, and only a small number of Christian homes available to provide for them. The Lord needs willing workers to provide for these young souls.

The Children's Home
Board Members

houses were treated to a hayrack ride with some of our Amish friends. The hayrack was filled with straw bales and had iron wheels. It was pulled by two huge horses and had a battery to light up the red reflectors in the rear. There were about 35 to 40 people on the ride. Some of the children were given the privilege of driving the horses — this was quite a treat to them. After a ride of about an hour, we were all treated to popcorn, kool-aid, fresh apples and pretzels in the Amish home; a very enjoyable evening indeed.

The weekend of November 5 and 6, both houses journeyed to Fairbury, IL, a four-and-a-half hour drive. We had a delicious supper at the fellowship hall with about 200 of our people; then some games for the children downstairs while we "oldsters" sang some hymns upstairs. Later in the evening the children came upstairs and we all sang together — it was a most rewarding evening. Sunday, we all went to church

in Fairbury. Two of our former residents, Wendy Roth and Robin Fossdick, both of Fairbury, spent the day with us. It was nice to see them again. We were served supper at Bro. Dick and Sis. Betty Wiegand's farm home and everything was delicious. Thank you, Fairbury congregation, for all you did for us.

We are looking forward to Thanksgiving vacation when most of our children will be guests of our church people from the midwest. We all have so much to be thankful for all year around, it is unfortunate we are reminded of Thanksgiving only once a year on a national basis. However, we can thank our Heavenly Father each day wherever we are. We have a rich heritage in America concerning the worshipping of our great God, Praise be to His Name.

We have new houseparents for the West House. We welcome the Babins, Bro. Kenneth, Sis. Jacqueline and, their children, Kevin 11, Kim 9, Jason 6 and Jonathan 4, to our staff and to our Leo congregation. They come to us from Morton, IL. We are looking forward to many pleasant hours with them. We thank Bro. Paul, Sis. Leanne and little Laura Fischer for houseparenting the West House until we found full-time houseparents.

We welcome a new child to our Home once again. She is Daleen C., 13 years old. Her birthday is January 22, 1970. We pray that we can have a positive influence on Daleen and that she can enjoy and appreciate her time with us.

Dawn, John and Deb are all involved in the Christmas concert at Leo High School.

Randy will be participating in the Christmas program at Leo Elementary. We look forward to seeing and hearing these children sing and tell of the birth of Christ. John and Jerry are learning to be mechanics. They love tinkering around with little things that need to be fixed to see what they can do. Chuck is a hard worker. He helped Paul and Leanne when they were moving. Debbie is frantically looking for a part-time job, hoping that she will be able to continue on there full-time after graduation. Thelma and Bertha are continually writing letters and asking "Did I get any mail?" when they come home from school. It is extremely important to them to hear from you, their friends. Erik has a beautiful sense of

humor and is doing very well in school. Last, but not least, Gary has been a continual support and companion to our dear friend, Jay Ice, still hospitalized at Parkview in Ft. Wayne.

We welcome a new little Baer to the East House. Sarah Marie was born to Larry and Vera on November 25. All is fine with mother and child and we are thankful for that. Their son, Mark, is also very excited about the "BABEE"!

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

To the families of our residents, to our many, much-appreciated volunteers, and to our many friends, we express warm greetings for this Holiday Season.

To the relatives of those who have their residence here and with whom we have a tender bond of concern, we express gratitude for your continuing interest and support. As we think of the Babe of Bethlehem and His unique mission upon earth, we think also of you mothers and fathers. There was a day, too, when you received a babe with a special mission; and as Jesus' mother, Mary, yielded to Gabriel's annunciation by saying, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word," so also the time came when, as a result of your acceptance of this special responsibility, you were blessed with love and peace. Now as we pause at this time of year when hearts are mellowed, we wish you continued peace and love.

Though we have repeated it often before, we feel the need to say again and again to our many, valuable volunteers how very much we appreciate each of you. Your spirit of willingness is as a warm cloak of encouragement. Surely our Heavenly Father will reward you richly for lending to Him your hands and feet.

And with our many friends who stand by us with support, encouragement, and prayers, we feel a close walk of brotherhood. Though distance may separate us, yet we know that often you have reached out to us on your knees. May the spirit of the Christ, who came as a Babe, unite us together with Him in such closeness that we can almost "touch the hem of His garment."

A new resident, Bryan Streid, has recently come to our Home. He is the son of Ralph and Violet Streid of Chenoa, IL. Two brothers, Keith and Tony, two sisters, Karen and Diane, and two

nieces and nephews make up Bryan's family. His favorite foods are hamburgers and ice cream; his favorite pastime is music. Birthday time for Bryan is Dec. 8. We welcome Bryan and hope he is happy here.

Our landscape was lightly touched with beautiful snow already early in November. Each season brings a renewed feeling of awe and reverence for our Creator.

The inn was crowded, no one from inside
Had seen the star or heard the angels sing,
They never knew that just beyond the door
A baby had been born to be their King.

For these were busy folks in Bethlehem,
Exchanging views, lamenting of their cares,
Commanding tables and the choicest food,
Engrossed in their own problems and affairs.

The keeper, too, was anxious for his guests
And strived to see each detail was set right;
How could he then make room for peasant folk
Who came entreating at his door tonight?

He had made a hopeless gesture and replied
That they might seek the stable in their need,
And hurried to attend some new demand,
There were so many yet that he must feed.

Do not think harshly of the little inn
Or yet of those who tarried long ago
About the tables with their own concerns . . .
They merely erred because they did not know.

The keeper was harassed on every side,
He knew not that he turned the Christ away. . .
Think rather, after nineteen hundred years,
There can be no excuse for us today!

Viney Wilder

ALABAMA, ATHENS**Joan Schrenk**

For a long time the Athens Church has needed another minister to help ease Bro. Lavoyd's load, as he has been alone now for some time. In October the way was finally opened and this responsibility has fallen on Bro. Tom Schrenk. With everyone's love and support, he will now share some of Bro. Lavoyd's work.

Harvest is now past here in Alabama, but is still evident here in our small congregation. Tammy Haggemaker has decided to give her life to the Lord and Mr. Long is awaiting baptism.

We've recently had visitors from Alto, Fairbury, Gridley, Tremont, Princeville and Bradford. We thank them for their visit and encourage others as they travel south to stop and spend a weekend with us.

The preschool is going well this year. We have 27 enrolled, which requires two full time teachers and a full time helper. It's not only our duty to help these little ones but a joy to watch and care for them, as they are gifts from God.

Recently we learned a new definition for meekness that I'd like to share with you. It is the spirit of submissiveness to accept that which God places on us, to not complain and to know that what God does is well done. Oh, beloved brethren, we need to pray for this virtue that we can continue to grow in our Lord.

ARIZONA, PHOENIX**Ron and Ev Hoerr**

Our usual nice weather made our Sunday School picnic a great time to rejoice in the Lord, for the young in age and the young in heart. We truly do appreciate those who work with our children in Sunday School.

Sis. Kathy Klotzle showed slides of Japan and the children from the preschool where she taught. The next evening we heard more conference tapes.

On Oct. 30, we heard the engagement of Sis. Cheryl Huber to Bro. Jon Ricketts (Washington, IL). Their parents are Bro. Wilbur and Sis. Sophie Huber (Phoenix) and Bro. Meredith and Sis. Leona Ricketts (Forrest, IL).

And the Lord said, "return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee." Gen. 31:3. And with this promise, Bro. Elmer and Sis.

Clara Zollinger left Phoenix to make their home in Rittman, OH. Their four children and families in our congregation have been blessed with their presence since 1976. Their new address is:

Elmer and Clara Zollinger
c/o Apostolic Christian Home
10680 Steiner Rd.
Rittman, OH 44270

Nov. 2, Grant Richard was born to Bro. Jay and Sis. Teri Leman. Young Bryant is quite impressed with little "Gant".

On Nov. 13, it was a privilege to have Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach and Bro. Noah Herman (Tucson) serve Holy Communion to us. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." I Cor. 11:26.

Our visiting minister was Bro. Edward Aeschleman (Philadelphia).

"Oh, sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things." Psalm 98:1. After 45 days in the hospital, Bro. Dick Beery has returned home again. We are looking forward to his and Sis. Marie's return to church.

Bro. Dick and Sis. Marie wish to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, and gifts during the ten weeks of his illness. After a walk through the Valley, one truly enjoys a closer walk with Him.

Other hospital patients who have safely returned home are: Sis. Minnie Farney (medical), Sis. Cathy (Don) Emch (surgical), Sis. Joyce Yackley (medical), and Ryan Banks (leg injury from a car accident).

We have enjoyed visitors all summer and fall, and are looking forward to our winter residents and visitors. We send Seasons Greetings and the Lord's Blessings to one and all.

"Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all." II Thes. 3:16

ARIZONA, TUCSON**Sandy Bauer — Lisa Knapp**

We thank Bro. Ron Heiniger (Bloomington) for his visit and for ministering to us. May God richly bless those brothers who are willing to minister to us through His Word.

Dale and Margaret Knapp have recently moved here from Fairbury, IL. We all join Bro. Loren and Sis. Evelyn Knapp in welcoming their son and his wife to Tucson.

This month we held our annual busi-

ness meeting. Bro. Curt Kaufman was elected as a church trustee to replace Bro. Harvey Kaisner who will be leaving the office in January.

The starting time for our Sunday church services has been changed. Hymn singing now begins at 10:00 a.m., with services beginning at 10:15. Also, the date of our Annual Pancake Supper has been changed from Sunday, Feb. 12, 1984 to Saturday, Feb. 4 at 4:30 p.m. Those planning to attend should note this change.

Our dear Sis. Tillie Aldrich recently suffered a severe heart attack. We pray that God will grant His healing power according to His holy will and encourage her while she is in the hospital.

As the Christmas season again approaches, we are reminded of God's wonderful gift to mankind, His Son, Jesus Christ.

CHRISTMAS BENEDICTION

The star which guided the shepherds
Still shines on our fellowmen,
And joy reigns again in human hearts
As it did in Bethlehem.

The Christ Child offers His blessings
Onto all who dwell on earth,
And those who know and love Him
Share in His glorious birth.

May His love, down through the ages,
Glow as the star did then,
And the spirit of peace on earth, good
will
Live in the hearts of men!

Marian L. Moore

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA**Mary Beth Klotzle**

Christmas . . . the time of year when we remember the birthday of our Saviour and King. Feelings of goodwill and love flow from heart to heart as we think of the love God has for us; enough love to send His Son here to earth to suffer for us. Yes, it's a beautiful time of year. But let's be careful to keep the true meaning and not get so caught up in the holiday festivities that we lose the peaceful, gentle, caring love which was certainly present at the stable wherein Christ was born. There are many people throughout the world — even in our own towns and cities — who aren't as fortunate as we are. Let's remember them in prayer and, if given

the chance, share some of God's love with them. What better gift could we give?

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;" We were blessed to hear Bob Crockett testify of his belief and faith in Jesus Christ and to then witness his baptism. Our hearts rejoice with Bro. Bob and Sis. Judy that he has taken this most important step in life.

Sis. Elizabeth Feldman suffered a fall and is now patiently waiting for her broken wrist to heal completely. She extends thanks to all who remembered her with prayers and cards. We trust God will continue to be near and strengthen her.

We thank our visiting minister, Bro. Gene Metzger (Lester) for sharing God's Word with us.

May the Lord's grace, love and power help each child of His to walk in His steps each day of the coming year. And we pray that He will lead many more souls into His service and ultimately to Heaven for eternity.

CALIFORNIA, MAYWOOD

Bev Ammann

We thank Bro. Don Wagenbach (Washington, IL) for providing us God's Word and direction Sunday, Oct. 20.

On Sunday, Oct. 27 we were served by Noah Herman (Tucson, AZ). Also many brothers and sisters visited us.

Our small congregation is always happy to have visitors.

COLORADO, DENVER

Marlene Leman

Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Oakville) came to minister to us in October. We appreciate each brother who gives of himself in this manner. We pray God will bless him for his service to God and to us.

It is with mixed emotions that we report the engagement of Sis. Charleen Bahler (Bro. Edwin and Sis. Lois — Remington) and Bro. Tim Hartter (Bro. Virgil and Sis. Marie — Sabetha). In the short time since we have come to know Sis. Charleen, we have felt that blessed tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. We pray God's rich blessing upon her and Bro. Tim as they share their lives. Their wedding is planned for Dec. 18.

We have been having the privilege of

listening to the tapes of the Brotherhood Conference. We appreciate hearing our dear brothers speak to us of those things so important to our soul's salvation. It behooves us to be not only hearers, but doers of God's precious Word.

The following poem was written by one of our young sisters here in Denver:

When things all seem to be so good,
When troubles from you flee,
Be watchful, careful for the devil
'cause crafty he will be.

At times you think you can do it all,
And that you really don't need the
Lord,
Well don't forget to watch and pray,
And always read His word.

It's times when you thing you're doing
so well,
That Satan makes you fall.
And when he does and you ask for help,
On whose name do you call?

Of course to Jesus you humbly plead,
Upon your knees you fall and pray,
But if you only call in time of need,
Will Christ be there each day?

The Lord has promised He'll always
be near,
And forgiveness on us He'll bestow,
But we must help Him every day,
And live for Him here below.

For if we continue in our sinful ways,
What good will forgiving do?
We need to always follow Christ
And live each day anew.

So put away the old life
And live for God each day.
A comfort, guide, and help He'll be,
If we will watch and pray.

So forget about the yesterdays,
And live for God today —
'Cause joy and peace and happiness,
You'll find upon this way.

CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE

Dorothy Viens

It hardly seems possible that once again, the Christmas season is approaching. We are glad to remember, at this blessed season of the year, the precious gift that God gave to unworthy mankind in the sending of His only Son. We should not only think of His humble beginning, but remember

that our salvation lies in the bitter death that He endured for us — a death that is able to save us from our sins if we apply His shed blood to our hearts.

We thank Bro. Harry Sutter (Ft. Lauderdale) for being with us on a Wednesday evening and ministering God's precious Word to us. May God bless each one who labors in this capacity.

Bro. Arlo and Sis. Lynn Hoffman became first-time parents on October 30 with the birth of a baby girl, Kelly Christine. Kelly's grandparents are Bro. Edwin and Sis. Elsa Hoffman and Bro. Jim and Sis. Jane Moser.

Bro. Wally and Sis. Judy Carlson are the parents of a son, Nathan Paul, born November 15. Heidi and Benjamin are glad for another playmate. Maternal grandparents are Bro. Ben and Sis. Glenna Moser. May God grant grace to all who are parents that we may set the proper example to the dear little souls He has placed within our care.

Sisters Shirley Luginbuhl and Marie Hany were hospitalized for surgery. We are thankful when we can see God's power in restoring health where He sees fit.

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 judgement,
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

The above poem was a treasured favorite of our dear Bro. Christian

Luginbuhl, 94, who peacefully passed from this life on October 27. Bro. Chris, the oldest member of our congregation, was an outstanding example of faith and love to all who knew and loved him, and we are experiencing a deep feeling of loss at his absence. But we can take comfort in the assurance that he fought a good fight and kept the faith and we believe that he is at home with God. His wife, Sis. Bertha (Schneider), and a son, David, preceded him in death. Surviving are two brothers, Bros. Herman (Roanoke) and John; four sisters, Sisters Rose Luginbuhl, Ida Luginbuhl, Emma Luginbuhl and Louise Ballasy; six sons, Bros. Martin, Robert, Urban, Edward, Emanuel and Rudolph; and four daughters, Sisters Christine Virkler, Adele Trueb, Esther and Elizabeth, who lovingly cared for him at home. Bro. Chris dearly loved his large family. He had 45 grandchildren and 53 great-grandchildren. May God comfort the hearts of all those who miss him with the thought of the great reunion ahead for all of us if we are faithful to the end.

FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE Billie Klopfenstein

More and more visitors are appearing each Sunday to worship with us. Their arrival, along with the arrival of our winter residents is making our church a busier place. We welcome each one who comes, whether for one Sunday or for the season.

Our Sunday evening hymn sings have begun at the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome.

Bro. Roy and Sis. Helen Luginbuhl have returned to their home here after spending a few months in Connecticut. We welcome them back. Bro. Al and Sis. Gladys Schneider are spending a few weeks with us. It is always good to have them here in Ft. Lauderdale.

Bro. Bill and Sis. Joan Kuntz are the proud, first-time parents of a new little bundle of joy. Jamie Marie was born on Nov. 8 and weighed in at 5 lbs. 8 oz. Father, mother and baby are doing great.

During my morning devotions recently this verse really stuck in my mind. "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name." Psalm 86:9. Our nation no longer seems to be glorifying God's name. Each one of us should pray daily for our great and wonderful country.

Verse 5 in Psalm 86 says, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." We need His mercy in our individual lives and collectively as a nation.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA Doris and Diane Rocke

"They who walk the closest and work the hardest, watch the best for His coming." So it was close together amid hard tasks, but with thankful hearts to God and everyone, we are nearing the end of the remodeling. By the time this reaches you we hope to have completed the project. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31.

To add coziness in the new baby room are two newborn infants, gifts from above. We are delighted Ryan Austin arrived Oct. 5 to Billy and Sis. Barbara Mashburn. He was welcomed by two brothers, Nathan and Troy. We regret we missed reporting this in the last issue, as he was born the same week as the Bill Sauder's new daughter.

Other newcomers to our church are Jim and Joan (Heiniger) Cambern and family (LaCrosse, IN). May they feel the love of God as we welcome them. Tony Christopher has returned to Sarasota again. He had been a faithful helper in the work at the church. Bro. Phil Schlatter (Junction, OH) is also living here now. We welcome their presence, praying that the Lord will guide and watch over each one.

Sis. Marie's husband, Philip Bartoni, had eye surgery several times and has been in our prayers for strength to endure this pain. Bro. George Bruellman was hospitalized shortly after he arrived here for the winter. Bro. Tom Gudeman has returned after a hospital visit for surgery. Our love and prayers for a quick recovery are with them all.

Sis. Jeanette (Mike) Siladie attended the funeral of her grandfather, Bro. Chris Luginbuhl, in Rockville, CT. May she find comfort in the hope of that great reunion when we shall again be reunited.

We are happy to have the winter visitors arriving. May the Lord be praised for these gatherings in His name. We thank all the visiting ministers who labored this month. Among those were Bros. Homer Reineck (Toledo, OH), Joe Schrock (Congerville, IL), Mark Bahr and Elder Bro. Ben Maibach (Detroit, MI) and Elder Bro.

Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN).

GEORGIA, ATLANTA

Nancy Foltz — Charmin Sellers

Our deep appreciation goes to our ministering brothers this month who were Bro. Ed Alt (Cissna Park) and Bro. John Steiner (Oakville). We thank them for sharing the Word of God with us and our prayers are with them.

As we approach the end of another year, let us take a moment to reflect back and thank God for the many blessings he has bestowed upon us. Our congregation here in Atlanta has truly been blessed with many brothers and sisters who have come to visit and share in the teaching of His Holy Word. We look forward to the coming year.

Our last scheduled service for 1983 will be December 11. Our new schedule will begin on January 8, 1984, at the Ramada Inn I-75, Marietta, Georgia, and will be scheduled every 2nd and 4th Sunday thereafter. For information contact either Don Sellers at 404-923-0721 or Nancy Foltz at 404-451-9191.

ILLINOIS, BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL Charlene Knobloch Shirley Denick

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Vernon Leman (Eureka) and our Elder Bro. Dan Koch (Tremont). We trust that God will bless them for their labors of love.

