

The Silver Lining

A LIGHT FOR BELIEVERS

VOLUME 34

FEBRUARY 1984

NUMBER 2

... but the greatest of these is ...

LOVE!

I COR. 13:13

Is "love" really the greatest? What makes "love" so important? Just recently we observed Valentine's Day when a lot of thoughts turned to candy hearts, romantic cards and various expressions of "love". Was the Apostle Paul thinking the same thoughts when he wrote to the Corinthians in I Cor. 13? No, it soon becomes obvious that any "love" that ranks higher than faith or hope is far, far more than a warm feeling about someone or something. The scripture soon takes us right to the source and definition of love. I John 4:8 and 16 tells us that God is love. The essential nature of our living, personal Father is love. He proved it by sending His only Son that we might live. I John 4:9. Well, what does that have to do with us down here in the real world? **EVERYTHING!**

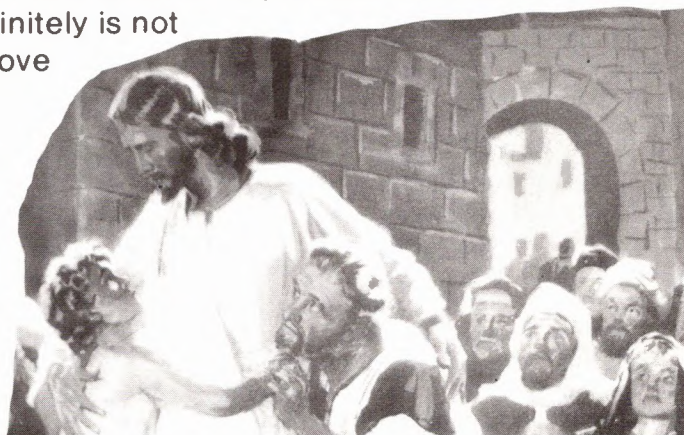
As Christians, we are directly commanded to "love others" no less than 55 times in the New Testament alone. Christ said that all the law and the prophets hung on the two commandments, to Love the Lord Your God... and your neighbor as yourself. (Matt. 22:34-40). Only by the fact that we have love one to another will men know that we are Christ's disciple. (John 13:35). Paul warned in I Corinthians 13:2-3 that even if we have the gift of prophecy, understood all knowledge, have all faith (to move mountains), give all our goods to the poor and give our body to be burned, but have not charity or love, we are Nothing!!

True biblical, Christlike love cannot be overrated. It is the greatest! The love that the Lord wants us to have and express is not an emotion, feeling, attraction or passionate drive. Let us understand that love more often involves our attitudes and action, in spite of how we feel. It was the love that Christ had for us in the garden that put Him through agony. Dying on the cross was the last thing He **felt like** doing!

Valentine's Day and its activities may soon be forgotten. That is the way the world moves on its way. Let us, the body of Christ, never take our eyes off the very essence of love, God Himself. And as it says in Hebrews 10:24, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto **love** and good works." Love may be painful at times. It definitely is not always fun or self-gratifying. That's what makes love what it is... the greatest!

Love suffereth long, and is kind; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth...

I Corinthians 13:4-8.



AID TO BRETHREN IN ROMANIA

Reports by returning visitors from Romania describe the shortages of food and other daily essentials as staggering and no signs to indicate any improvement in the near future. Our food package program, thus far, is working out pretty well. Confirmation cards by the Romanian postal service, bearing the signature of the recipient, the local postmark and date, indicate that the parcels arrive about 5 or 6 weeks after the order is mailed out. In addition, the many letters from the brethren mean so much to us. We've learned that they benefit greatly, though small the packages may be. Letters still keep coming almost daily. Many greetings are being sent to you, dear brethren and friends in America, with expressions of thanks and appreciation to God for His unfailing provisions through you, and for remembering them in time of their need and suffering.

Recently, by way of telephone conversation with one of the elder brothers in Romania, we were assured that the food shipments are very useful and helpful and most appreciated by young and old. Packages are assembled in Romania and are distributed and delivered by the Postal system tax and duty free. (Also a profitable deal for the Romanian government.) The brother said that he wished to personally thank everyone for their great work of charity in the name of our Lord, in behalf of the many who are not able to write a thank-you note. It is also a tremendous help to lift their spirits, to know that so many loving brethren stand at their side, though a great distance apart.

The brother also stated that lately other groups and individuals are getting involved in sending aid to Romania, some directly, and others indirectly, by way of Germany, Hungary or Yugoslavia. The government security organization is very suspicious and is more vigilant as they regard this as illegal and black market operations. The brother expressed a concern over this, as they too may be affected by it. He asked that we should avoid such transactions and to just continue following the same legal channels that we have in the past. He was assured that we have no intention of changing.

I also wish to thank you, dearly beloved, who in the past few months

and weeks have so generously responded to the needs of our dear less fortunate brethren, with your gifts of love. May God bless you all! (James 2:17-26.)

Excerpts from letters (translated):

"Dearly Beloved Brother: Peace, grace and blessings of all good gifts be granted unto you and your house! May the holy love of our God be with you and us all.