Bro. Brent Nussbaum and Sis. Cheryl Honegger were married Oct. 29 in Bluffton North, IN. We wish them many happy years together and God's richest blessings as they begin their lives together as husband and wife. Their parents are Bro. Keith and Sis. Nancy Honegger (Bluffton North, IN) and Sis. Tillie Nussbaum.

Our prayers are with Sis. Dorothy Harsh, who had the misfortune of breaking her leg. She was hospitalized for a short time, but is home again and doing much better. We miss her smiling face and wish her a speedy recovery.

We had a blessed weekend Nov. 5th and 6th with those of like mind and faith. We thank the Taylor, MO, brethren for coming and sharing some singing and fellowship with us.

Address Changed . . .

Give Old and New Address
to Your Reporter.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD Shirley Kieser

WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS MEAN?

Christmas is presents and shopping. It's turkey, candy and parties. It's trees, decorations and vacations. Christmas is all of these things — and none of these things.

The real Christmas is Jesus' birthday. God gave His own Son to the world as the first Christmas gift.

But Christmas is even more than Jesus' birthday. Jesus did not come so that He could be a baby in a manger. He came so that He could die on the cross for the sins of the world. When we celebrate Christmas, we celebrate Good Friday and Easter, too. At Christmas time we do not worship the Baby Jesus. We worship Jesus, God's Son, who came to die on the cross for our sins, and rose again that we might have everlasting life.

from The Book of Life

Nate and Sherrill Stoller are the happy first-time parents of a little girl, Joanna Rae. Grandparents are Bro. Nate and Sis. Martha Stoller and the Lloyd Stahls of Dunlap.

Two sisters and three brothers welcomed Philip Tristan, along with his parents, Bro. Larry and Sis. Becky Endress. Sis. Mildred Endress (Princeville) and Bro. Orel and Sis. Rose Steiner (Oakville) are the grandparents.

Visiting us were ministering Bros. Hartzell Kaisner and Don Wagenbach (Washington), Bro. Jim Byrd (Roanoke) and Bro. Bob Walder (Congerville). Our thanks are extended to them and their families for their efforts.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO Kathy Schlatter

"Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me . . ." a song begins. Though the real truth may not be recognized by all, within the meaning of those words lies the solution of all of mankind's problems. An individual who believes in and desires world peace is still part of the problem and not a piece in the solution as long as he/she does not have peace within their soul. The only lasting peace ever attained begins within one's heart, in response to the blood of Jesus. Only by each individual's cry for the eradication of sin in his/her own life can the cry

for peace be answered. Those who have peace within often become much more concerned about the peace of others, person by person, since the whole world cannot be at rest without the peace of each soul.

Elder Bro. Jesse Beer (Milford, IN) assisted our Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann in serving communion Saturday evening, Nov. 5. From the Spirit he certainly was granted the gift of etching into our hearts the feelings of our Lord, viewing the cross ahead, that we might know more clearly the cost of our sins, for which He atoned. On Sunday, after we were spiritually fed, we also enjoyed a church dinner together.

We were encouraged to watchfulness by the brotherhood conference memorandum, brought to us by Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA), along with Bro. Dale, on Saturday, Nov. 19. We were reminded that distraction of the Christian is one of Satan's strongest tools, so that he may seek even to rob us of heaven through a lack of watchfulness. Bro. Ed especially exhorted us to humility and meekness, using Christ's example: "Go and tell no man". Surely we need to observe our Lord's pattern and footsteps and deeply meditate about them that we may become better imitators of Him.

Having seen the slides from India, narrated by Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO), we are ever more appreciative of the dedication of Bro. Roy and our other brothers. They have visited where the floors and walls are plastered with cow dung and people sit on the floor. They have slept where one sleeps undisturbed by spiders — as long as there are lizards or rats instead. They have traveled where water is so scarce that some walk five miles to draw from a well, but the Springs of Living Water are available. They have gone where missionaries are not allowed, yet the people go from shrine to shrine, hoping to appease the right "god", whom they do not know. They have ministered where Christians often have not read the Word because they cannot read and are persecuted by threats and burned huts but are able to remain true. Because of deprivation in India, we tremble at our responsibilities for all we have been given. However, because of the work of the Lord, we rejoice that we may do our little part in support of the Rural Gospel Medical Mission.

The inspired ministering of other

brothers was also ours this month. We enjoyed being nurtured by the Spirit through Bro. Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL), Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Bro. Arnie Gerst (Taylor, MO). We pray that they may be rewarded by the One who knoweth how to give all the best gifts.

Christmas glitter and tinsel is Santa Claus, jolly as he is. Yet, both glitter and tinsel are very disposable and easily tarnished. Children are always afraid of disappointing Santa because Mr. Claus' promises are fragile and ephemeral, broken within a short time. On the other hand, Christmas gold is Christ, for gold is a real investment, substantial and valuable. His children know that, though they disappoint Him, His gifts are true and His promises sure. The Christmas season is as bright as it is in Spirit because of the significance of His coming. Truly, as human beings, we are impressed by the angels and the Magi and tend to forget the reality and lowliness of the stable birth. Yet the splendor and glory is an important part of our expectation of His coming again. On the other hand, we must not forget the reality of our Christian walk and its meekness, which for us, precedes the radiance and magnificence of heaven. In the new year may we be filled with the joy and golden expectation of heaven and His coming as we walk in humble places: The gold of Christ in the surroundings of the stable.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK Wilma Walder — Joan Waldbeser

O God of wisdom, life and love
Thine is the blessed plan
In holy bonds of love to join
The twain created man.

These souls betrothed before Thee
stand
Thy blessing we implore;
Unite Thou them in heart and hand,
And guide them evermore.
Hymns of Zion #286

The engagement of Sis. Patti Walder and Bro. Les Marti was made known on Sunday, Nov. 6. Parents of the couple are Bro. Les and Sis. Dorothy Walder and Bro. Allan and Sis. Delores Marti (Gridley, IL). We do implore God's blessing on this couple and pray He will guide them as they plan for their future life together.

A precious little baby girl was born into the family of Bro. Jon and Sis. Cyndee Anderson on Nov. 3. Stephany Lee was welcomed home by her brother, Zachary. Grandparents are Sis. Mary and the late Loren Anderson and Bro. Richard and Sis. Marge Rocke (Eureka).

Hospital patients this month have been Bro. Walter Kaufmann, Sis. Mabel Vogel, Sis. Anna Marie Young, Sis. Anna Hari, Phyllis Enz, as well as Sis. Twylla Beer who still remains a patient in Burnham City Hospital, Champaign, IL 61820. She enjoys mail.

Everyone is looking forward to the Christmas season. It is a beautiful time of year when everyone's hearts are filled with love. A true Christian carries this love throughout the year and that is why they have this great joy within.

We are looking forward to having our Christmas program on Wednesday evening, Dec. 21. It is always a joy to hear "the blessed story of the Christ, the babe of Bethlehem," especially from the lips of our children.

Bro. Ezra and Sis. Ollie Feller wish to thank all who so kindly remembered them in prayer, with cards, phone calls and gifts of love in any way. Everything was appreciated more than words can tell. They also want to thank their children for all they did for them. May God bless you all.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Kay Roth — Carol Craig

As we approach the Christmas season, we get caught up in the hustle and bustle and tend to forget the real reason for Christmas. Let us strive to remember the love that God had for us to send His Only Son.

What can I give Him?
 Poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd
 I would bring a lamb.
 If I were a wise man
 I would do my part —
 Yet what can I give Him
 Give my heart.

Christina Rossetti

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament which

is shed for many for the remission of sins.

St. Matthew 26:26-28

We were thankful to have Elder Bros. Josh Broquard (Fairbury) and Bob Grimm (Goodfield), as we participated in Holy Communion. May the Lord richly bless them for helping in this important sacrament.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Ruth Ann Getz

Year after year the familiar sounds of Christmas reverberate. Songs are sung, poetry is recited and Scriptures are read to remind us of our loving God's gift of Himself in the form of the Christchild! As we reflect upon this Supreme Gift, is our vision dimmed by relatively unimportant demands for our attention and commitment to non-essential activity? If so, are we consciously enlisting His grace to overcome the distractions and discover deeper appreciation for His redemptive power?

Isaiah 53 reminds us of our Saviour being "despised and rejected" and that "we hid as it were our faces from Him — and we esteemed Him not." We read of "grief", "sorrow" and "affliction". Can we comprehend that "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed", (verse 5) so that we can say as Isaiah said (chapter 9:6) "for unto us a Child is born, unto us a son is given and the government shall be upon His shoulders and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"? His is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! (Rev. 19:16).

The Elgin brethren have been prayerfully proceeding with the development of a forty-nine bed intermediate care facility for the elderly. They have reported that some of the major obstacles which have impeded progress have been marvelously resolved and that construction will probably commence shortly. Anticipated completion is January 1985 and it is the board of directors desire to hire an administrator at least six months prior to completion. Therefore they implore any brother having a desire to be involved in the work as administrator of this facility to send his resume by February 28, 1984 to either:

Bro. Stanley Schambach
 109 Romeo Drive
 11N209
 Elgin, IL 60120

or:

Bro. Kenneth Lindoerfer
 822 Adams Street
 Elgin, IL 60120

As usual, this month has brought some illness among the brotherhood and with loving concern we bring each before the throne of grace in prayer. Sis. Emily Preiss and Bro. Tom Moser have been hospitalized but have returned to their respective homes to convalesce. Sis. Emma Wewetzer presently remains hospitalized.

Bro. Kenneth Lindoerfer has been bereft in the passing away of his brother Willis "Bob" Lindoerfer on Nov. 12. Bob had been living in St. Petersburg, FL at the time of his death. His body was returned "home" (Elgin) for the burial. We extend our sympathy to Kenneth and all of the Lindoerfer family.

To Sis. Anna Lohbauer, we extend our deepest sympathy in the passing of her brother, Fred Ottinger Sr. on Nov. 16. Fred was born Nov. 5, 1904, in Cissna Park, IL to Bro. Ernest and Sis. Carolina Jung Ottinger.

Bro. Steve Scheitlin, who was in Honduras with the Peace Corp., has moved to his permanent address which reads:

Steven Scheitlin, Cuerpo do Paz
 Oficina de Recursos Naturales
 Jesus de Otoro, Intibuca
 Honduras, Central America

Steve will be stationed in this small village which lies between two mountains for the next two years, and will be helping the farmers with an irrigation project. We have marvelous opportunity to pray for those who are separated from us for a time. May we be motivated to do so.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Kathy L. Rocke

Wedding vows were exchanged between Jeff Banwart (Bro. Joel and Sis. Sonya, Eureka) and Lisa Bruellman (Bro. Don and Sis. Verda, West Bend, IA) on October 22. They are residing in Eureka.

October 29, Jayne Schmidgall and Dwayne Schock exchanged wedding vows at the Roanoke Fellowship Hall.

Parents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Dorothy Schmidgall and Bro. Frank and Sis. Lois Schock (Elgin, IL).

Sis. Deb Saathoff and Bro. Bruce Fischer (Roanoke) were married on November 6. Bro. George and Sis. Thelma Saathoff and Bro. Wilmer and Sis. Clara Fischer are their parents. Bros. Bruce Leman and Jim Leman (Roanoke) spent the day with us for which we thank them. We wish all these couples the Lord's guidance and direction as they walk this earthly pathway together.

On October 30, we were blessed with visiting Elder Bro. Andy Virkler (Bay City, MI) and Bro. Harold Schmidgall (Gridley, IL). We pray the Lord will bless them for their willingness to come and serve us.

Wednesday evening, Nov. 16, we gathered together to hear the testimony of Brian Wiegand (Bro. Elton and Sis. Loretta). We are so thankful for each soul that answers God's call and surrenders their heart to Him. Bro. Willis Wiegand (Goodfield) was with us for this special occasion. Baptism services will be held Sunday, Nov. 20, Lord willing. We sincerely welcome Brian to the fold.

We miss our dear Sis. Clara Zimmerman (Bro. Lawrence) as she has been quite ill in a Peoria hospital. May God richly bless her and provide for her every need.

Bro. Jim and Sis. Linda Vierling welcomed Brent Alan on November 9. Eric, Kevin and Brian are anxious to meet their new brother, as are grandmothers, Sis. Pearl Vierling (Oakville, IA) and Sis. Mildred Endress (Princeville). May God bless this little family.

Wednesday, Nov. 9, Lawrence Fehr passed from this life into eternity. Surviving are his wife, Hilda; a brother, Aquilla; and three sisters, Sis. Clara Bach (Forrest), Sis. Alice Fehr and Sis. Mabel Bowald (Roanoke). Services were held on Friday, Nov. 11. May God comfort these dear ones in their loss, and may we all prepare for that time when we too must close our eyes in death.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6.

What a precious and blessed time of year when we celebrate the birth of our

Lord Jesus. It is a joyful time, a time for praising God for sending His son, knowing the agony and cruel death He would have to endure. "Tis not the manger but the cross that sets the spirit free." May our hearts be filled to overflowing for His wonderful plan for all mankind.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

Carol Bazzell — Joann Zehr

On Oct. 20, our Bible class students hosted Peoria and Cissna Park. A day of fellowship was enjoyed by all and we thank Bros. Glenn Dill (Tremont) and Kenneth Weertz (Cissna Park) for their labors among us. We were privileged this month to have the Leo Children's Home visit us for a weekend. We enjoyed the fellowship with the young people and with Bro. Uriel and Sis. Judy Gehring. We hope they enjoyed their weekend as much as we did. It helps us to be aware of others who have had misfortune and we appreciate that there are those who lovingly care for them. May we remember them in prayer. We thank Bro. Uriel for his inspiring message. We have enjoyed other visiting ministers this month: Elder Bro. Dave Kieser (Princeville), Bro. Al Aberle (Tremont) and Bro. Earl Gerber (Forrest).

Recently Sisters Kathryn and Anna Steffen have spent time in a Peoria hospital. As of now, they, along with their sister, Tillie, are residents at the Apostolic Christian Home in Peoria. We miss them in our congregation here in Fairbury.

Sis. Louella Sohn is recuperating nicely following knee surgery and wishes to sincerely thank all her friends and relatives for their prayers, cards and gifts she received while in the Carle hospital and since returning home. She wishes God's blessings to all who remembered her.

As the Christmas season is upon us, may we remember to "set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth." Col. 3:2. May the true meaning of Christmas remain precious in our hearts.

ILLINOIS, FORREST

Jan Bachtold — Kathy Leman

We were richly blessed with willing ministers of God's Word. Serving us were Bro. Steve Gutwein (Francesville), Bro. Marshall Heinold (Washington), Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction), Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor) and Bro.

Ken Schneider (Remington). We thank these brothers for their labor of love.

Two young children were hospitalized recently but are back home again. They are Shawna Adams (Bro. Terry and Sis. Sharon) and Paula Bachtold (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Mary).

The engagement of Bro. John Ricketts (Bro. Meredith and Sis. Leona) to Sis. Cheryl Huber (Phoenix, AZ) was made known. Sis. Trish Gerber (Bro. Earl and Sis. Esther) and Bro. Martin Steidinger (Bro. Maurice and Sis. Alma, Fairbury) are planning to unite their hearts as one in the Lord. Bro. Bob Anliker (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy) and Sis. Linda Steidinger (Bro. Ivan and Sis. Kathryn) are also engaged. May God be with these couples as they plan their future lives together.

We again were reminded of our duties and responsibilities as God's children when we heard the memorandum read in Fairbury. May we always strive to follow these good teachings as they will guide us on our way to Heaven.

We look forward to hearing our Sunday School children bring forth the Christmas story. May each one welcome the Savior into their hearts this Christmas season as we celebrate His birth.

A CHILD HAS COME FROM HEAVEN

A child has come from heaven
To bring the waiting earth
New hope and joy and meaning
By his incarnate birth.

A child has come from heaven
As love made manifest,
That hearts which will receive Him
May be forever blest.

A child has come from heaven
To teach each eager mind
Man's vast potentiality
To love and serve mankind.

A child has come from heaven
To lead where He has trod
The path of truth and righteousness
That keeps man close to God.

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Bev Joos

Christmas — no other time of the year is more bustling or more blissful. During those many shopping excursions, have you ever searched for "the gift"?

It's that one special gift, that one item that would be just right for someone special on your list. It must be something your loved one wants or needs, something not already owned, and something sure to fit. Well, there is ONE perfect gift. Perhaps, that is why Christ Jesus gave it to us. "The gift" is salvation and everlasting life. How parents do long to give this to their children. How grandparents would delight in bestowing this present upon their grandchildren. How swiftly we could finish our gift lists if such were possible.

On Nov. 1, our hearts were heavy as we held memorial services for our dear Sis. Minnie Knapp. It was comforting, however, knowing Minnie had received the gift of salvation on her bed of affliction this past spring. Our deepest sympathy flows to her husband, Bro. Carl Knapp and their daughter, Mrs. Joe Bell of Deer Creek, IL.

We wish to thank the Milford, IN choir for spending the weekend of Nov. 5 with us. We were greatly inspired as we listened to their beautiful song service. We are grateful for their gift of enlightening hymns of praise.

Elder Bro. Dave Kieser (Princeville) shared in the reading of the memorandum on Wednesday evening, Nov. 9. We are so thankful to each and every one of our elder body for their deep concerns. They continually give of themselves for the strength of our faith.

Hospital patients this past month were Sis. Laura Hohulin, Sis. Laura Steffen and Sis. Vi Wagner. It is our prayer that God grant them the gift of renewed health.

Our Goodfield congregation was fortunate to hear words of encouragement from a host of visiting ministers this past month. We are appreciative to Bros. Lenard Meyer (Chicago), Al Langhofer (Wichita), Kevin Knapp (Bloomington), Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville) and Dale Strassheim (Milford).

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Jim and Connie Anderson in the loss of his father, John Anderson. May God comfort them in their sorrow.

God has given the gift of love to two dear sisters-in-faith. The engagement of Sis. Carol Hohulin to Bro. Dale Gerber (Bluffton) was announced Nov. 13. The engagement of Sis. Phyllis Wiegand, daughter of Bro. Willis and Sis. Betty Wiegand, to Bro. Scott Le-

man, son of Bro. Roy and Sis. Wanda Leman (Eureka) was announced Nov. 20. Happiness fills our hearts as God directs their separate pathways into one.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY
Carol Klopfenstein

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." II Cor. 5:8.

Sis. Sophia Kaupp has gone to her eternal rest, where she can now be "present with the Lord". We appreciate the memories we have of her pleasant disposition and her simple and sincere Christian life that we could observe. Sis. Sophia died Oct. 26 at the age of 85 at the Apostolic Christian Home in Eureka. Our sympathy is extended to her brothers, Bro. Walter Kaupp (Fairbury), Elmer Kaupp (Eureka); her sisters, Emma Bressler and Sis. Marie Kaupp (both of Peoria), Sis. Caroline Moser (Eureka); Sis. Louise Finck (East Peoria) and Sis. Ida Alt (Las Vegas, NV).

During the last 2½ years while she was at home, Sis. Sophia has expressed her deep appreciation for those who remembered her with visits and other deeds of kindness. It meant so much to her each time some one would take the time to come to see her, and may God bless each of you who did so. Her family wishes to say thank you to everyone who has expressed their sympathy with cards, kind words, flowers, food and other gifts since the departure of their loved one.

We rejoice that four dear souls have forsaken this world of vanity and through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ have set their feet on higher ground. In doing so, the peace that passes understanding has enveloped them and the Lord has made their hearts to rejoice with thanksgiving. Roland Kuntz (Bro. Clyde and Sis. Wilma); his wife, Brenda; J. D. Schlipf (Bro. John and Sis. Carolyn) and Larry Gramm (Bro. Ed and Sis. Lucille) are looking forward to giving their testimony and being baptized Dec. 10 and 11, Lord willing.

Bro. Curtis and Sis. Carla Stoller welcome their new daughter, Carrie Jean, who was born Nov. 13. Carrie's grandparents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Marie Stoller (Gridley) and Bro. Leland and Sis. Marge Kuntz (Forrest).

The marriage engagement of Bro.

Roger Stoller (Art Stoller and Ruth Wiggins) and Sis. Mary Lou Schlipf (Carl and Lola) was announced.

Our hospital patients were Bro. Rudolph Miller, Sis. Bertha Funk, Bro. Henry Gramm, Sis. Lillian Fenton and Sis. Jean Hodel.

We were glad for the visit of ministering Bro. Marvin Stieglitz (Leo).

ILLINOIS, MORTON

Phyllis Farney — JoAnn Roecker

Bro. Reuben Krug was called Home. His funeral was held on October 22. May the Lord comfort and bless his family and friends.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. II Timothy 4:2. We are very thankful that our Heavenly Father has called Bro. Ted Witzig into the ministry. Our prayers are with Bro. Ted, Sis. Cindy and their family. May we continue to be prayerful for our beloved elder brothers, ministering brothers and our Sunday School teachers. May God grant them courage to preach and teach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We wish to thank Elder Bros. Dave Kieser (Princeville, IL) and Dan Koch (Tremont, IL) for assisting our Elder Bro. Joe Braker in this most important work.

Lucy Rapp was called from this life. Her funeral was held on October 26. May God comfort and bless her family and friends.

Bro. William Roecker was called Home. His funeral was held on November 14. May God comfort and bless his wife, Sis. Mary, his family and friends.

We have had many loved ones who have been sick and/or shut-in. May we continue to remember them in prayer. May the Lord continue to be with each one of them.

Christmas will soon be here. Let each of us take the time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. May you all have a very blessed Holiday season and New Year in the Lord.

Bro. Ken and Sis. Jackie Babin will be leaving our congregation to become houseparents at our Children's Home in Leo, IN. We will miss them and their four children. Our loss is Leo's gain. May our Heavenly Father richly bless them in this new undertaking.

 Give Your Address Change
 to Your Reporter

ILLINOIS, PEORIA**Susi Herman — Margo Marx****"A CHRISTIAN'S CHRISTMAS"**

Brightly shone the eastern star
 For the wise men on their way,
 Leading them to Bethlehem,
 Where the infant Saviour lay.
 Still this radiant Star does shine;
 Jesus is Himself this light,
 Leading us with love divine,
 Guiding us in darkest night.

As the wise men brought rich gifts,
 Laying them at Jesus' feet,
 Humbly did they worship Him,
 Sought in Him salvation sweet.
 But the rich gifts He does not ask;
 Rather that our hearts we give;
 Serving, loving, heeding Him,
 Evermore in Him to live.

There the shepherds heard with joy
 Angels sing the blest refrain:
 "Peace on earth, good will to men,
 Glory to His holy name."
 Jesus is the Shepherd true,
 Leads His flock in righteous ways,
 Fills our hearts with peace and love,
 Tunes our hearts to sing His praise.

Henry Beer

As we approach this Christmas season, may we ever think of the true meaning of Christmas.

Babies are a gift from God; and we are especially happy to welcome Karl James into the lives of his thankful parents, Bro. Merle and Sis. Mary Weyeneth. The happy grandparents are Bro. Melvin and Sis. Leona Weyeneth (Eureka) and Verla and Wayne Davis (Fairbury).

A special pre-Thanksgiving bundle arrived at the home of Bro. Bill and Sis. Joan Kuntz. Jamie Marie was born Nov. 8. The happy grandparents are Bro. Lyle and Sis. Helen Huette (Fairbury).

Mitchell James, Jr. is the new little son born to Mitchell and Marty Moore on Oct. 27. The grandparents are Bro. Bud and Sis. Shari Fehr and Ralph Moore (Peoria).

In our congregation, we again find that there are those who have been ill. Those hospitalized are Sis. Sophie Hybarger, Sis. Mary Berchtold, Sis. Elsie Hess, Sis. Madge O'Moran, Sis. Louise Martin, Sis. Marie Kipfer, Marjorie Weyeneth, John Hoerr, David Weber, Henry Triplett, Steve O'Moran and

Harlan Schafer. We pray for each one and commit their need for body and soul to God who loves them.

Our sincere sympathy goes to the family of Sis. Anna Hoerr. We pray that they can feel the comfort of our dear Lord in the loss of their loved one.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Jesse Hofstetter in his passing.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Perceda Honegger (Fairbury) on the death of her sister, Addie. The Honegger sisters were Peoria residents for many, many years. We still miss them.

We want to express our sympathy to Sis. Marie Kaupp and Sis. Louise Ginch on the death of their sister, Sis. Sophie Kaupp (Gridley).

The family of Anna Hoerr wishes to express thankfulness for the many prayers, cards, flowers and deeds of kindness.

Stephen and Sis. Madge O'Moran are deeply grateful for all who remembered them with prayers, cards and gifts during their hospital stay.

God has led two souls together to share in His love through holy matrimony. Bro. Brent Gutwein (Francesville) and Sis. Marti Stoller have announced their engagement and plan to be united as one in the Lord on May 27, 1984. The parents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Marian Gutwein (Francesville) and Bro. Herb and Sis. Nancy Stoller. May God bless their plans that He may be glorified through their love.

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE
Arlene and Arlys Martin

"A part of kindness consists of loving people more than they deserve."

Joseph Joubert

Visiting ministers have been Bros. Ronald Heiniger (Bloomington), Art Bahler and Duane Kilgus (Fairbury) and Marvin Leman (Bradford).

On Oct. 23, Bro. Dave Kieser announced the engagement of Bro. Randy Kieser to Sis. Brenda Martin. Their parents are Bro. George and Sis. Esther Kieser and Bro. Ellsworth and Sis. Donna Martin (Princeville).

We welcome Bro. John and Sis. Sally Schafer and their children, Clint, Erik, Shanna and Craig, into our fellowship. Bro. John and Sis. Sally testified of their faith in Jesus Christ on Oct. 26.

On Nov. 3, Matthew Alan was born to Sis. Pat and Bro. Loris Knobloch. His two sisters, Marla and Amy, wel-

come him to their family. Grandparents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Lucille Knobloch (Princeville) and Bro. Levi and Sis. Faye Pfister (Morton).

Bro. Allan and Sis. Rose Streitmatter became parents for the first time. Their son, Michael Allan, was born Nov. 4. Grandparents are Bro. Robert and Sis. Esther Herrmann and Bro. Burton and Sis. Martha Streitmatter of our congregation.

Sis. Teresa Martin (wife of Bro. Dale) was a hospital patient and is recovering at home.

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE**Joyce Hodel — Carol Rumbold**

United as one in the Lord on November 6 in Eureka were our Bro. Bruce Fischer and Sis. Debbie Saathoff. We rejoice with their parents, Bro. Wilmer and Sis. Clara Fischer and Bro. George and Sis. Thelma Saathoff, and welcome Sis. Debbie to our congregation.

Our God has graciously given healthy babies to bless several homes this month. Melinda Mae Rumbold was joyfully received into our (Bro. Rol and Sis. Carol) home on October 17. Her grandparents, Sis. Anna Rumbold and Bro. Mel and Sis. Mae Rocke, and Lisa, Jamie and Martin enjoy her so.

Bro. Gene and Sis. Evelyn Hangartner became first-time grandparents when Christopher Michael was born October 22 to Kay and Michael Nazarczuk (Chicago). Paternal grandmother is Lillian Nazarczuk (Chicago).

Wendy Renae, born November 3, has enriched the home of Bro. Chuck and Sis. Rita Hodel. We rejoice with Kevin, and grandparents Betty Hodel of our congregation and Bro. Ray and Sis. Emily Eisenman (Cissna Park).

Bro. Dennis and Sis. Mary Beth Zimmerman have been blessed with their first child, Jacob Dennis, who was born November 7. Their parents, Eugene and Carol Zimmerman (Eureka) and Bro. Bill and Sis. Helen Leman of our congregation, share their joy.

Angie Renae Gingrich has brought joy to the hearts of her parents, Bro. Ross and Sis. Nancy and her grandparents, Virgil and Wilda Gingrich (Eureka) and Bro. Glenn and Sis. Margaret Hodel of our congregation, since her birth November 8.

Bro. Bob and Sis. Lorene Hodel are happy to be grandparents to Lindsay Marie. She was born to Neil and Lelia Hodel November 9. Lindsay's maternal grandparents are Lee and Marlene

Mellin (Roanoke). What a joy it is for us to have these beautiful little people come to live with us.

Our recent Bible study, Cults and the Occult, was an education for us all, and we thank Bro. John Isch (Indianapolis) for the time he's given to this subject and for sharing his findings with us. May we now be more cognizant of the dangers around us, and may we be able to recognize the devil in sheep's clothing.

Sis. Lena Martin and her family wish to thank everyone who remembered her during her hospitalization with prayers, cards, kind words and kind deeds.

Ministers visiting were Bros. Ray Sinn and Larry Wenninger (Latty), Bros. Dan Stoller and Ken Schneider (Remington), Bro. John Isch (Indianapolis), Bro. Art Baurer (Princeville), Bro. Edwin Ringger (Gridley) and Bro. Dale Eisenman (Chicago). May these brothers, their wives, and their families be blessed for their efforts.

What kind and helpful teachings we received from God through our dear elder brothers, Bro. Don and Bros. Edwin Ringger and Dale Eisenman as they read the conference memorandum. Through their love and concern, we know they and God care for us.

Now at this season of Thanksgiving and Christmas, let us count our blessings one by one, and remember, "to have more, desire less".

For those in the hospital, Sis. Jane Schumacher and Bro. Wilmer Blunier, we pray they may soon be able to go in and out again.

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Marcia Metz

You are writing a gospel,
 A chapter each day,
 By deeds that you do,
 By words that you say.
 Men read what you write
 Whether faithless or true,
 Say, what is the gospel according to
 you?

Apples of Gold

Each of us has various opportunities to touch the lives of those around us whether we are at home, working or going to school. Those of us at ISU come into contact with many people and we have a special chance to be a light since the gospel we are writing is read by many people every day. The

fact that our gospel is being read by so many people should be an extra incentive for us to lead a Christ-like life and to have a special prayer on our hearts that God's perfect will may be done in our lives.

We appreciate all of the ministering brothers who were willing to come and share God's Word with us in the past month. Bro. Glenn Dill (Tremont) spoke on Contentment and Discontentment; Bro. Dave Wiegand (Champaign-Urbana) spoke on Faith; Bro. Bill Hodel (Roanoke) warned us about the consequences of being judgemental; Bro. Ken Weertz (Cissna Park) exhorted us to be more compassionate and Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forrest) spoke to us about Love. As we strive to be lights and examples, we need to take heed of these teachings. We need to work to bring forth these desired virtues of Contentment, Faith, Compassion and Love.

The annual Christmas Program will be held December 8. Bible study is still held on Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in Schroeder 214. We appreciate the support of anyone who wishes to attend.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT
Dorothy Wagenbach
Carolyn Bolliger

Let us go now to Bethlehem
 Upon this Christmas Day,
 And there within a manger bed
 Find strength we need alway.

A faith to conquer every doubt . . .
 Love which is good and true . . .
 Hope that can banish all despair . . .
 Peace to bring joy anew.

And let us there accept the gift
 God sent so long ago;
 That in our heart on Christmas Day
 Eternal hope can glow.

Esther Johnson

We do appreciate the efforts of our visiting ministers. This month our congregation was blessed with visits from Bros. Carroll Gerber (Bluffton North), Walter Herrmann (Princeville), Joe Braker (Morton), Bob Walder (Congerville) and Harold Schmidgall (Gridley, IL).

Again, we have those who have met with sickness or accident. Sis. Anna Beutel, who recently had surgery, is now convalescing at Restmor and

hopes to be home again soon. Bro. Bruce Sauder is recovering from recent eye injury and Bro. Bob Frank is recovering from a foot injury.

November 13 was the wedding day for Bro. Philip Koch and Sis. Diane Frank. Their parents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Rosemary Frank and Bro. Dan and Sis. Carol Koch. We rejoice with them as they start their new life together.

ILLINOIS, URBANA
Cheryl Joos

TRUE HAPPINESS

I sought for joy in creatures,
 I tried human love to win;
 But these things did not satisfy
 The world with all its din.

Till freed from worldly tumult
 In a quiet room apart,
 I gave my love to Jesus
 And found heaven in my heart.
 Mary Gemme Brunke

We wish to thank Bro. Ed Alt for reminding us of that true joy and happiness and where it can be found, especially as we get caught up in this busy season. "Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." Psalm 144:15. The true happiness that is found in a child of God is a result of each soul keeping his eyes on the Lord. Often we try to look to someone or something to make us happy, when our true joy comes from looking to the Lord and trying to walk in His footsteps. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord . . ." Psalm 1:1,2.

If we continually envy others and desire their possessions, we will only end up frustrated and disappointed. For "Godliness with contentment is great gain." I Timothy 6:6. May our hearts be filled with joy and happiness during this Christmas season, the joy and happiness that is found when our eyes are turned to heaven.

Our visiting ministers have shared God's joy and true happiness with us. We are thankful that Bros. Don Wagenbach (Washington), Edwin Bahler (Remington), Dale Frank (Oakville), Ed Alt (Cissna Park) and Elder Bro. Bob Grimm (Goodfield) are willing ser-

vants of the Lord.

Reminder: Silver Lining dues will be collected in January.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON
Lily Schick — Elaine Winkler

"REMEMBER THE REASON FOR THE SEASON" Last year I saw this slogan around college campus, and it has stuck with me as we approach this holiday season. It is so easy to become irritable and burdened down with all the endless lists and preparations for Christmas, that the joy — the Christmas spirit — isn't really there. We can look around and see all the commerciality, and it is disheartening. However, as Christians, we have a wonderful opportunity to witness to others the Christ-Spirit within us. If we remember the reason for the season, we can't help but rejoice in the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ — the beginning of God's great promise, and plan of salvation. He came to live and die among mankind, that we might die and then live in Him. Let us remember to worship Him before all, at this time of celebration. Even as the wise men came to worship the newborn King bearing gifts of joy and love, so should our gifts to each other symbolize those long ago gifts, and be gifts from the heart rather than gifts of duty.

Speaking of gifts, one of God's great gifts to mankind is the gift of love between husband and wife. In anticipation of experiencing this bond of love and oneness in Christ, two couples have begun a great step in faith and have announced their engagements. They are Bro. John Ricketts (Bro. Meredith and Sis. Leona, Forrest) to Sis. Cheryl Huber (Bro. Wilbur and Sis. Sophia, Phoenix) and Bro. Scott Steffen (Bro. Ray and Sis. Lucille, Remington) to Sis. Marvella Knoblauch (Sis. Iola, Lester).

October 30, we had an all-church farewell dinner for ministering Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Mary Kaisner and their beautiful family. We are so thankful that we have been the recipients of their Christian love and service for as long as the Lord gave them to us. We miss them and pray that God's blessings always be with them back in Detroit.

Also, we are thankful for our visiting minister this month, Bro. Kevin Knapp (Bloomington) for lending himself to the Lord, first of all, and then to us.

Our dear convert, Luis Gomez, will be returning to his home in Mexico for the holidays, but plans to be back in time for school to start in the middle of January. Our prayers and love go with him on his journey.

Bros. Marvin Wieland and Emil Gnehm were involved in accidents, but thankfully both escaped without serious injury.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON
Jan Ringger — Linda Kipfer

THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS

Many were the miracles
 The night of Jesus' birth;
 The wonders in the eastern sky,
 The signs upon the earth.
 Mary was a miracle
 By prophets long foretold;
 A virgin bringing forth a Son,
 Amazing to behold!
 But the miracle of miracles,
 The wonder of it all,
 Was not the virgin Mary,
 The stable and the stall;
 It was that God Himself had come,
 Incarnate as a child,
 That God and sinful man might be
 Forever reconciled.

Angels from the realms on high
 To lowly shepherds came,
 Proclaiming peace, goodwill to men
 And glory to His name.
 Wise Men saw the star appear,
 Announcing Christ the King;
 To guide them on their journey west,
 Their precious gifts to bring.
 But the miracle of miracles
 Was not the eastern star,
 The angels near to Bethlehem,
 Or Wise Men from afar;
 It was that God Himself had come,
 Incarnate as a child,
 That God and sinful man might be
 Forever reconciled.

Eugene L. Clark

As we commemorate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are reminded of how precious a newborn can be. The month of November brought the arrival of several new babies. Shaun Matthew was born to Bro. Darrell and Cindy Gerber. Bro. Dave and Sis. Joleen Sinn are also first-time parents of Joel David. Grandparents are Bro. Carl and Sis. Nova Kipfer and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Juanita Sinn (Fort Scott). Alysa Rose is welcomed into

the family of Bro. Steve and Sis. Fonda Fiechter. Bro. Everett and Sis. Alice Geisel and Bro. John and Sis. Shirley Fiechter are her grandparents. Bro. Ked and Sis. Shelly Ringger and their three daughters are thrilled with the arrival of Dustin Jay. Grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Marge Ringger. Also rejoicing over a new baby daughter, Nichole Lynn, are Bro. Brian and Sis. Debbie Fiechter. Her grandparents include Carl and Betty Macklin and Herman and Sis. Phyllis Fiechter.

We thank Elder Bro. Ben Maibach (Detroit) and his wife, Sis. Lorene, for visiting us. How good God is to bless us with ministering brothers who bring us His Word in truth.

Loved ones hospitalized this month were: Sis. Esther Geisel, Bro. Richard Gerber (Bro. Bill and Sis. Carolyn) and Bro. Ezra Reinhard. We are happy to report that Bro. Paul Dotterer is recuperating well following heart bypass surgery. We pray that God will bless them with continued progress toward recovery.

Sadness fills our hearts with the passing of three dear members of our congregation.

Bro. Herman Steffen was called from this life at the age of 75. Our sympathy is extended to his wife, Sis. Goldie and his surviving brother and sisters.

Bro. Bill Kipfer, 77, went to be with the Lord following complications of surgery. Our thoughts and prayers are with his son, Bro. Richard Kipfer; his daughter, Janeil Johnloz; six grandchildren; and brother and sisters.

Bro. Harold Gerber, 59, was taken to his heavenly rest. He had been ill for several months and during this time God's grace was sufficient to bring Bro. Harold into repentance. We rejoice that God's mercy is never failing and that He does not want even one soul to perish. Those surviving include his wife, Bessie, and his brother, Bro. Ralph Gerber.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH
Peg Fiechter

Kathy Longenberger

Our congregation has three new babies this month. On Oct. 22, Ryan Keith was born to Bro. Keith and Sis. Kay Steffen. Big sister, Janell is excited as are her grandparents, Bro. Al and Sis. Bernice Fiechter and Bro. Harry and Sis. Betty Steffen. Joshua Allen arrived on Nov. 5 to first-time

parents, Bro. Brent and Sis. Ann Gerber. Grandparents are Bro. Carroll and Sis. Louise Gerber and Norman and Mary Schulz. Lanner Kildare was born Nov. 11 to Bro. Ernie and Sis. Robin Schwartz. Lanner has two brothers at home, Tiercell and Gyrkin. Grandparents are Bro. Wm. Gene and Sis. Edna Moser and Bro. Ervin and Sis. Alice Schwartz. May we all realize the importance of rearing our children in a Godly way.