"Again we received several gift packages in our village. May the good Lord reward you richly for your deeds of kindness.

"Some one from you (America) visited here for about 20 minutes, but I can't remember his name. I hope you can read my writing as I am very ill and weak. I just got up to write to you as no one here can write in Hungarian. I am 87 (on Jan. 9) and suffer with a lung ailment. Very painful, but soon will be going home where there is no more pain, sorrow or suffering, but eternal peace and rest. If I offended anyone I ask for forgiveness.

"Now I close with loving greetings to you and all the beloved brethren there. May the good Lord direct your hearts unto all good things. Your very least brother-in-the-Lord,

Balog Janos (elder)

(NOTE: In 1968, Elder Bro. Balog and a group of worshippers were interrupted during services by the security people and heavily fined for holding unauthorized meeting, and for preaching without a license. He spent years in prison for his faith.)

"Dear Brethren: We thank God for you and for your goodness and love towards us by remembering the poor and needy. We dare not complain, for the apostle Paul teaches us that as long as we have food, shelter and clothing we should be content. But God knows best. We have our trust and confidence in Him. He cares and provides, and has never forsaken us. We received your gifts of love and may God reward you out of His storehouse.

"I close now, may the blessings of God and His grace be with you and keep you in good health and strength. Amen.

"We greet all the brethren there. Your least brother and His weak servant,

S. Biro"

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

Uriel Gehring — Jane Stieglitz

"When the days begin to lengthen, the cold begins to strengthen," this old adage has certainly proven true in the "Hoosier" state as we are being exposed to one frigid blast after another from the nostrils of "Old Man Winter." "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech or language, where their voice is not heard." Ps. 19:1-3. I believe the writer of these precious words included God's control of the element of weather. How far above our ways are His ways. The more we ponder the infinite wisdom of our Creator, the more we are made to realize our human insufficiencies, and our constant need for His help if we are to abide in His love. May we ever praise His name for His unspeakable gift (the grace of God) to the sons of men.

One Friday evening, both houses were invited to our Amish friends farm

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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IN MEMORY — EDITORS:
HENRY SOUDER
EDWARD SOUDER

home, and what an interesting evening it was. We watched the cows being milked by hand, and our staff and children were given the opportunity to milk a cow, which we took advantage of. This was a first for many of us. We saw the cows being fed baled hay and the pigs being fed ear corn. We also saw many beautiful horses — they are used for field work and transportation. We were treated to rides on a bob sled (drawn by two horses) and a one horse open sleigh; the weather and road conditions were just right for sledding. A delicious supper was served to about sixty of us. The Amish folks sang some German hymns, we sang some English hymns, then we all sang some hymns together in English. It was a most rewarding evening.

We have a new girl at the West House, Elizabeth A. She is thirteen years old and in the eighth grade. We

feel very close to "Beth" and are looking forward to many pleasant hours together.

One weekend a number of brethren from Princeville helped us saw and split wood for our fireplaces — the wood was taken from the timber on our farm. Our boys enjoyed working with the brethren.

Early in January we went to Bro. Nick Knobloch's farm near Princeville. Eighteen hogs were butchered that day and about seventy people helped cut up the meat. The pork was divided between the Peoria church home, the Home for the Handicapped, and the Children's Home. We brought home between 500-600 pounds of sausage, bacon, pork chops, and ham. It is delicious.

John and Jerry are excited about their involvement in wrestling at Leo Jr.-Sr. High School.

Debbie L. has left our home as of Christmas and is presently living with a foster parent at this address: 6607 Bandon Dr., Ft. Wayne, IN 46815. We wish Debbie the best in the future and appreciate having shared a part of her life over the past three years.

Thelma was thrilled to be able to paint Debbie's old room and move into a new room of her own.

The girls in the West House are excited about the challenge to learn how to sew from our single sister LeAnn Wulf.

Beth is already displaying her talents in the areas of journalism and hair-cutting.

We have seen a lot of growth and maturing in many of our children, recognizing that progress is not made in forceful leaps but in gentle strides.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

The quiet, pensive mood of many of the residents helps us to assess the rich depth of their personalities with wonderment. If they have a deficiency in some ways, it is often compensated for in ways almost beyond our understanding. (How does one feel when a resident, from whom you would least expect it, opens a door for you when there is a need?) It reminds us of Isaiah 30:15: "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

Sometimes it is felt that the dreariness and the inconvenience of winter days are legitimate reasons for complaint, but wisdom suggests another viewpoint. Looking downward at the frozen earth, it seems so peacefully quiet that we assume there is inactivity. Trees and bushes, standing mute, seem to have only loneliness for a companion. The truth is that while resting from the previous summer's labor, they are being rejuvenated from the depths of the earth to prepare them for the growth season ahead. Looking upward, however, great and powerful is the activity as always, though even this sometimes envelops us in quietness. Many times in the stillness between dusk and dawn, gentle snow wraps the earth in an ermine coat or designs windows with exquisite works of art, making the earth a most beautiful dwelling place.