In the spirit of Christian love, Bro. Brent Nussbaum (Bloomington-Normal) and Sis. Cheryl Honegger were united in marriage on Oct. 30. Parents of the new couple are Bro. Keith and Sis. Nancy Honegger and Sis. Tillie Nussbaum. May God bless them as they establish their home in Bloomington-Normal.

Oct. 22, Jenni Kaehr and Jeff Milholland were united as one, in the home of her parents, Bro. Vernon and Sis. Mary Anne Kaehr. Jeff is the son of Mary Jane and the late Kedric Milholland. We wish them God's blessings.

Dec. 28 is the date chosen for the wedding ceremony of Bro. Dale Gerber and Sis. Carol Hohulin (Goodfield, IL). Dale's parents are Bro. Elmer and Sis. Emma Gerber. May God's blessings be present as these two families are united as one.

Bluffton North has a new convert, Marci Neuenschwander. Marci's parents are Bro. Ted and Sis. Deb Neuenschwander. We pray for much grace in her conversion.

Hospital patient this month was Sis. Tammy Gerber, daughter of Bro. Jerry D. and Sis. Pauline. We welcome Sis. Tammy back in church.

We were saddened by the sudden death on Oct. 29 of our dear brother, Walter Fiechter. He is survived by his wife, Sis. Gladys, and children, Ted Fiechter, Sis. Linda Dubach, Sis. Judy Dubach and Sis. Cathy Bussel. Think of him still as the same and say: He is not dead — he is just away. (From a poem by James Whitcomb Riley).

Bro. Uriel Gehring (Leo) was our visiting minister this month. We thank him for bringing us the Lord's word.

As the busy holiday season approaches, may we each take time to remember the true meaning of Christmas. Although family gatherings, gift giving and festive meals are a wonderful blessing, may we remember that our Savior, Jesus, was born. Christ's birth is the true meaning of Christmas. May

His silent coming touch you with love, enfold you in peace, and fill you with hope.

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE

Jacki Huber

We recently had the privilege of visiting the Holy Land. It is with vivid pictures of the land and its people that we celebrate this holiday season.

How beautiful and how much more important to visit the manger and the cross by thanking our dear Lord for the price He paid, that we can live with inner peace now, and by His grace, live forever in eternity.

Three babies came to share homes with loved ones in the past month. Kara Nicole was born on October 27 to Kevin and Connie Wuethrich. Grandparents are Bro. Chris Lee and Sis. Ruth Wuethrich and Mr. and Mrs. Donald Tiede.

On October 31, Bro. Roger and Sis. Sandi Ward welcomed Erin Michelle into their family. Erin has three sisters, Erica, Amber and Amanda. Sis. Lena Ward and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Long are the grandparents.

Barry and Quinell Gutwein gave birth to Evangeline on Nov. 15. Evangeline has two brothers and her grandparents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Marian Gutwein.

Our congratulations go to Bro. Brent Gutwein (Bro. Jim and Sis. Marian) whose engagement was announced to Sis. Marti Stoller (Bro. Herb and Sis. Nancy) of Peoria. May they enjoy God's richest blessings.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Bro. Willis and Sis. Margaret Gudeman, as Sis. Margaret's father, Phillip Steffen (Germany) passed away. May God "put His arms unfailing 'round you".

We welcomed Bro. Vernon Schwab (Wolcott) on a recent Sunday when he shared the Word with us.

We also heartily welcome Bro. Jerry and Sis. Tianne Overmyer back to Francesville after attending the La-Crosse church due to changes in employment. It's a joy to have them, along with their son, Josh, with us again.

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS

Judy Dubach — Lynn Winslow

Any man can sing by day; but only he whose heart has been tuned by the gracious hand of Jehovah can sing in the darkness. The things of earth may satisfy for the hours of prosperity; but

only the peace of God can give gladness in the darkness of adversity. God gives joy in sorrow; and when the sad one sings through his tears, then the Lord comes out to him with new and tender assurances, so that by his very hymn he is made more gladsome. Remember, however gloomy our surroundings may be, we have the assurance that we are one day nearer to heaven than we were yesterday, one day nearer our eternal joy and peace. That which is born of trust rises in rapture.

The Walter Fiechter family would like to thank all the brethren who remembered them with deeds of kindness, love and prayers, during the sudden loss of their father and husband. They feel the power of your prayers and it gives them strength to go on, believing it is the dear Savior's good will.

We humbly thank Bros. Elmer Hartter and Dale Strassheim (Milford) who so willingly gave us Godly instruction from the Holy Word.

INDIANA, LACROSSE

Lu Ann Troxel — Connie Knobloch

Recent job changes have made it necessary for several families to move. We are thankful that one of these changes brought a young couple into our congregation. Bro. Jeff and Sis. Carla Fritz have decided to make La-Crosse their new church home. Previously they attended the Indianapolis congregation. Unfortunately, we also were affected the opposite way by another family. Jim and Joanie Camburn and two of their children, Mary and Bill, have moved to Florida. We will miss them but hope that God's blessings will be theirs as they gather with brethren from Sarasota.

Bro. Bob Gudeman recently had back surgery. We pray that the long recovery weeks ahead will not be so difficult to bear, and that he will soon be his active self.

November 20 was the date of our Thanksgiving program, "Autumnal Blessings" and what a blessing it was! We have so much to be thankful for as we travel the "seasons of life". It was a joy to have Gridley's men's choir with us. We were encouraged with their lovely singing and it was such a blessing to fellowship with them, their families, and others that came with them. Bros. Edwin Ringger and Byron Stoller ministered to us, and the whole day was truly spirit-filled. We pray God

will reward these brethren for their loving efforts.

Now as Christmas is nearly upon us, we must be careful. "There is always the danger of keeping Christmas and losing Christ. As we remember our Savior's birth, let's be deeply conscious that it is vitally linked to Golgotha's hill. There He was crucified, and there He shed His blood for the sins of the world." Calvary's tree is the most important Christmas tree!

**INDIANA, LAFAYETTE
 PURDUE UNIVERSITY**

Lynne Bucher

Lord, we thank Thee for our friends,
 For good times we share,
 For helping hands and understanding
 hearts,
 And for the Kinship we know as Your
 children.

Gail Cunningham

The warmth and love we all feel for one another here at Purdue is a blessing from God. Often we don't feel as secure here as when we're at home. The friendships we have keep us going. Every other Tuesday evening we get together and sing hymns to the elderly at Lafayette Health Care. This is such a blessing and we love it. The patients tell us they appreciate it and just by the look on their faces we know they mean it. Our Purdue group also got together for a Thanksgiving dinner. It's a blessing to have the whole group together.

We want to thank our visiting ministers for lending themselves to the Lord's service. May God bless Bro. David Wiegand (Urbana) and Bro. Edward Alt (Cissna Park) for their efforts. We want to urge everyone to come visit us and join us at our Thursday services.

**INDIANA, LEO
 Thelma Schlatter**

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

Peace on earth? It doesn't look like it. The earth is so full of greed, hatred and distrust. One crisis follows another. The world is doomed to war, trouble and eventually destruction because of sin, man's disobedience to God. A dismal picture, you say? But there is joyful news! Real peace is

found in Jesus Christ. He is our peace. Ephesians 2:14. If you do not have this peace, come sorrowing for your sin, and in true faith make peace with God. It will bring you real peace, real joy. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. Isaiah 26:3. Jesus said, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. John 14:27.

Our congregation was given added blessings through the ministry of visiting Bros. Wayne Anliker (Forrest) and Roy Weiland (Bay City).

Sis. Rosa Bertsch entered her eternal rest Nov. 16. Services were conducted by Bro. David Bertsch and Bro. Jack Bollier. She is survived by two sisters and one brother: Sis. Mina and Sis. Frieda Melissa and Andrew.

Bro. Bill and Sis. Janet Hartman and three daughters were happy to welcome a baby son and brother, Timothy Benjamin. Pleased grandparents are Gerald and Lillian Hartman and Bro. William and Sis. Nancy Klopfenstein.

Little Joel Michael was born to Claudia Kizer, and will within a few months enjoy his brother, Courteney, as a playmate.

We are thankful for the recovery of Dennis Klopfenstein who had surgery recently.

Our Christmas program is scheduled for Dec. 11, another opportunity to tell the Good Tidings.

We may, or may not, have a white Christmas; but, let's have a right Christmas by honoring His birth.

**INDIANA, MILFORD
 Marcy Haab — Gwen Steffen**

There is so much within this world
 Of brokenness and pain.
 Yet nothing God in grace allows
 Is ever rendered vain.

Hospital patients have been Penny Hoover (Don and Sis. Virginia) and Sis. Marcy Haab (Bro. Steve). May we who suffer with increasing trials know that this suffering allows us to experience a greater measure of His love. We do not honor and glorify Christ because He explains Himself and gives reasons "why", but because of His suffering and death on the cross.

As we near the Christmas season and the beginning of a new year, let us dwell on the life of our dear Savior. Let us remember how He came to begin His earthly experience in a stable; what a humble surrounding for the Master.

He had emotions (anger, love, loneliness) and no place to call His home. He felt forsaken and abandoned by His closest friends. He wept real tears. This God is real — one we can trust! This God felt all the sufferings we could possibly feel with the ultimate pain of the cross! On this cross each of us were allowed a way of salvation. As we begin the new year let us look at a list of daily gifts. When you wonder what gift to give, consider giving something of yourself.

Mend a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion. Write a long overdue love note. Hug someone tightly and whisper "I love you". Forgive an enemy. Be gentle and patient with an angry person. Express appreciation. Gladden the heart of a child. Find the time to keep a promise. Make or bake something for someone else, anonymously. Release a grudge. Listen. Speak kindly to a stranger. Enter into another's sorrow. Smile — laugh a little. Take a walk with a friend. Lessen your demands on others. Read a poem or two to your mate or friend. Kneel down and pat a dog. Play some beautiful music during dinner. Apologize if you were wrong. Talk together. Treat someone to dinner. Do the dishes for the family. Pray for someone who helped you when you hurt. Fix breakfast for someone on Saturday morning. Give a soft answer even when you feel strongly. Encourage an older person. Point out one thing you appreciate most about someone you work with or live near. Offer to babysit for a weary mother. Give those around you a break — be especially cooperative. From C. Swindoll.

This Christmas let's give one long extended gift of ourselves to others unselfishly, without announcement, obligation, reservation or hypocrisy. That is Christianity, isn't it?

**INDIANA, REMINGTON
 Beth Virkler — Annette Bahler**

The field harvest is over and the cornstalks are plowed under. The farmers can agree that perhaps the crop yields were lower than normal, but yet . . . the Savior is still reaping souls for the spiritual harvest. Lisa Schneider (Bro. Ken and Sis. Loretta) has answered the invitation from Christ to work out her soul's salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12).

Adding to our joy and bringing us the

gospel message along with exhortation to doctrine were several willing ministers, Bros. Dale Strassheim (Milford) and Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville).

It is always an encouragement to our faith to witness how God, in his infinite wisdom brings together two souls in holy matrimony. When we observe our nation's divorce rate soaring higher each year, what a supreme comfort to know that God's hand laid the foundation of our marriage and we do not have to fear the future if we continue to seek His will in all things. Sis. Charleen Bahler (Bro. Ed and Sis. Lois) has announced her engagement to Bro. Tim Hartter (Bro. Virgil and Sis. Marie, Sabetha, KS). They are planning a December 18 wedding.

Bro. Odell Pitman would like to extend his special "thanks" to all the dear ones for the sincere and thoughtful gestures shown him in the hospital and while recuperating at home. These deeds will long be remembered. May the Lord bless each of you.

ARE YOU INCLUDING JESUS

Are you including Jesus in your Christmas plans this year,
Or will He be forgotten when His special day is here.
Are you including Jesus on the gift list you will make,
Or will He be forgotten in this game of give and take.

Are you including Jesus in the music you will play,
Or will He be forgotten in the modern songs of today.
Are you including Jesus in the Christmas cards you send,
Or will He be forgotten just because you might offend.

Are you including Jesus in the things you will do,
Or will He be forgotten by the family and you?
Are you including Jesus on your guest list for Christmas day
Or will He be forgotten and again be turned away.
Won't you try including Jesus in everything you do
Remember when He died to save . . .
Jesus included you.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

Karen Lehman

Oh give thanks unto the Lord! Our

Sunday School presented us with a Harvest Program followed by a Harvest Feast Potluck, enjoyed by all during this fall season.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Dave Wiegand (Urbana), Bro. Dave Bertsch (Leo), Bro. Marvin Lehman (Bradford) and Bro. Jesse Beer (Milford). May God bless all who share with us.

Sis. Shirley Lehman and family sincerely want to thank each and every one for your prayers, cards and visits at the time of her mother's death. May God richly bless you.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Jill Hitz — Vera Nuestr

SAVED BY "WORKS"

Many years ago, Dr. Walter L. Wilson told of an unusual conversation he had with a man who took exception to his presentation of the gospel. "You make no provision for human effort," the unbeliever complained. "Personally I believe I am saved by good works!" "Shake hands, brother!" answered Wilson, "So do I!" The faultfinder expressed great surprise. "You mean you actually believe you are saved by good works?" "Yes, indeed!" replied Wilson with a victorious smile, "Jesus' good works — not mine." As he spoke, I thought to myself, what a striking way to present the truth! The more I pondered it, the more I could see the wisdom of his words. He was trying to break the power Satan held over the mind of one who believed he could actually do something to merit his own salvation.

The sacrifice of Christ is the foundation work that must precede and underlie anything we seek to do for the Lord. We must accept by faith His perfect work for us on the cross in order to be fully justified. Since our efforts always fall far short of the Lord's holy standards, we can be saved only through the sinless life and atoning death of Christ. To add anything to this is to discredit the completeness of His saving work.

The only work that will get us to heaven is the finished work of CHRIST on the cross. Are you trusting in Him? Thought: The first good work you will ever perform is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!

Our Daily Bread, H.G.B.
This past month has been an excit-

ing and blessed one. In our small congregation, we have seen and felt the work of God's hands.

Two of our dear friends, John and Corinna Holbrook, have answered the Lord's call and felt the need for salvation.

On Nov. 12 and 13, we heard the testimonies of six precious souls. We are thankful to God for the abundant harvest of souls. We witnessed the baptism of Bro. Conrad and Sis. Donna Paarlberg, Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy Paarlberg, Bro. Jim Paarlberg and Sis. Jeannie Zeltwanger.

Our visiting ministers were Elder Bros. Joe Ramsier, Dan Koch, Jesse Beer, Alfred Bahler and Ed Frank. We thank them for their time and the spiritual teachings they shared with us.

Our dear friend, Joe Kimmerer Sr. was a hospital patient this past month. We thank the Lord for his recovery.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT

Elaine Bahler — Lorene Furrer

"Joyfully upon the air
There comes a sweet refrain,
For carols bring the message
That it's Christmastime again."

Mildred Jarrell

Once again we celebrate the joy of this season, the birth of the Christ Child, our hope for all eternity. If we keep this joy and hope in our hearts, we cannot get lost in the earthly meanings and celebrations that can so easily crowd our minds.

We miss Tony Christopher who has moved to Sarasota for winter employment. Tony has confessed of the peace that now abides in his heart and is awaiting baptism.

Sis. Teresa Bahler (Chris) was baptized upon her confession of faith on Nov. 6. Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen (Alto) shared in the weekend, along with Bro. Mike Thomas (Valparaiso). We also thank Bro. Ken Schneider (Remington) for sharing the word with us Nov. 13.

We had the conference report shared with us on Nov. 20. A special thank you is extended to Elder Bros. Sam Anliker (Lamont) and Wendell Gudeman (Francesville) for sharing their love and thoughts with us. We rejoiced when Bro. Walter Stoller (Sis. Grace) was restored to full fellowship.

May all of you have a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year in the Lord.

IOWA, BURLINGTON
Edith Massner — Kim Salek

Glory be to God in heaven,
 Praise to Christ, our Savior great!
 By the power of Thy Spirit
 A new man Thou didst create.
 Angels see in joyous rapture
 God's own word in deed fulfilled
 And amid our glad embraces
 Is this child of God revealed.

This new being now arises,
 Having died with Christ before;
 What in Adam's fall had perished
 Christ the Savior did restore.
 Dearest child we bid thee welcome
 In our blessed brotherhood;
 From the wild tree thou art grafted
 On this holy tree and root.

The New Birth From Above,
 Zion's Harp #34

It was with much joy that we heard the testimony and witnessed the baptism of Marty Buehler (Bro. Ken). We pray for much grace and God's nearness as she begins her life of faith.

We have had several visiting ministers this month for which we are ever thankful. Our Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville) was with us several evenings and for Sis. Marty Buehler's baptism. Others visiting included Bros Edwin Bahler (Remington), Leland Hirschey (Naumberg), Walter Anliker (Eureka) and Clarence Kachelmuss (Forrest). May God bless these and all of our ministering brothers as they labor in His vineyard.

Elder Bro. Carl Kinsinger (Alta-dena) was also with us on a Sunday when our Bible Class hosted a Sunday School get-together. Students from Bradford, IL and Oakville, IA attended church in Burlington that Sunday. We enjoyed the day so much and thank all of the parents, teachers and students who put forth the effort to come and we pray that there were blessings to be had by all. We also thank Bro. Carl for sharing the Word with us.

Monti Taeger (Bro. Dick and Sis. Dorothy) had an emergency appendectomy but is home and getting along fine. We also have some in our congregation who, although they have not been hospitalized, have been having pain and illness and we pray for God's nearness and comfort. Sis. Mayme Gerst and Sis. Gustie Frank are both still recuperating from their recent hospital stays but are well enough to attend church.

IOWA, ELGIN
Gloria Frieden

From the beginning of time, God has had a divine love for mankind. So great is this love, that even after the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, He promised a Savior who would be no other than His only begotten Son. At this season of the year, we rejoice anew in the fulfillment of this promise. The promise does not end at the manger. Let's go beyond the manger thirty some years and see our Savior dying on the cross so that we might have the greatest gift of all, Eternal Life!

Again the death angel looked down over our flock and plucked another rose for the Master's bouquet. Sis. Edna Gehring went home to be with the Lord on October 28. Her surviving children include: Dr. Lawrence Jr., Gerald, Joyce (Mrs. Jack VanSickle), Grace (Mrs. Tom Meighan), Norma, Dr. Edith (Mrs. Leo Bryant) and Janet. Her husband, Bro. Lawrence, passed away in December, 1979.

We extend a long overdue welcome to Bro. John and Sis. Pat Knapp and their three sons, Ryan, Brandon and Blake. It is a joy to have you as a part of our little flock here at Elgin.

IOWA, IOWA CITY
Connie Gerst

We, at Iowa City, wish to extend our warm wishes to everyone for a blessed holiday season. Just as we have recently celebrated Thanksgiving, we can again count our blessings as we rejoice in the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. However, let us remember that the story does not stop at the manger. In order to fully reap the blessings of God's love, we must follow Christ through His childhood, manhood and then out to the cross of Calvary where He shed His precious blood for us. There, if we are willing to lay our burdens down and pick up His cross to follow Him, we will start to comprehend the bountiful measures of love God is willing to shower on us if we but do His will.

We wish to extend our thanks to Bros. Paul Eisenmann (Burlington) and Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) for sharing God's word with us this past month. May they be blessed for their efforts as "God loveth a cheerful giver" I Cor. 9:7.

Give Your Address Change
 To Your Reporter

IOWA, LESTER
Alice Metzger

For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole. John 5:4. The story of Bethesda comes to mind as the waters are troubled here and several are in repentance. They are Leroy Wulf (Bro. Bill and Sis. Leona), Jackie Wysong (Bro. Jack and Sis. Janet), Denise Warner, Stan Warner (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Esther), Lanae Knoblock (Bro. Glen and Sis. Joyce Metzger), Blair Metzger (Bro. Gene and Sis. Dolores), Paula Kellenberger (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Shirley), Michelle Metzger (Bro. Dale and Sis. Cris), Linda Knobloch (Bro. Art and Sis. Elgeva), Patty Knobloch (Bro. Dale and Sis. Mary Ellen), Rita Knobloch (Bro. Willie and Sis. Helen) and Doug and Suzette Messner (Bro. Henry and Sis. Elaine Kellenberger and Elder Bro. Harold and Sis. Gerry Messner, Winthrop).

We were uplifted by the many who came for our dedication service on Oct. 30. We are thankful to Elder Bros. Loren Stoller, Sam Anliker, Paul Butikofer, Harold Messner, Art Nohl and Wayne Fehr for taking part in the service and giving wonderful food for thought. We appreciate their wives who accompanied them as well as several ministers, brothers and sisters and friends of the faith who shared a most blessed day with us.

On the weekend of Nov. 13, a group from the Bradford and Princeville churches visited us. Among them were ministering Bros. Ken Dietz and Walt Herrmann who brought us the Word in truth and purity and left us with many good teachings. We are thankful for all who made the effort to worship with us.

Bro. Harvey Metzger was hospitalized with burns received in a welding accident. Durwin Marten (Ed and Judy) is hospitalized with injuries he sustained in a fall from a barn loft. Other hospital patients were Bro. August Knoblock, Matthew Feucht (Bro. Ronnie and Sis. Sandy), Bro. Lynn Doorneweerd, Stephen Snyders (Sis. Peggy and Lyle) and Roger Myrlie who suffered a heart attack. May God comfort and heal according to His will.

We rejoice to have John and Louise Tolvstad in our midst. They have moved here from the Elgin, IL area. We also welcome Bro. Curt and Sis. Martha Kellenberger and their infant son

who have moved here from Lamar, MO. We hope they will soon feel at home among us.

From all of us here at Lester, we wish you dear readers of the Silver Lining a blessed holiday season. May you all have the love of Jesus in your hearts and know this far surpasses material gifts which are so sought after by the world.

IOWA, OAKVILLE
Debbie Wagenbach

**"I SAID A PRAYER
 FOR YOU TODAY"**

I said a prayer for you today
 And know God must have heard —
 I felt the answer in my heart
 Although He spoke no word!
 I didn't ask for wealth or fame
 (I knew you wouldn't mind) —
 I asked Him to send treasures
 Of a far more lasting kind!
 I asked that He'd be near you
 At the start of each new day
 To grant you health and blessings
 And friends to share your way!
 I asked for happiness for you
 In all things great and small —
 But it was for His loving care
 I prayed the most of all!

Kristone

The weekend of October 29 and 30, the young groups from Forrest and Fairbury, IL spent the weekend in Oakville. It turned out to be a wonderful weekend of Christian fellowship.

We would like to thank our visiting ministers, Elder Bro. Carl Kinsinger (Altadena, CA), Bro. Harvey Heiniger (Burlington, IA), Bro. Bill Funk (Garden Grove, IA) and Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA) for being with us and ministering to us the precious word of life.

Note: Taken by mistake at Edward Koehl's (Morris, MN) funeral — men's size 42 Zero King zip-out lining tan top coat. Can contact Virgil Massner, Route 2, Box 52, Mediapolis, IA 52637.

IOWA, PULASKI
Mary Wiegand — DeAnn Wuthrich

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger."
 Luke 2:11-12

The Christmas season is here, and as we near the day of Christ's birth, may we not get caught up in the worldly Christmas celebrations and forget the real meaning of Christmas. It truly is a holy and blessed season.

On November 5 and 6, some of the high school Sunday School class from Lester, IA, were here with the Sunday School teachers. We all enjoyed the weekend, and appreciated them putting forth the effort to come.

"Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."
 I Timothy 3:8-10

On October 22-23, Bro. Leo Moser (Lester, IA), Bro. Edward Lanz (Oakville, IA) and Bro. Paul Butikofer (Elgin, IA) were here to help with the ordaining of Bro. Russell Wuthrich as an ordained deacon. It truly was a very blessed weekend and we could feel God's presence. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Russell as he carries out his new duties. We pray that God will stand mightily by his side. During the weekend, we were reminded that if each one of us will do our part, it will make it just that much easier on the shepherd of the flock. Let us all strive for that true love of Christ, that it may live within us and flow freely from heart to heart.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."
 John 13:34-35

Other visiting ministers that were with us in the past month include Bro. John Steiner (Oakville, IA), Bro. Kenny Knapp (Taylor, MO) and Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA). We thank each one of them for ministering God's Word unto us.

We are thankful Bro. Bernard Schaer is recovering well after a fall. We hope he continues to do well.

IOWA, WEST BEND
Polly Zaugg — Elma Mogler

A NURSE'S CHRISTMAS STORY

Johnny was small for his age, and the nurses noted that the little boy seemed very withdrawn, especially today.

Johnny's only friend seemed to be a little stuffed dog to which he clung ever so tightly, and he seldom ventured far from his room.

But today was Christmas Eve, and Christmas Eve on a pediatrics ward is not home, no matter how hard the nurses try to plan the Christmas party, the presents and the caroling.

The party started at 7:00. The children were anxious to begin: so anxious in fact, that the nurses had trouble keeping them reasonably quiet. The party proceeded at a hectic, fun-filled rate. The older children strung popcorn and cranberries — the younger ones pulled them apart — hot chocolate was served, and in some cases, simultaneously spilled, but no one seemed to notice. The children joined in singing carols with their high pitched children's voices. Then the great moment came. The children saw the huge boy and fell silent as names were called out and packages were handed to each child. One little girl received a golden-haired doll, and her squeals of delight were drowned out only by the little boy beside her who had just received a new fire engine. Then the nurse called out the name "Johnny", but there was no answer because Johnny was not there. With a sinking feeling the nurse went to look for him. How could they have forgotten that lonely little boy?

Johnny was not in his room, or even in the immediate hall. The nurse searched further down the hall and suddenly she paused outside the door of the room of a little girl who was bedridden and supposedly asleep. The nurse saw Johnny standing by the bed of the little girl. Finally, Johnny whispered one word, very slowly. "Here." He loosed the grip on the old toy and placed it on the girl's arm, then quickly withdrew his hand. "It's the Baby Jesus' birthday," he added. She looked at him and smiled. She glanced down at the toy and picked it up. "Thank you," she said. The nurse stood quietly outside the door — a witness to gentle love which is Christmas.

Unknown

On Oct. 22, Lisa Bruellman, daughter of Bro. Don and Sis. Verda, became the bride of Jeff Banwart, son of Bro. Joel and Sis. Sonia (Eureka). The wedding and a reception was held in our Fellowship Hall. We wish them God's blessings as they make their home in Eureka.

We have had several sick hospitalized this past month. Kevin Anliker and Bro. Ernie Schmidt were in for surgery, Bro. Paul Banwart Sr., Sam Mogler and Frank Dogotch were medical patients. May each of us take a little time to offer a prayer for those who are in hospitals or confined to their homes.

Let us store a little warmth and gentleness away . . .

Let us save a bit of Christmas for another day.

Unknown

JAPAN, SHIODA

Judy Luginbuhl — Margie Heintz

Fall has come to Shioda. The skies are clearing and the beautiful snow-capped South Alps are in view almost every day. Bright orange persimmons stand out brilliantly against green leaves and blue skies. And we continue to feel the Lord's love and nearness.

In early October, Sis. Lois Ehnle returned safely from her visit to the States. It is such a blessing to have her with us again. She is a real example of sharing and loving.

Holy Communion was recently shared by the brothers and sisters of the Shioda congregation. Through that simple service, we were reminded of Christ's terrible suffering on the cross and of our precious relationship to Him. We were rejoined to Christ in body and spirit, and as a congregation, our bonds of love were strengthened and renewed. We thank Bro. Akito for assisting Bro. Willis.

Fall Shuyokai (fellowship meeting) was a special time of spiritual growth for the brothers and sisters, and friends who attended. Many of us gathered on Sunday evening for a singing. On Monday, our meeting continued with singing, fellowship and discussion groups centering on the topic of Faith. Bro. Willis and Bro. Akito directed the groups. The key verse was Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him . . ." The importance of faith was emphasized, but we were also reminded that our faith need only be ". . . as a grain of mustard seed . . ." Matthew 17:20. We were encouraged to simply believe enough to obey God's commandments, and then added blessings will follow: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I

will love him, and will manifest myself to him." John 14:21.

We have all felt the pain of parting, as Sis. Eiko Nozawa left Shioda to go to America for an extended visit. We know that Sis. Vicki Ramseyer and her family and the entire Bay City congregation will be blessed by her presence, but we greatly miss her cheerful smile and her unselfish, kind and loving ways.

Our prayers go out to the Lord for Sis. Uchida who is again hospitalized.

This past month (Oct. 15 to Nov. 9) we were especially blessed with the extended visit from my parents, Bro. Rudy and Sis. Evelyn Luginbuhl (Rockville, CT). The time shared together with many of our sisters, brothers and friends here in Japan are indelibly printed in our hearts. God, beyond our expectations, has once again blessed us with many treasured moments and memories. During their stay, we received news from home that my grandfather, Bro. Christian Luginbuhl (Rockville, CT) had quietly and peacefully returned home to our eternal Father on Oct. 27. Grandpa Luginbuhl's life, to his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, friends and acquaintances, touched us deeply and impressed us all with his warmth, loving and encouraging words, smiles and hugs. Bro. Willis Ehnle held a memorial service on Oct. 30 for him. Many brothers, sisters and friends and kindergarten parents extended their sympathy to us. Though our hearts are joyful for Grandpa, we will miss his love, smile, words of counsel . . . his presence. I believe Grandpa Luginbuhl's christian example will continue to live on in the lives of many who knew him. For me, this time of reflection has renewed my conviction to press on with eager feet toward those goals that are good, holy and God-inspired, and to seek after those means and ways that are most apt to portray the real peace and love God has given us.

JAPAN, TOKYO

Marie Inoue

This past month our brothers and sisters journeyed to Calvary via the Holy Scriptures and meditation of our Elder Bros. to remember the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour on the cross. As the Israelites of old had faith to put the blood of an unblemished lamb on the doorposts to be spared of the death angel, so we also must have a living

faith in Christ's shed blood and broken body which covered our sins that we might be accepted of God if we are faithful. Our departed Elder Bro. Schrock often mentioned at this holy feast that we are making a "new start" and a rededication of our life in Christ to serve Him more faithfully. May this be our thought each day.

Our visitors brought special joy this month. Bro. Rudy and Sis. Evelyn Luginbuhl (Rockville), parents of Sis. Judy, visited our assembly and took part in our services. Sis. Ruth (Bro. Art) Gramm, Gridley, IL, assembled around the Holy Word with us the next day after her arrival here in Japan enroute to help care for her new grandson, Joel Kaufman, Jr., born to Joel and Sally (Ishikawa-Ken). We appreciated her visit and care for our small assembly so much.

We wish every reader of the Silver Lining a blessed holiday season from all of us here in Japan.

KANSAS, BERN

Linda Esslinger

Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Plattner were blessed with a baby daughter, Stephanie Lynn, on October 24. Stephanie has one older brother, Nathan, to welcome her home. Grandparents are Bro. John and Sis. Marie Plattner (Sabetha).

We have finished listening to the conference tapes. We alternated with Sabetha for this on Wednesday evenings as we normally do for midweek services.

We appreciated having Bro. Leroy Huber (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Roy Wernli (Lamont) minister God's Word to us.

Work on our Sunday School addition is progressing nicely.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

When the Christmas spirit springs to life

In the human heart each year,
The world becomes, for a little time,
A haven of love and cheer.

The poor in body are clothed and fed,
And the lonely know once more
The warmth of hearing a welcome
knock

On a too long silent door.

For these few days we remember well
That all mankind is kin,

Bound by the love of the Babe who
found
No room in that long-ago inn.

But the day goes by, and the spirit dies,
So busy with living are we,
And the poor and the lonely are left
once more
In hunger and apathy.

I have been guilty too, God knows,
Too busy to lend a hand,
Too busy to stop for a friendly chat,
Too busy to understand.

"No more, no more let this happen to
me,

Dear Lord," I earnestly pray.

"Let me keep the Spirit the whole year
through

As bright as it is today."

Virginia Blanck Moore

May you be blessed with a Merry
Christmas and may God bless you in
the coming New Year.

KANSAS, FT. SCOTT

Jamie Marti

October 21 was the wedding day of
Pam Colgrove and Jimmy Jackson.
Pam's parents are Bro. Harvey and Sis.
Ethel Smith. May God bless their lives
together.

Bro. Wayne and Sis. Juanita Sinn
became grandparents again on Oct. 26.
Joel David was born to Bro. David and
Sis. Joleen Sinn (Bluffton, IN). Maternal
grandparents are Bro. Carl and Sis.
Nova Kipfer (Bluffton, IN).

"Watch therefore, for ye know not
what hour your Lord doth come." Re-
cently the young sisters had a "come as
you are breakfast" for the ladies of the
church. Most of them were not pre-
pared for us to show up unexpectedly.
We do not know the day or the hour the
Lord will knock on our door. Will we be
watching and ready when the Lord
comes for us?

KANSAS, GRIDLEY

Julie Bahr — Doris Bahr

The birth of our Savior and King was
welcomed by Shepherds. Shepherds
were considered "outcasts" by many
Jewish people. They were constantly
unclean people because of the work
they had to do. Yet God sent angels to
summon these men to the manger.
From the first hours of His presence on
earth, our Lord identified with the
lowly. The Lord condescended to dwell

with those who were rejected by others
and mankind, in general, as well. For
this reason most people called Him
"the friend of publicans and sinners".
Where would any of us be if Jesus had
not come to seek and to die for lost
sinners? "For ye see your calling breth-
ren, how that not many wise men after
the flesh, not many mighty, not many
noble are called. But God hath chosen
the foolish things of the world to con-
found the wise and God hath chosen
the weak things of the world to con-
found the things which are mighty; and
base things of the world and things
which are despised hath God chosen
..." I Corinthians 1:26-28

Our hospital patients have been Bro.
Jake Beyer, Sis. Edna (Joe) Somer-
halder and Sis. Esther (Sam) Kraft. We
have also missed our dear Sis. Lena
Strahm as she had been unable to
assemble with us for quite some time.

Sis. Edna Somerhalder underwent
surgery and wished to express her
many thanks to all for their prayers,
cards, flowers, food and gifts that were
shared with her. "May the Lord bless
each one for their kindness."

Our sincere sympathy is expressed
to Sis. Edna Somerhalder and her dear
family in the death of her beloved
brother, Bro. Lester Braker (Lamar).
Bro. Lester passed away Nov. 26.

Our sincere sympathy is also ex-
tended to our dear Sis. Bertha Beyer
and her dear family in the death and
loss of her father, Bro. Jacob Beyer.
Bro. Jake was our oldest brother-in-
Christ and also our oldest community
citizen at the age of 101 years. He went
to meet his creator in heaven Nov. 24.
We will surely miss Bro. Jake, as we
know his loving daughter, Bertha, will
also feel the vacant gap. Sis. Bertha
tenderly cared for her father for over
40 years. May God so richly and ten-
derly bless her loving hands.

The engagement of Bro. Doug Kraft
and Sis. Judy Hartter was announced.
Doug is the son of Bro. Lloyd and Sis.
Nadine Kraft and Judy's parents are
Bro. Virgil and Sis. Marie Hartter
(Sabetha). May the joy and love of the
Lord fill their hearts as they begin their
new lives together.

KANSAS, LAMONT

Jill Luthi

I WONDER AS I WANDER

I wonder as I wander, out under the

sky,
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to
die,
For poor, ornery people like you and
like I
I wonder as I wander, out under the
sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a
cow stall
With wise men and farmers and shep-
herds and all.
But high from God's heaven a star's
light did fall
And the promise of ages it then did
recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to
sing,
He surely could have it, 'cause He was
the King.

I wonder as I wander, out under the
sky
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to
die,
For poor, ornery people like you and
like I,
I wonder as I wander, out under the
sky.

John Jacob Niles

Time has swiftly gone by this year, as
it is time to reflect on the true meaning
of Christmas. Songs are one way of
remembering the birth of our Saviour.
It's a miracle and a joy to memorize the
words and music together. As you may
have guessed the past verses are some
I have known since my high school
time, a decade ago! "Sing aloud unto
God our strength: make a joyful noise
unto the God of Jacob" Psalm 81:1.

Our grounds are blanketed with
snow as one of our snowfalls was the
day prior to Thanksgiving Day. The
snow and the many wreaths already
hanging are another big reminder that
Christmas is here.

Thanksgiving Day was very special
for our family as another grandchild
and niece was born. Audrea Jane is a 6
lb. 12½ oz. bundle of joy and first child
of Bro. Jay and Sis. Jane Luthi. Grand-
parents are Bro. Lloyd and Joann
Luthi, and Bro. Don and Sis. Ione
Broquard (Fairbury). Great-Grandpar-
ents are Elder Bro. Sam and Sis. Clara
Anliker, and Bro. George and Sis. Clara
Broquard.

We do wish God's blessings upon the

sick, the needy, the homeless, and the afflicted. We want to always remember those in rest homes and hospitals. At this time we want to remember Sis. Matilda Emch (at the home) and Sisters Hilda Jacobs and Carrie Gleichman, who were hospitalized recently. Just think of the abundant blessings we have!

We wish everyone a blessed and safe holiday season, and a prosperous new year ahead.

KANSAS, SABETHA

Clara Steiner — Judy Hartter

My Lord, an offering do I bring;
My heart I give to Thee.
I gladly give this heart of mine,
Which Thou dost ask of me.

Thou sayest, "Child, give me your heart!"

O what a sweet request!
It shows the way that we must take
To life and peace and rest.

O now, my Savior, do Thou take
My heart and make it Thine;
I'll follow Thee, a servant true,
With in Thy fold divine.

En clothed in all Thy righteousness
And innocence I'd be,
That I might stand before my God,
From sin made pure and free.

Zion's Harp #163

We recently witnessed with joy the testimonies and baptisms of Marvin and Peggy Strahm. We also rejoice with Thirza Thompson, who has turned her heart to the Lord in repentance. We sincerely pray that God will bless her and continue to stir the hearts of many of our dear friends.

Our hospital patients have been Sis. Lena Steiner and Sis. Lena Wenger (Bro. Will). May God's blessings rest upon our dear sisters that they may feel God's love and nearness.

We want to thank Bro. Leroy Huber (Eureka, IL), Bro. Lester Hartter (Bern) and Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) for bringing God's Word unto us.

We have spent several Wednesday evenings gathering with the Bern congregation to listen to the tapes of the Brotherhood Conference. May we each heed the timely warnings and count it a blessing to have trials and tests come upon us. "Were there no

test, how should it proven be, Who weak, who strong, who true or untrue be?"

Bro. Gordon and Sis. Sharlyn Huber welcome a precious little daughter into their home. Brooke Nichole's grandparents are Bro. Sam and Sis. Jeanette Huber and Bro. Eli and Sis. Lois Meyer.

By God's love and guidance, Bro. Tim Hartter (Bro. Virgil and Sis. Marie) and Sis. Charlene Bahler (Bro. Edwin and Sis. Lois, Remington, IN) have announced their engagement. We wish them God's blessings as they make their future plans together.

With the Christmas season soon to be upon us may we each one be reminded of the birth of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus. Whether your Christmas season will bring a family gathering or a lonely time, may each one feel God's love and nearness.

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY Lanette Meyer — Maria Schrader

Ministering the Word unto us on October 19 were Bros. Loren Strahm, Lloyd Kraft and Tim Zimmerman from the Gridley congregation. We appreciated their kindness in coming and sharing the Word with us. Several singings were held by our small group; one being at the home of Jim Schrader, Wayne Anliker and Sam Bahr. On November 9, a singing was held by Sis. Jana Meyer, Chris Strahm and Pam Agee.

Also ministering to us were Elder Bro. Sam Anliker, Bro. Roy Wernli and Bro. Bill Emch from the Lamont congregation on November 2.

We were privileged to have Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) with us and enjoyed the encouraging message he gave. May God's blessings rest on those who came and assembled with our group here in Manhattan.

KANSAS, WICHITA Laurie Gallatin

What a special time is Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour and King, Jesus Christ. Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." This verse tells all of what Christ is to us — everything.

"For unto us a child is born": Jesus was born into the world just as we were.

Jesus lived on earth as we do. He had a childhood and grew up to be a man. He experienced pain, sorrow and temptation as we do. But He was without sin. Jesus was obedient to God in every way and completely fulfilled the will of His Father. What glory He must have given up to become a man of flesh.

"Unto us a Son is given": Jesus is a gift of the Father to us. God sent Him because of His love for us. Jesus is a gift undeserved and we are so unworthy to receive Him. But God is full of grace and compassion. Jesus was given for us. His life was taken and His blood shed so we might have life and the hope of eternity with Him. What a precious gift has been given!!

"And the government shall be upon His shoulder": Jesus is King and ruler over all and He will return to reign on this earth in power. "And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed." Daniel 7:14.

"His name shall be called Wonderful": Who is more wonderful than Jesus? Who else has so unselfishly given us so much? We are amazed at His love and His sacrifice for us. How wonderful and great He is. Words can't completely express it. His name is Wonderful!!

"Counselor": Christ should be our counselor in every area of life. We should take everything to Him and ask His direction and guidance. He is the only one who has the answers to life's problems. We must seek our guidance from Him and ask for His help in making decisions whether great or small. He never leaves us or forsakes us. Jesus is the only constant trustworthy aspect of our life.

"The Mighty God": Christ is truly almighty. He has power over all and nothing is impossible for Him. None is greater or can match up to Him, but He has overcome all. What a mighty God we serve who has won the battle for us.

"The Everlasting Father": Jesus is everlasting and gives life everlasting. He is ever with us, constant and sure. Only He and His are everlasting. All else shall see destruction. His words are everlasting and true. How thankful we are that we have an everlasting Father to serve, one who will live and reign forever.

"Prince of Peace": What an appro-

priate title for Jesus. He is the giver of peace, only in Him can peace be found. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27. How wonderful it is to have His peace, peace that passeth understanding.

God's gift to us is so complete. Jesus is everything we need. He is the most wonderful gift that has ever been given. Oh how we thank you Lord!!

Bro. Loren Strahm (Gridley, KS) visited our congregation on November 13. He preached of charity and how charity will overcome all evil. We pray for God's blessing on Him.

Matt Kieser has finished his schooling here in Wichita and has moved back home again (Goodfield, IL). We will miss his presence and pray God will direct, bless and continue to draw him closer.

My prayer for this Christmas is that we all would have a deeper love for God and a deeper appreciation and thankfulness for the precious gift He has given in His Son, Jesus.

MICHIGAN, ALTO Jane Grawburg

Sitting here, listening to the cold and the blustery wind outside, brings to mind the fact that our Lord has brought another change in seasons upon us. A change which brings thoughts of Christmas; and, of the Christ Child — a babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger; born to Mary and Joseph, in Bethlehem.

Thoughts come to mind of our Sunday School children as they hear the beautiful story of Christ's birth — of how Mary and Joseph cared for their child — of how loved ones came to worship, and brought gifts from afar.

New babes being welcomed home for the Holidays are Jonathan Wallace, son of Bro. Wally and Donna Gerst; and, Lisa Janelle, daughter of Ed and Joyleen Zaagman.

We want to remember those who are ill, or hospitalized, at this time. Bro. Ferdinand Grawburg (Sis. Jane) is in the hospital again. Sis. Miriam Feldman (mother of Bro. Lyman) is still hospitalized. Sis. Loretta Steffen (Bro. Aaron) is home; and, we pray, is doing a little better now.

Sis. Loretta has asked that a thank you be extended, on her behalf, to all those who have sent cards and flowers,

words of encouragement and prayers. Your love for her, and for Bro. Aaron, has been most warmly felt and deeply appreciated.

We give our love to Bro. Dave and Sis. Bertha Wingeier as they have gone South for the Winter months. We pray that all will be well; and, that we will soon be with each other again.

Visiting us this month was Bro. Joe Waibel (Bay City). We thank him, most sincerely, for his labors of love.

May the love of God warm your hearts throughout this Christmas season, and in the coming year.

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY Pam Wieland

Cindy Martin and Kelly Wieland have experienced a promise of God: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up." James 4:10. Having repented, they have confessed a peace with God and man. What a joy to be lifted up by the peace of God which comes only through a process that is foreign and unnatural to man — that of humbling oneself in the sight of the Lord.

When Jesus ascended into heaven He left behind His body, the Church. The Bay City congregation was privileged to unite together as a body and share in Holy Communion. We trust the sharing of this sacrament will cause each to be stirred to a deeper appreciation of the broken body and shed blood of Jesus.

We are appreciative of the services rendered by our visiting ministers. This past month Elder Bros. Ben Mai-bach (Detroit) and Aaron Steffen (Alto) served us the Lord's Supper. Bro. Floyd Wieland (Detroit) also visited and fed us out of the Word.

God guides us in our steps and He guides us in our stops. Many times the stops in life, though difficult, can benefit our spiritual being. Hospitalized this month have been Bro. Sam Wieland, Sis. Tina Wackerle and Bro. Bob Schlatter. We pray for God's sustaining hand on each of them.

Kenn and Kathy Wackerle (Bro. Wallace and Sis. Alvina Wackerle) are newly married. We wish them many happy years and the blessings of the Lord in their marriage.

The basic unit of the church is the family. It is here that children are taught a fear of God and to learn His commandments. We pray for Bro. Rod and Sis. Beth Steffen as they

continue to provide a Christian haven in which their newborn, Gretchen Nicole, can learn of God's ways. Parents have a high calling to witness to their children of the love of God.

Jesus made His appearance on earth in a place that we would not expect a King to come. He humbled Himself to be born in a manger; a place that was cold, undesirably furnished, and occupied by animals. How closely that still compares today to the place where Jesus makes His abode. He comes to a sinner's heart: cold, unclean and occupied by desires foreign to the Spirit of God. What an unlikely place for a King to set up residence! In spite of the lowliness of His birth, there were those who recognized Jesus as being the Messiah, and worshipped Him. And so today, in spite of the lowliness of the habitation of Jesus in the hearts of sinners, there are still wise men who recognize the deity of Christ and worship Him. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." II Cor. 4:7.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT Dawn Bahr

"There are friendships that we cherish in our daily walk of life, . . . friends among the aged and youthful, friends that live from us apart, . . . find a place within my heart." We shared a blessed weekend of fellowship Nov. 5 and 6, when the Bay City and Alto Sunday Schools visited. It is our prayer that many new friendships were cultivated that will warm the hearts of the young people for many years to come. We appreciate the efforts the Alto and Bay City Sunday Schools made to help make the weekend possible. We especially want to thank Bro. Jim Rinkenberger (Bluffton, IN) for coming to minister to us and for sharing his faith with our future church.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." Ephesians 2:19-20. This was the scripture shared with us by Sis. Holly Barton as she spoke in her testimony of how God revealed to her that she is no longer a part of the world of sin, but is forgiven of her sins and filled with the peace that is beyond all human understand-

ing. We rejoiced to be able to greet Sis. Holly as a new sister-in-faith, following her baptism Nov. 13. Holly's parents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Vi Barton. We thank Elder Bro. Eugene Pamer (Akron, OH) for being here at Holly's baptism and for assisting Bro. Ben Maibach in reading the conference letter.

We are happy to have Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Mary Kaisner and their family back home after spending a year-and-a-half in the Washington congregation. We also welcome Dan Dahl, who recently moved to our area from Atlanta, GA.

We, of the Detroit congregation, would like to wish all of you a very blessed Christmas season, and pray that "your joy might be full" in the coming year.

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS

Deb Tilbury

Bro. Harold Messner (Winthrop) and Bro. Alpha Moser (Morris) brought us inspirational messages this month. We are so glad that they and their wives could assemble with us.

We have had two hospital patients. Bro. Noah Miller had surgery and is assembling with us again. Kevin Bragg, grandson of Sis. Viola Aupperle, is undergoing chemotherapy. We pray that God will watch over him.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Rhonda Zeltwanger — Jan Schock

Our dear Bro. Donald Luthi, 50, passed from this earth on October 20. He is survived by his wife, Sis. Della; and four children, Sis. Charlene, Sheryl, Bradley and Galen. Other survivors include his stepmother, Sis. Lillie Luthi (Morris, MN); and four brothers, Albert (Hancock, MN), Harold and Bro. Reuben (Morris, MN) and Bro. Raymond (Jasper, MO); and three sisters, Sis. Violet Wulf (Morris, MN), Sis. Wilma Kuntz (Gridley, IL) and Sis. Lillian Mogler (Alvord, IA). Bro. Don suffered with cancer for six and one-half years, but was always a light and example to all of us. His faith seemed to be strengthened, even in his suffering and he always commented on how much he had to be thankful for. May God comfort his family. May we all remember them with an extra prayer and try to do our duties to the widows and the fatherless.

We have been blessed again with several visiting ministers this month. It is amazing that God knows our needs

and answers them Sunday after Sunday. Visiting ministers were Bros. Carl Feucht (Lester, IA), Carl Hartman (Sabetha, KS), Noah Gerber (West Bend, IA), Ken Knapp (Taylor, MO) and Dale Wulf (Lester, IA).

Guy and Lynette Koehl have chosen "Hannah Lynn" as the name of their first child. Bro. Edward and Sis. Lois Koehl and the Wilbert Spohrs are Hannah's grandparents. Bro. Verle and Sis. Christa Sauder also have a new daughter. She is Heather Elaine. Grandparents are Virgil and Mildred Sauder and Bro. Jesse and Sis. Donna Huber (Fairbury, IL). Heidi is also happy for a playmate.

I am happy for this opportunity to thank each and everyone for the many cards, telephone calls and gifts of love during my illness the past summer. Also, thanks for the many prayers and visits. It certainly makes us realize how precious is the bond of Christian fellowship.

In Christian love,
Alpha Moser

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

Carol Ann Messner
Mary Lou Schmidt

What shall I give for Christmas,
To Him who gave Himself for me?
To Him I give my life, my love,
For time and for eternity.

Anonymous

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16. What a precious gift was given to the world by Jesus Christ our Lord! May we never tire in giving thanks to our Almighty God in Heaven!

One weekend this month, Elder Bro. Ed Ringger (Gridley, IL) and Bro. Harold Gramm (Morris, MN) shared their efforts and love with us. On Sat. night, the exhortation of the memorandum was given. After hearing the exhortation, we can all truly say, "help us Dear Lord, we all need improvement." On Sunday, the dear Bros. ministered to us. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Heb. 13:17.

The annual Bible Class Sunday School meeting was held in Winthrop

this month. We thank all the brothers for coming and taking part with these meetings. May the Lord bless them for giving and sharing of themselves for our precious youth.

The engagement of Jason Messner, son of Sis. Carol and the late Bro. Dennis Messner, to Nancy Schuller was made known. Nancy's parents, Glen and Marvel, are from Vesta, MN. We wish them many blessings.

Hospital patients have been Bro. Walter (Butch) Messner, Bro. George Messner and Sis. Darlene (Darrel) Schmidt. Bro. Roland Messner had hip surgery and is now home and doing fine. We pray God will extend His wonderful healing touch to all!

I wish to thank everyone for the cards and gifts of money sent to me while in the hospital. Your thoughtfulness and prayers will always be remembered! Bro. Roland Messner

January is the month Winthrop sets aside for the collection of the Silver Lining. It is truly a spiritual booklet we all enjoy reading!

Look not back on yesterday,
So full of failure and regret;
Look ahead and seek God's way —
All sin confessed, you must forget.

We should leave the failures of 1983 behind us. Let's press on to higher ground with our Lord as our shepherd and Guide in 1984. We should all pause for awhile; then think back about the past year of 1983. After looking back, we should think ahead and thank God for His faithfulness and blessings.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

Janice Lehman

Sis. Brenda Knobloch has accepted a job in Portland, OR and will be greatly missed by our congregation here. We wish her the Lord's guidance in her new location.

The family of Bill Rogers wishes to express their thanks for the many expressions of sympathy and kindness shown to them during his illness and at his passing away. It was appreciated. May God bless each one for their deeds of love.

Sis. Cora Rogers would like to share the following poem which was given to her at the time of her husband's death.

SAFELY HOME

I am home in heaven, dear ones;
Oh, so happy and so bright!

There is perfect joy and beauty
 In this everlasting light.
 All the pain and grief is over,
 Every restless tossing passed;
 I am now at peace forever,
 Safely home in heaven at last.
 Did you wonder why I so calmly
 Trod the valley of the shade?
 Oh! but Jesus' love illumined
 Every dark and fearful glade.
 And He came Himself to meet me
 In that way so hard to tread;
 And with Jesus' arm to lean on,
 Could I have one doubt or dread?
 Then you must not grieve so sorely,
 For I love you dearly still;
 Try to look beyond earth's shadows,
 Pray to trust our Father's will.
 There is work still waiting for you,
 So you must not idly stand;
 Do it now, while life remaineth —
 You shall rest in Jesus' land.
 When that work is all completed,
 He will gently call you Home;
 Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
 Oh, the joy to see you come!

MISSOURI, LAMAR

Sandra Luthi — Becky Hohulin

Be present, holy Spirit, To bless them
 as they kneel,
 As thou, for Christ the Bridegroom,
 The heavenly bride dost seal;
 O spread thy pure wing o're them; Let
 no ill power find place,
 While onward to thy presence, Their
 hallowed path they trace.

Hymns of Zion, No.196

Most certainly we felt the presence
 of the Holy Spirit on Nov. 13, when
 Bro. Lawrence Luthi and Sis. Sandra
 Marti were united in holy matrimony.
 As our heavenly Father has drawn
 them together, may He bless them
 further as they start their lives to-
 gether, two becoming one in Christ.
 Their parents are Bro. Ray and Sis.
 Marilyn Luthi and Bro. Charles and
 Sis. Alice Marti.

Adding to the blessings of that very
 special day was our visiting minister,
 Bro. Charles Sinn (Fort Scott, KS). We
 thank him for his labor of love among
 us.

As always, sorrow intermixes with
 joy, and we express our sympathy to
 Bro. Martin Hohulin and his family in
 the passing of his father, Bro. Silas
 Hohulin (Gridley, IL) and also to Bro.
 Ray Luthi and his family in the passing

of his brother, Bro. Don Luthi (Morris,
 MN).

Bro. Curt and Sis. Martha Kellen-
 berger have moved back to make their
 home in Lester, IA. We will miss them
 and pray for God's blessings on their
 move.

Mid-week services are always such a
 special spiritual lift in a busy world. We
 will begin having them, starting Nov. 9
 on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each
 month beginning at 7:30 p.m.

In the hospital this month was our
 dear Sis. Lydia Rentsch. Our prayers
 continue with her.

God's love is immeasurable. If only
 we could keep that amount of love in
 our hearts each and every day of our
 life. We appreciate the love and con-
 cern that was shared with us as we
 gathered to listen to the letter from the
 recent brotherhood conference. Our
 Bro. Gene Marti and Bro. Leroy Huber
 (Eureka, IL) were present to share with
 us God's love and how to apply it in our
 heart and lives in service to Him. We
 were richly blessed by receiving ad-
 vice, counsel and admonishment from
 our dear elders who care for us and are
 willing to lend themselves on our be-
 half. May God richly reward them for
 their labors of love.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Becky Gudeman

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a
 son is given: and the government shall
 be upon his shoulder: and his name
 shall be called Wonderful, Counselor,
 The Mighty God, The Everlasting
 Father, The Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6

We are so thankful for those who
 have come and shared of themselves
 this past month. The ministers were
 Bro. Nathan Stoller (Bradford) and
 Bro. Marvin Schmidgall (Eureka). May
 the Lord bless them for their efforts.

Services are held the 2nd and 4th
 Sundays of the month (because of the
 Holiday, they will not be held Dec. 25)
 at the Ben Franklin Motel, 4645 N.
 Lindbergh Blvd. For more information,
 call Dan and Becky Gudeman at 314-
 275-2227.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Loida Hodel — Lori Marquart

Our thanks is extended to Bro. Ken
 and Sis. Darlene Hoerr and family
 (Peoria) who spent the weekend of Oct.
 29-30 with us. Christian fellowship and

spiritual blessings were enjoyed by all.

"CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP"

"There are friendships that we cherish
 In our daily walk of life.
 Friends with whom we meet and labor
 In our earthly toil and strife.
 Friends among the aged and youthful.
 Friends that live from us apart
 Friends of higher rank and station
 Find a place within my heart."

Hymns of Zion # 91

We extend our thanks and apprecia-
 tion to all those of the Bloomington
 congregation for their love and hospita-
 lity shown to a group of us who were
 privileged to share a weekend with
 them. Old acquaintances were re-
 newed and many new ones were made.

We are looking forward to a blessed
 and happy holiday season. Once again,
 we hope to enjoy the Christmas story
 that is always eagerly portrayed by our
 little folks and youth. May we remem-
 ber . . .

"'Twas not the angel's message
 That gave the Christmas thought
 Nor yet the golden incense
 Which the Wise Men brought.
 'Twas not the star that led them
 upon the unknown way;
 It was the birth of Jesus
 That makes the Christmas day!"

Annie Johnson Flint

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

Luke 2:11

NEW JERSEY, UNION CITY

Ed Aeschleman

The Union City congregation en-
 joyed two blessed Sundays during the
 past month. On October 23 a group of
 35 brethren, including ministering
 Bros. Leland Hirschey, Duane Farney
 and Elder Bro. Robert Beyer, came by
 bus from the Croghan and Naumburg
 churches to worship with us. Then on
 November 13 about 30 brethren from
 the midwest churches of Princeville,
 Morton, Washington, Eureka, Fair-
 bury and Peoria worshipped with us as
 they passed through New York on a
 trip from the Holy Lands to their
 homes. Ministering Bros. Joe Stoller
 (Princeville) and Carl Wyss (Washing-
 ton) were among this group.

It is difficult to explain how much we
 enjoy these visits. Groups of this size

are large groups to our small congregation. We appreciate so much the fellowship and encouragement offered by so many and the Holy Word as it was offered by the Spirit's inspiration through several brothers. The singing was an inspiration in itself and we rejoiced in singing some beautiful hymns that we dare not attempt when we are alone. May God bless each soul who lent himself in our behalf.

NEW YORK, CROGHAN
Alice Virkler

O little town of Bethlehem,
 How still we see thee lie!
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
 The silent stars go by;
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth
 The everlasting Light;
 The hopes and fears of all the years
 Are met in thee tonight.

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

Hymns of Zion, No. 37

As the Christmas season is near, and we think of the birth of our Lord and Savior, we can be so thankful that this wonderful gift of love is still available to each and every one who will accept it. Every meek soul who calls upon Him can receive Him into their heart.

A very blessed day was enjoyed by 39 members, friends and Sunday School children who traveled by bus to the Union City church on Sunday, Oct. 23. Although the day was cloudy and wet outside, we could feel God's love flow through the hearts of each as we traveled and assembled together with those of like mind and faith. We want to thank the Union City congregation for their love and hospitality shown unto each of us.

We have been able to gather on three evenings to listen to the tapes of the General Conference. This is truly a great blessing to be able to hear the love and concern of our elder brethren for each of us. May we each be guided and strengthened by the words of these dear brothers.

Bro. Bernard Martin was hospitalized for eye surgery and is again in our

assembly. We are glad to see God's healing hand upon our loved ones.

Our congratulations are extended to Linette and Joe Bush who were united in marriage October 29. Their parents are Bro. Lowell and Sis. Celia Virkler and Dick and Sandy Bush (Lowville).

NEW YORK, NAUMBURG
Rachel Snyder

On Oct. 15 a group from our New York church attended an open house at the home of Bro. Walter Rumpf at St. Johnsville. He formerly attended the Union City church but we now appreciate his assembling with us. We had a pleasant and rewarding day, seeing his new home and meeting his family. May God richly bless them.

On Oct. 23 a bus load from our church went to Union City for the day. We enjoyed the fellowship and appreciated the love and hospitality of the brethren there.

The Naumburg and Croghan congregations are making plans for a trip to Kitchner, Ontario, Canada, to visit the Fortenbacher family and hold services there. We are expecting to charter a bus (39 passengers) as was done when the trip was made to Union City. The date is set for Nov. 20. May God bless the efforts. We pray for a pleasant day and safe trip.

Sister Barbra Bachman is still a patient in Lowville Hospital. Also Bro. Arthur Herzig was in for a few days. Gerald Beyer, son of Bro. Henry and Barbra, and Sis. Julia Karcher were in for surgery. We have been missing these and others from church who have been ill including Sis. Edna Sturtg and Bro. Theodore Herzig.

We have been privileged to listen to the conference tapes taken at our last brotherhood meeting. Oh, that we would seriously consider and take to heart what has been spoken by these inspired brethren.

A singing for Bro. Jess Karcher and Sis. Sarah's birthdays was held at the extended care unit in Lowville.

We wish to extend our sympathy to Gertrude Herzig and family on the passing of her brother (Maine).

Sis. Maude Pelton, 79, passed away November 12. Surviving are many nieces and nephews. Services were held by Elder Bro. Robert Beyer. Burial was in the Black River Cemetery.

OHIO, AKRON
Joyce Gasser

Sherri Bako, daughter of Bro. Zoltan and Sis. Bonnie Bako, had surgery on her knee. She is using crutches, but is able to return to school.

We appreciated visiting ministers Bro. Ken Indermuhle and Bro. Gary Maibach.

Bro. Rudy and Sis. Bethi Graf have returned safely from a visit to relatives in Switzerland and are thankful to God for His protection and blessing throughout their travels.

OHIO, GIRARD
Karen Laparo

"He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree."
 Roy L. Smith

The spirit of the Christmas season is one of love. We should all endeavor to keep the Christmas spirit throughout the year.

ETERNAL CHRISTMAS

In the pure soul, although it sing or pray,
 The Christ is born anew from day to day;
 The life that knoweth Him shall bide apart
 And keep eternal Christmas in the heart.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps

We were blessed with a visiting minister this month. We thank Bro. Ron Steiner (Rittman) for his labor of love.

We also wish to thank our visiting song leaders: Bro. Leon Graf (Akron), Bro. Bert Gasser (Rittman) and Bro. Larry Rufener (Rittman).

At the close of another year we wish to express a special thanks to our dear faithful minister, Bro. Harold Emch and all the song leaders from Rittman, Akron and Mansfield who share their services with us in love, Sunday after Sunday. They are truly workmen of God.

THE CARPENTER OF GALILEE

The Carpenter of Galilee
 Comes down the street again,
 In every land, in every age,
 He still is building men.
 On Christmas Eve we hear Him knock;
 He goes from door to door:
 "Are any workmen out of work?
 The Carpenter needs more."

Hilda W. Smith

OHIO, JUNCTION**Les Manz**

In this Christmas season, most of us whose parents are still pilgrims on this side of the grave will remember them with "tokens of our appreciation". Yes, the many gifts of love they have given us and most of all the knowledge of the way of salvation which we learned on their laps are of such great value, no sum of money, no gift of great value could come close to repaying them for their efforts. And so, we will be remembering them with "tokens of our appreciation". Realizing the great value of our earthly parents' love and humbly realizing our inability to repay them, how can we help but think further of our Heavenly Father's love for us and again humbly realize repayment efforts are futile. We can only thank Him for His great love for us and gladly give Him our time and all our talents to use in His service — again mere "tokens of our appreciation".

Our Elder Bro. Loren Stoller gave again of his time this month to bring God's Word to us from the pulpit.

Our new Sis. Esther Naveau was hospitalized again this month. No doubt, she is experiencing the joys of serving Christ even though she has reasons to become discouraged.

OHIO, LATTY**Laurie Stoller — Patty Riggensch**

Latty was privileged to have many visitors from various congregations as we hosted the annual World Relief meeting for Eastern U. S. on November 12. We enjoyed a very interesting day as we learned of the many projects in which the churches are helping those less fortunate than ourselves. We are reminded in Heb. 6:10, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward the saints, and do minister." Visiting ministers who shared God's Word with us on Sunday were Bros. Bill Gerst (Alto), Jim Hoerr (Peoria) and Art Gudeman (LaCrosse).

Bro. Elmer Witzig (Gridley) also ministered to us recently.

We were reminded of the necessity of obedience to God's will and the preciousness of His promises during the reading of the memorandum. Bro. Nate Steffen (Elgin) assisted with the services.

We are thankful that no persons were seriously injured in a fire at the

farm of Bro. Lou Stoller (Sis. Mildred) and sons. Although they suffered great material loss, God's grace supplied much encouragement and help through the local brethren joining together in time of need. Bro. Lou and his sons, Bro. Mark (Sis. Shirley) and Bro. Jim (Sis. Tam), and their families are grateful for all of the help and especially for God's protection from injury.

Hospital patients in November were Sis. Lillian Stoller, Sis. Anna Rager, Dawn and Kim Stoller (Bro. Ray and Sis. Carol) and Sis. Katie Breitwieser (Bro. Henry). We are glad these loved ones are all home now and we pray for God's continued healing power and strength.

October 26 was a happy day for Bro. Gus and Sis. LeAnn Schlatter and their sons, Matt, Vince, Adam and Mitchell. They welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world. Shannon Marie is the name given to the new addition. Congratulations, Gus and LeAnn and may you continue to raise your children in God's love and admonition.

Feeling a double joy because of a new birth is Bro. Phil and Sis. Gloria Grant and their children, Amy, Brad, Shelli and Adam. Twin brothers, Benji Lee and Barry Jay arrived in the Grant family on November 18. May their blessings be doubled as these boys grow to maturity.

Sis. Frieda Kipfer has passed from this earth to eternity. She had suffered illness for a short time before her death and we are thankful she did not have to suffer long. Surviving are four sons, Bro. Henry (Sis. Arvilla), Ralph, Bro. Ephraim (Sis. Marilyn) and Joseph; five daughters, Sis. Elsie Rager (Bill), Alice Yates (Harold), Mary Ann Crews (Joseph), Sis. Margaret Schlatter (Bro. Dave, Bay City) and Sis. Esther Stoller (Bro. Ken); two sisters, Sis. Ida Gerber (Bro. Eli, Bluffton) and Sis. Arvilla Kipfer (Bro. Henry); 30 grandchildren; and 50 great-grandchildren.

Latty was saddened by another death. Bro. Michael Stoller was relieved of his bodily afflictions which he had been suffering for the past few years. Although he will be missed by family and friends, we rejoice that he can have a new body in heaven. Those surviving Bro. Mike are three sons, Bro. Ken (Sis. Esther), Ellsworth (Sis. Evelyn, Peoria) and Jet (Van Wert); four daughters, Sis. Kate Oesch (Mansfield), Sis. Ann Plummer (Bro. Rex), Sis. Dolores Riggensch (Har-

lan) and Sis. Josephine Stoller; three brothers, Bro. Ezra (Sis. Martha, Gridley), Bro. John (Sis. Martha) and Bob; two sisters, Sis. Juliet Graf (Akron) and Sis. Louise Graf (Bro. Ernest, Akron); 32 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. Bro. Gene Fetter (Toledo) and Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City) assisted with the morning services before the funeral.

As the Christmas season approaches, let us ever remember why Christmas is really meant to be celebrated, the birth of our Savior. Let us be mindful that Jesus Christ is the reason for the season as we decorate our homes, give gifts, and enjoy the holiday traditions. All praise to Him!

Praise to You, O Holy One,
Source of our salvation,
For out of darkness You brought light
That first day of creation . . .

And when the world went dark again
And evil walked this earth,
You sent a Guiding Light to us,
O praise His Holy Birth . . .

He leads us out of darkness
He gives new hope to man —
O praise His Name, His Holy Name
As Christmas comes again!

Alice Joyce Davidson
Daily Guideposts, 1983

December is collection month for Silver Lining dues in Latty. Please see your reporters.

OHIO, MANSFIELD**Lucille Groh**

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King; Let every
heart prepare Him room. (From Joy To
The World). What a refreshment and
sweet pleasure it is for the heaven-
bound pilgrim to sing of the Savior.

The story is told of a little girl who had a very beautiful mother — all but her hands. They were scarred, shriveled and hideous. Though the child withheld from speaking of it, the time came when she could no longer hold her silence. "Mother, why is it that you, with such a beautiful face, have hands that are not pretty at all?" The mother told her the answer. When she was a wee baby in her cradle upstairs, and while the mother was downstairs, the mother discovered that the house was on fire. She rescued the child through the fire and the smoke. However, in

running through the flames and protecting the baby's face with her hands, she received terrible burns. Ever since then her hands carried the marks of rescue. "Oh, mother," the little girl sobbed, "I have always loved you, especially your face - but now, more than all, I love your hands." There is one who left heaven's glory and as we commemorate Jesus' birthday this Christmas, 1983, let us remember that He is the one who braved the fires and pain of Calvary. The fact stands that those compassionate hands wear the marks of His sacrifice for your sins and mine. Will you let Him into your heart this Christmastide or:

Is your life so crowded this Christmastide,
That you cruelly turn the dear Lord aside
From the door of your heart, as they did that night
When at Bethlehem's inn, Joseph told their plight?

They little knew that down the years
Would be told their answer and oft with tears;
There was no room, save a cattle stall
In a lowly stable, - yes that was all.

Is your life crowded with sin and shame,
That you have no room for the One who came
To give you peace at the Christmastide,
If within your heart He may now abide?

If you give Him room there will ever be
Glad rejoicing throughout eternity.
For the Christmas Babe is God's Holy Son
And through Him alone is the victory won.

Author Unknown

Truly our hearts were filled to overflowing on November 6 when Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton), Bro. Joseph Ramsier (Rittman) and a number of others visited our congregation. Truly heaven came down and glory filled our souls. We especially want to thank our brothers Ed and Joseph for proclaiming God's precious Word to us.

On November 6, Bro. Jim Zimmer, Jr. was elected Sunday School Superintendent and Bro. Clair Keever was elected his assistant. May they ever look to the one above for guidance and direction as they guide our youth.

We are sorry to report Bro. Byron

Rice, Sis. Christine Dotterer and Sis. Ruth Weiss have been hospital patients this past month. Our prayers have been on their behalf and we wish them God's nearness and love.

Dud and Melissa (Matuck) Sulzener have moved to 6397 Union Ave., N. E., Alliance, OH 44601. I'm sure they would be glad to receive mail from home.

Let's remember it is simplicity which makes Christmas wonderful. Here we may worship, recognizing in the simplicity of the Child the meaning of God's redeeming love. Here we may bring our joys and sorrows; our joys will be hallowed, and our sorrows will be lightened. Unto you, this Christmastide; with your longing heart the angels sing their song again, with all their heavenly art, Nay sweeter far than their sweet song, the Spirit from above shall bring the tidings of your King, and whisper of His love. Won't you give Him room tonight?

OHIO, RITTMAN
Janette Blough
Florence Hartzler

As the Christmas season draws near, may we not get so busy and caught up in the hurry and scurry that we forget the true meaning of why we celebrate the Christmas season. Our dear Lord was born into this world because of His great love for us.

We have two new little baby boys to report. Matthew Allen was born to Rich and Kathie Garrison. Matthew has two brothers, Nathan and Michael and his grandparents are Ken and Lil Rupp. Bro. Harvey and Stephanie Landis are first-time parents with the birth of Joel Austin. Joel's grandparents are Bro. Vernon and Sis. Lib Landis and his great-grandparents are Bro. Alvin and Sis. Estella Winkler. Our sympathy also is extended to Stephanie for the loss of her grandfather.

We are so happy to report that Stan and Gloria Hartzler have surrendered their hearts to the Lord. May He give them much grace in their new walk of life. We rejoice with the angels in Heaven.

November 13 was the wedding day of Bro. Bob Riegenbach and Sis. Lori Acker. May they be blessed in their married life. Bro. Bob is the son of Bro. Ed and Sis. Anita Riegenbach and Sis. Lori is the daughter of Boyd and Barb Acker.

Sis. Mary Ann Maibach fractured her ankle in a fall and had to be hospitalized for a few days. Sis. Bertha Kiser was also hospitalized but is now home again. May our Lord lay His healing hand on all those who have met with sickness or accident.

Julie Bauman, daughter of Bro. Dale and Sis. Nancy, was also hospitalized after suffering from a fall. We are glad that she has returned home again.

The Rittman congregation is so thankful that we have been so richly blessed with converts and by those who worship with us. We are so appreciative of this, and have known for a long time that due to overcrowding, we would have to make some changes. After a few years of prayer, deliberation, seeking and voting, we have been led to believe that another church would have to be built. After much prayer, a site for a new church has been chosen in the Smithville-Sterling area on Fulton Rd. We pray for our Lord's guidance and leading as this project progresses.

OHIO, SARDIS
Joyce Indermuhle

We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear, and often for each other flows a sympathizing tear.

Hymns of Zion #156

The family of Bro. John and Sis. Paula Figel wishes to express their heartfelt thanks for the prayerful support, kind words and many deeds of kindness during the loss of Sis. Paula's father, Paul VanCamp. May the Lord bless you, each one.

In this beautiful Christmas season, we have so many reasons to praise God. The love flows so free between loved ones and brethren and we can feel God's gift to us working in our heart and lives. This year at Christmas may we strive to return that Holy Love to God, by giving it away to those around us. May we put aside the material blessings and dwell on those that are spiritual. May our gifts to each other reflect the Love of Jesus and may we give of ourselves to further God's love and Word!

OHIO, TOLEDO
Mary Ann Weigle
Josephine Rehklau

The engagement of Sis. Alice Harmon to Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sardis) was recently announced. "When two fond hearts as one unite, the yoke is

easy and the burden light." This little saying was on a plaque once given to me. May Alice and Mark find this true as they begin their married life together in the Lord.

We enjoyed a very blessed weekend in our congregation on Nov. 5 and 6. Elder Bro. Ben Maibach and his wife, Sis. Lorene, and Elder Bro. Andy Virkler and his wife, Sis. Maxine, were with us to share Holy Communion on Sat. evening. On Sunday they shared with us the letter from the Brotherhood Conference. The day was completed with a church dinner and fellowship.

Sis. Lydia Fetter has been unable to attend church lately because of her health. We miss her very much and will be glad when she can be back among us.

Bro. Aaron Fetter is now residing in a nursing home. His new address is: Hillcrest Care Center, 564 S. River Rd., Waterville, OH 43560.

Diane and Mike Hughes and daughter, Kathy, have welcomed a new baby girl into their family. Her name is Lindsay.

The Sunday School children have been busy preparing for the annual Christmas program to be presented on Sunday, December 18.

THE STORY THAT NEVER GROWS OLD

Oh list to the story that never grows old,
Its tidings of joy repeat,
The Savior is come by the prophets foretold,
To Bethlehem's quiet street.
The miracle star shines in splendor above,
The stable so dingy and worn,
So humble a cradle for One who is Love,
And there Jesus Christ is born.

Song by A. H. Ackley

OREGON, PORTLAND Barbara Moser

The supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world is to learn Love. Is not life full of opportunities for learning Love? Every man and woman every day has many of them. The world is not a playground; it is a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday, but an education. And the one eternal lesson for us all is how we can love better. What makes a man a good artist, a good sculptor, a good musician? Practice. What makes a man a good linguist or a good stenographer? Practice. Nothing else. There is nothing capricious about

religion. We do not get the soul in different ways, under different laws, from those in which we get the body and the mind. If a man does not exercise his arm, he develops no bicep muscles; and if a man does not exercise his soul, he acquires no muscle in his soul, no strength of character, no vigor of moral fiber, no beauty of spiritual growth. Love is not a thing of enthusiastic emotion. It is a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole round Christian character — the Christlike nature in its fullest development. And the constituents of this great character are only to be built up by ceaseless practice.

What was Christ doing in the carpenter's shop? Practicing. Though perfect, we read that He learned obedience, and grew in wisdom and in favor with God. Talent develops itself in solitude — the talent of prayer, of faith, of meditation, of seeing the unseen; Character grows in the stream of the world's life. That chiefly is where men are to learn love.

From the book: "The Greatest Thing in the World"

On Saturday evening, Oct. 29, we were privileged to hear the testimonies of three dear souls in Silverton. One could surely feel the Spirit of God come through two of the converts who have been deaf all their lives. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. These dear souls can only read the Word and then listen or "see" by sign language. How beautiful is the thought that when these two dear souls get to heaven they will be able to "hear" all the wonderful words of God and be able to join in the beautiful singing of all the wonderful songs. We joyfully welcomed Bro. Louis and Sis. Gloria Kuenzie and Sis. Chris Kuenzie (Bro. Rich and Sis. Rosa Lee) into the fold of believers.

Take, eat; this is my body . . . this cup is the new testament in my blood . . .

I Corinthians 13:24-25

On Sunday morning we were served Holy Communion by Elder Bro. Carl Kinsinger and Deacon Clarence Dietrich. We thank the brothers for their love and fellowship and the many prayers in our behalf.

Note: January is collection time for the Portland church. (\$6.00 for the year.)

OREGON, SILVERTON

Rosa Lee Kuenzi

"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen . . ."

Now what does that bring to mind? Until recently, when an occasion made a closer look necessary, that particular Christmas Carol seemed, at first glance, sort of superficial. We probably would have classed it with songs like White Christmas or Jingle Bells, perhaps because of its lively melody. But, look closer; these words plainly say what many contemporary Christmas Carols and Christmas cards miss entirely:

"God rest ye merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay, For Jesus Christ our Saviour, Was born upon this day: To save us all from Satan's power, When we were gone astray: Chorus.

"From God, our Heavenly Father, A blessed angel came, And unto certain shepherds, Brought tidings of the same: How that in Bethlehem was born, The Son of God by name: Chorus.

"The shepherds at these tidings Rejoiced much in mind, and left their flocks a feeding In tempest, storm and wind, And went to Bethlehem straightway, The Blessed Babe to find: Chorus.

Chorus: O tidings of comfort and joy, Comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy."

As was mentioned last month, Bro. Gus and Sis. Dorothy Dietrich have officially added little Amy to their household. Amy is now one year old, so, perhaps Sis. Dorothy was even more unsuspecting than usual when invited to the home of Sis. Carol Dietrich on a recent Friday evening. The occasion was a surprise baby shower given by Sis. Carol and Sis. Joan (Bro. Jim) Dietrich. It isn't often that the guests can enjoy seeing the "baby" cheerfully modeling her own gifts.

Bro. Andy and Sis. Mary Jane Winkler and their five children are moving away from the Silverton area to return to the midwest, where they were originally from. They have lived here for over five years and will certainly be missed in our congregation.

We wish them God's grace as they settle their family in new surroundings. Many, many loved ones gathered together to express their love and best wishes at a farewell singing held on Winkler's last Sunday in Oregon. God be with us all until we meet again.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to

Bro. Duane and Sis. Arlene Kilgus (Fairbury, IL) and family, at the recent death of Sis. Arlene's father, Ralph Werner (Salem, OR). Ralph is survived by his wife, Emma; one daughter, Carol (Bob) Franz; and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. May they find comfort in the Lord for their sorrow. We extend our sincere appreciation to Bro. Duane for ministering to our congregation; carrying out the Lord's work even in a time of personal sorrow.

**PENNSYLVANIA,
 PHILADELPHIA**

Ed Aeschleman

Visitors from Bluffton on Nov. 6 included ministering Bro. Carroll Gerber. On Nov. 13 we enjoyed another visiting minister when Bro. Dan Stoller came to be with us along with others from Rockville and some brethren from Rittman. The word came to us in its truth and power, and we were encouraged by the faith and good fellowship brought by all who came. We thank God for the love that binds the brethren bought by our loving Saviour Jesus Christ.

**WEST VIRGINIA,
 NEW MARTINSVILLE**
Minne Weltz

In the Mountain State, the beauty of summer is gone, and we are having fall weather, but a bit of snow is really welcome after the intense heat of the summer.

William Riggenbach is a resident of the Walnut Creek Nursing Home, Walnut Creek, OH, and is quite content with the care and love that is shown him. He had his 97th birthday in July.

Elza Ritz is a patient in the Health Care Center here and an ambulatory patient most of the time. He has very good care, and the surroundings of the Home are very pleasant. He had his 85th birthday in October.

Harry Burton was a medical patient in the local hospital a few days in early November.

Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Williams and daughter, Norma Brandle (Akron, OH), spent two weeks in Bradenton, FL in October.

James Wade (Cleveland, OH) spent several days here with his mother, Mrs. C. O. Wade, during the hunting season.

A car-load of the residents of the Apostolic Christian Home in Rittman, OH drove over for a few day's outing in the hills of West Virginia and Ohio in

October. They visited the church at Sardis, OH and the country church near New Martinsville, and visited with several friends while here. Fred Widmer is always among the group and is welcomed by all.

By the time this is read, it will be time to wish all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all the friends in West Virginia.

Silver Threads

CAN THIS BE CHRISTMAS?

What's all this hectic rush and worry?
 Where go these crowds who run and scurry?

Why all the lights — the Christmas trees?

The jolly "fat man," tell me, please!

Why, don't you know? This is the day
 For parties and for fun and play;
 Why, this is Christmas!

So this is Christmas, do you say?
 But where is Christ this Christmas Day?

Has He been lost among the throng?
 His voice drowned out by empty song?

No, He's not here — you'll find Him where

Some humble soul now kneels in prayer,
 Who knows the Christ of Christmas.

But see the many aimless thousands
 Who gather on this Christmas Day,
 Whose hearts have never yet been opened,
 Or said to Him, "Come in to stay."

In countless homes the candles
 burning,
 In countless hearts expectant
 yearning

For gifts and presents, food and fun,
 And laughter till the day is done.

But not a tear or grief or sorrow
 For Him so poor He had to borrow
 A crib, a colt, a boat, a bed
 Where He could lay His weary head.

I'm tired of all this empty celebration,
 Of feasting, drinking, recreation;
 I'll go instead to Calvary.

And there I'll kneel with those who know

The meaning of that manger low,
 And find the CHRIST — this Christmas.

I leap by faith across the years
 To that great day when He appears
 The second time, to rule and reign,
 To end all sorrow, death, and pain.

In endless bliss we then shall dwell
 With Him who saved our souls from hell,
 And worship CHRIST — not
 Christmas!

M. R. DeHaan, M.D.

SATAN'S HOOK

The hook of sin, with which Satan catches pitiable people and leads them captive, is like a barbed hook. It goes in easily but it is hard to pull out. And, if a person would pull it out, it tears the heart with bitter pain. That is why it is so hard for a person to be converted from the power of Satan to the living God.

S. H. Froehlich

GOD CAN PROVIDE

A brother lying in prison was fed similarly to Elijah. God touched the heart of one of the attendants, so he threw a good portion of his own rationed food into the jail cell. Of course, the brother knew not who this person was; he knew only that the Lord has ways to provide and sustain His own.

S. H. Froehlich

Sermon . . .

(Continued from Page 36)

explained about Jesus and the Gospel message, the eunuch asked to be baptized. After we repented and were converted, we were not forced to be baptized. We were not pressed into this, but we had the same desire: "What doth hinder me to be baptized" into the death of our Lord? Acts 8:36.

Because there was no hinderance, Philip went down into the water with the eunuch, and this man was free to become a child of God. As the Bible

says, "He went on his way rejoicing." Acts 8:39.

Isn't it wonderful, brethren, how the Spirit of God works as He did in this man who might otherwise have gone home with a heavy heart? We believe that our friends often go home with heavy hearts. They come, and they know that this is the place to hear and to taste and to see. Beloved, if we don't surrender to the Spirit of God, we must go home with a heavy heart of condemnation and conviction.

It is of the greatest importance to be humble. I have asked this before, dear brethren: Do you have any good suggestions as to how to get across to the masses of men that being humble and being meek does not mean being weak? Is there a way that we can convey this message? To be totally surrendered to the Creator of heaven and earth is the answer to all of life's problems.

We sang in the last song before we came to the pulpit, "Oh, to be nothing." Read that song over again very carefully. There is a tremendous impact in those words, but the question is, do we really feel that way? It is easy to sing it, and it is easy to say it, isn't it? But do we really feel it? That is also true of believing. Believing means to not only say words with our lips, but it is to act upon them.

We read in Deuteronomy that the Lord told His first-covenant people exactly what they should eat. It wasn't so much, beloved, that this particular flesh or that flesh would have been much different to the taste, but He had to tell them what was good and wholesome in their particular way of life.

Likewise, He tells you and me that what we read, what we view, or what we talk about is clean or unclean. It's the same thing, is it not? He says the same thing to you and to me today.

Consider how Daniel was told that he was greatly beloved of God. Brothers, can you think of a higher calling than to have that comment made of you? That is exactly what was said of Daniel. "Thou art greatly beloved." Dan. 9:23. Do you remember how he was despised in the court of Assyria, but then arose to a very high position in the kingdom?

When his faith was tested, when they made a decree that no one should worship anyone but the king, Daniel was not intimidated. It didn't bother him. He knew that people were watching him. He knew that this was all done

to try to put him out of the picture so that his presence would no longer prick their hearts and convict them. It could have brought a lovely and beautiful conviction upon them to enjoy a life of fellowship with God as Daniel had, but in the ways of flesh they didn't want that.

Daniel was faithful, beloved, in spite of the test and the trial that was put before him. After a sleepless night, the king came to Daniel in the morning and asked him whether God had closed the lion's mouths. It wasn't a great surprise, beloved. The king believed the Lord would preserve Daniel.

In another portion of Scripture pertaining to this faithful servant, a king said that if Daniel could tell him the meaning of a dream, he would clothe him with scarlet and hang a chain of gold around his neck. Daniel said, so to speak, "You keep them. They don't mean anything to me. I have no use for them. I will tell you the meaning of your dream. I won't, but the Spirit of God through me will. Keep all your decorations because they don't mean anything to me. They are part of the world and I don't have any use for them."

In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul tells us to take off those weights which hinder our spiritual progress. Isn't that good advice? The weights are not necessarily horrible sins, dear brothers and sisters. They may not be something that Satan would hang out in front of us as a lighted neon sign. We would flee from those. But small, minute sins may creep into our lives and finally lead to deception and spiritual blindness. In the book of Revelation, God tells us to anoint our eyes with salve (the understanding and the wisdom of God) so that we might see.

We could list all of the foods forbidden in Deuteronomy, but some of them, such as an eagle, we wouldn't even have a desire to cook, would we? But that isn't the point, beloved. An eagle could provide sustenance for us in an emergency and it wouldn't be unclean anymore before God. He was trying to tell the Jewish people what they should partake of and what they should not. We read the same thing today in the New Testament. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps . . ." Matt. 25:1.

We are the lamps, beloved. We are not the light. The light is the Spirit of God within you, but you provide a

carriage for that light. You become the vessel that it is carried in.

They ". . . went forth to meet the bridegroom (our blessed Lord and Saviour)." Matt. 25:1. It is very important for us to be ready.

Five of the virgins were wise and five were foolish. What does this say to you, and what does it say to me? There is no assurance that there will be an afternoon for us. We have no assurance that there will be an evening hour, or a tomorrow. It could be any time. He tells us, ". . . in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump . . ." I Cor. 15:52. Some might be foolish and believe that there will be time to make changes.

Listen to this: "They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them." Matt. 25:3. The oil is the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God had flown. It was gone. We are told that the five were foolish.

"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." Matt. 25:5. I am trying to say, dear brethren, that we must be wise and alert. We must not be foolish and allow the enemy of our soul to lull us into a state of being spiritually asleep.

Then at midnight, perhaps a time when they least expected it, when they thought that all was well and good, there was a cry: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Matt. 25:6.

They weren't told, were they, that there would be an hour and ten minutes left for preparation, or so many seconds, or so many days, but . . . "Go ye out to meet him."

A member of our congregation died some years ago, and at that time I did not ask the dear sister how her husband came to his death. But some time later we were speaking of it, and she said, "You will hardly believe this, but when I got up to get breakfast, he had long been dead." She said, "He died sometime during the night. I didn't want to disturb him. I just arose and went about my duties. When I went in to call him, he was cold and rigid." She said, "He must have been gone several hours, even before I arose."

We have no assurance, do we? Very recently a friend of ours was sitting at a table in a restaurant. Two couples were sitting together. One man simply ceased talking and sat there dead. Just like that. I wasn't there, but it happened in the presence of a room full of people. With no forewarning whatever,

he was gone.

"Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." It doesn't say that we should run the other way, does it? We so often say that, do we not? We would meet and greet our Lord if we could. If He came here, surely every one of us would make that effort. We can't, because we don't see Him face to face. So we meet you, and you meet us. As a brother said at the conference, "Ten thousand strong, beloved brethren, and every one hopefully dedicated to one thought, and that is to serve our Lord and our God and to promote His cause here before men."

We also read, "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise . . ." Notice that all were aware of the calling. All arose, but ". . . the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." Matt. 25:7, 8.

Can you think of a more tragic sentence to be pronounced upon any of us than to hear that our lamp has gone out? We are the bearers, at one time filled with the Spirit, with the oil of God within us. We would not want to hear that our lamps had gone out. "But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell." Matt. 25:9.

Beloved, here is the dispenser of the oil of the Holy Spirit of God. Within the covers of this Book, we can find the answer to every question in our lives, can we not? Is there one of us who has been within the calling of the Lord for any length of time who can truthfully say that even one incident has come up in his life that he could not find the answer to in the Word of God? But they said, ". . . go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." Matt. 25:9. It was too late. The time had passed. "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came. . ." Matt. 25:10.

You can read throughout the Scripture that when the Lord comes at the sound of the trumpet, and the trumpet shall sound, the faithful who have gone before you shall arise first. You who are living in the Lord shall then go with them to meet Him in the air. The apostle Paul told us to "Comfort one another with these words." I Thess. 4:18. "While they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Matt. 25:10.

A closer union cannot exist here on

earth, beloved, than that of those who are married in the Lord and become one in mind and spirit, even one flesh before man and God. Their goal should be to bring pleasure and joy to the life of one another. When we consider the duties of the sister in the marriage vows, dear brothers, remember that it is your duty, and mine, to be such that she can love, serve, and rejoice with. If this is true in earthly marriage, then how much more dedicated we should be in serving our Lord.

Some years ago a brother made this passing remark: "You don't want the rewards of the world." This is true, isn't it? The world doesn't even want that — the world doesn't want the rewards of the world. Nobody really wants to go to hell.

The difficulty is, beloved, that flesh doesn't want to give up the flesh; flesh doesn't want to give up the world. Though you and I are born again and risen to a new life in Christ, we still arose in the same body, did we not? We are new persons in Christ Jesus, but the flesh and bones are still here. They are prone to want those things that are not wholesome for us.

The Lord "spelled out" to Israel that the eagle and the bat and so on were not for them, but He permitted what was best.

He says to you and to me that those things that pertain to the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and the lust of the eye are no longer for us. We should discipline ourselves so that we do not even crave them.

Let us go back again to the thought that we do not want the reward of our former lives for we found that repulsive, and we knew what we were facing. We hear from converts how they walked the floors in fear that they might not live through the night, that they might be called upon to leave this earth and not be ready. How thankful that soul is to be accepted by the Lord in repentance.

So, if we do not want the rewards of the world, beloved, why do we walk in its ways? As a tree falls, so shall that tree lie. We know that this is true in the natural world and it is also true of the Spirit.

When the Lord calls us, there isn't time, we read it here again, to make any change. Now is when the change needs to be made. It says of the wise virgins that they were ready to meet the bridegroom. "Afterward came also the other

virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us." Matt. 25:11.

Remember the story of the ark? It was the same situation, was it not? God in His wisdom put a window on the top. He Himself sealed the door so that feeble man couldn't look out and see those people in the flood struggling and crying to gain entrance into the ark. Out of human compassion, they would probably have opened the door. They would have let down the plank, but God in His wisdom closed the door.

Of the churches in the book of Revelation, the Lord said that they had a little strength. To the church of Philadelphia He said, "I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it." Rev. 3:8. This is an encouragement, is it not? Beloved, as far as numbers are concerned, we are small and we may be almost insignificant. This is not important. Oh, we wish that the masses of men would join and swell the ranks of the church of God. The whole world may someday be evangelized, but Scripture doesn't encourage us to believe that it will be converted. How we wish that it would!

You and I, brethren, have been called and have accepted Christ, have accepted the precepts of holiness in Him; but far more important is the fact that we have found ourselves called and accepted of Him, acceptable before Him. Those are tragic, tragic words: "Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Matt. 25:12. Unto us He says, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matt. 25:13.

We may think sometimes, "Well, we don't have very much strength; we don't have enough power to stand fast." Maybe you read the story of the little boy who was trying to move a big rock, a large stone. He pushed and he pulled and he tried as his father watched him. Finally, the father said, "Have you used all the power that you have?" He said, "Yes, I have and I can't move that stone." The father said, "No, you really haven't, because you haven't used me." That made all the difference, didn't it? When the little boy used the father, it wasn't too hard to move the object.

The same is true of us, beloved. We heard that this morning: "In Him, we cannot fail." There is one thing that God will not do and cannot do. He cannot fail His own. The rest of it, brethren, is up to you and to me.

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SERMON BY BRO. EDWARD ALT OF CISSNA PARK, IL

Text: Deuteronomy 14 and Matthew 25:1-13

Intelligent people in different fields often tell us that the more they learn in their trades or professions, the more aware they are that there is more they need to know. The same is true of us, is it not, dear brethren, in the reading and meditation of the Word of God.

We read, and we think we understand. Then we read it again, and we often find that we see it in an entirely new light. If we are diligent, we believe that by the inspiration of God we can understand enough so that we can work out our soul's salvation.

We heard this morning about believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scripture tells us to believe with all our hearts. Beloved, let us understand what believing really means. It does not mean to only acknowledge that there is a God and that Jesus is His Son. In the original language, it means to follow in the Lord's footsteps and to lean totally upon Him. It means something that is almost impossible to express in our language.

We often hear that in our exhortation, in our preaching and in our ministry, we may be giving souls false hope of what is required to be children of God, acceptable before Him.

We have just read the parable of the ten virgins. You probably read from time to time (as your mailbox gets as much mail as ours does) material which tells you that God could never say to one whom He has once known, "I know you not." But we read that here, didn't we? We read of ten virgins. They were all virgins, all pure at one time, but five were foolish. It was to those five, beloved, that He said, "Depart from me; I know you not." Matt. 25:12.

This is a serious matter, beloved brethren. We could read in the last part of the chapter in St. Matthew of the dividing of the sheep and goats, symbolic of that which is pure and that which is impure before God. We have a high calling in Christ Jesus, our Lord,

and we need to be very diligent and search our hearts.

What is righteousness, beloved? It is not our own. We understand that don't we? Our righteousness is as filthy rags which cover nothing and give off a very bad odor. But what is righteousness? What does the righteousness of God mean? It means, simply, a right standing with God in obedience to His Holy Word. How do we know if we are standing right before God unless we lay our lives over this word as an overleaf, and compare them?

Paul told Israel of old, an unconverted people, that they were hard-hearted and stiff-necked. The Lord gave that message directly.

Do you remember the story of Lot and Abraham when they had both become prosperous? Their fields were not large enough for their sheep. Abraham, with Godly wisdom, told his nephew to take his choice, either the plain with the fresh water or back up into the mountains, and he would take the other. I suppose Lot took the same that you and I would take. He looked out across that good prairie grass, and he took the level land where the going was easy.

Abraham was wise. He went up into the mountains where it was more difficult to keep the sheep together. It required more effort on his part. The going was difficult and the pastures were less verdant. But Abraham had this advantage, dear congregation. He was separated from the thing that has become somewhat repulsive to our ears, and that is "the world". We hear the comment that perhaps we should refrain from using this word, "world". The Scripture doesn't refrain from speaking of the comparison between the church and the world. We are speaking sometimes of unregenerated mankind, and sometimes of the world system. The world system always has been and always will be in opposition

to the family in the plan of the kingdom of God.

We need to recognize these things, do we not? That is why God spoke so plainly to Israel and told them what they should eat and what they should not eat, of the clean things and of the unclean things.

In the New Testament account of Peter's vision on the housetop at noonday, we understand that in the sheet that was let down from heaven were animals that were forbidden in Deuteronomy. The Lord said to Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common (unclean)." Acts 10:15. Peter was being told that whosoever will may come. "Then Peter . . . said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34.

Peter, being a Jew, had to hear clearly from God that Cornelius, a Gentile Roman army captain, would be welcome in the family of God because he had the same desire in his heart which Peter had. However, Peter didn't understand God's plan that there would be a New Testament church drawn from every nation, creed and color. But Peter was directed to Caesarea where he would find hearts willing to follow in the footsteps of Christ. That is true believing.

We see this same Spirit, do we not, in the eunuch who was on his way back to Ethiopia. The Scripture tells us that he had been to Jerusalem to worship. If you read in the Old Testament, you will find there that this man by the decree of the law would have been forbidden to come into the congregation forever because of being a eunuch.

Yet, Philip was moved by the Holy Spirit to go to the eunuch who was reading in his chariot. Philip asked the eunuch if he understood what he was reading. This man of dark skin said, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" Acts 8:31. After Philip had

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