Relating this to our residents, we learn that they, too, often in quietness, add beauty to our lives. John Milton, a famous English poet, for example,

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

"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

wrote most of his memorable poetry after he had become totally blind at the age of forty-four. Until his death twenty-two years later, he to whom the written word was so important, was dependant upon others to read to him. Nevertheless, he did not stop his creative work and his spirit rose to meet its challenge. In one of his famous sonnets, he wrote (of God): "Who best bear his mild yoke, they serve him best . . . They also serve who only stand and wait . . ."

We are grateful that during inclement weather, the residents can listen to our church services, which are wired in to our Home. Then, too, some of the Morton members conduct special Sunday School classes on Sunday for residents, one here at the Home and one at church. To all who take part in this effort, we express sincere thanks.

New to our Home and family is Sharilyn Ann Rowell, formerly of Tremont, IL, where she lived with her parents, Willis and Zenith Rowell. One sister, Nancy Dennis, and one nephew, complete her immediate family. Favorite food for Sharilyn is hamburgers, doughnuts and ice cream; among her favorite pastimes is playing ball. Birthday time for her is January 10. Welcome, Sharilyn! We look forward to many happy times together.

ALABAMA, ATHENS

Joan Schrenk

God surely provides us with a beautiful world, doesn't he. Sunday morning we awoke to a beautiful white countryside. This is very rare in Alabama and when it comes, we all enjoy it very much. As we travelled to church, it was so pretty to see the snow in the mountains and on the pines. As we came to the Tennessee River, the bridge was a complete glare of ice. Trucks could not make it and cars were turning about, but thanks to God we were able to cross safely.

We'd like to give a special thanks to our visitors who have stopped while they were traveling through to spend a Sunday with us. We appreciate it so much. May God bless you.

Bro. Henry Perry has not been feeling well. When it is so cold he often cannot get out to worship with us. He's our oldest member and we all look up to him and need his support. Our prayers are that he can soon be meeting with us again.

In our Wednesday night Bible study

we are discussing marriage, what the scripture has to say on the subject and how to keep a happy home. No matter how long we've been married, we all need to be reminded of this. As with all things, if we follow the Bible teachings we shall all reach a blessed end.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp — Sandy Bauer

Bro. Clarence Yackley and his wife, Sis. Linda (Phoenix), visited us Sunday, Jan. 8. It is always such a treat when we have visitors and this was no exception. We wish to thank Bro. Clarence and Sis. Linda for remembering us here in Tucson and heartily invite them to visit us again very soon. We all received a blessing from the word that was brought forth.

Saturday, Jan. 7, was the evening set aside for our annual Chili Supper. As always, it was a chance to fellowship with our brethren and a joy for all who attended.

Our Sis. Tillie Aldrich was hospitalized but is now out of the hospital and doing much better. We thank the Lord for the improvement we can see in Sis. Tillie. We pray she will be able to worship with us again soon.

Our winter visitors have started to arrive and our little church is growing for the winter months ahead. It is such an encouragement to see the benches filling more each week. We wish to extend a joyful welcome to our winter guests.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Mary Beth Klotzle

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

II Tim. 2:2

We're thankful the Lord answered our prayers and has filled the need of another servant to minister His Word. We pray God's strength and grace will be with Bro. Tom Luginbuhl as he takes this position.

It was a blessing to have Bro. Dale Strassheim (Milford) minister to us. The Lord truly knows our every need and each sermon can speak to every individual if a sincere prayer is offered for His blessing.

David and Paula DeLay were blessed with another daughter, Michelle Sherisse. Tiffany is

Michelle's sister, and Bro. Paul Messer and Gary and Betty DeLay (Arizona) are her grandparents.

Deborah Joy made Mark and Joyce Bush first-time parents. Grandparents are Bro. Glenn and Sis. Kay Hackenjoes. May God bless these new little lives and surround their families with His love and nearness.

Michael Messer (Bro. Carroll and Sis. Annabelle) entered the Navy this month. We pray that God will protect and guide him each day. His address is:

Michael J. Messer

56853699

CO. #009 RTC/NTC

San Diego, CA 92133

Note: In many areas in and around Altadena the 213 area code has been changed to 818. The Maywood area has remained 213.

COLORADO, DENVER

Marlene Leman

We were blessed with many visitors several Sundays in January when the National Western Stock Show was on. We truly enjoy every visitor that comes. These dear brothers, sisters and friends that come back each year for any occasion become a special part of our lives.

Bro. Harold and Sis. Ila Gramm (Morris) spent a weekend with us. We thank God for sending them. It had been about three months since we'd had a visiting minister, not that we don't appreciate Bro. Tom, but he does appreciate help. May God bless you, Bro. Harold, for your service to God and to us here in Denver.

Our little congregation is growing! We welcome Ed and Sis. Cindy Fischer from the Morton area into our midst. The Fischers have two children, Danielle and Joel. It's nice to have small children as a part of our church circle.

A brother mentioned recently after singing the beautiful hymn, "I will meet you in the morning, just inside the Eastern Gate . . ." (Gospel Hymns #815) that he had been to the stock show and agreed to meet someone at a certain gate. When he went to meet them he became confused as to which gate he had said. He had to think how terrible it would be if spiritually we'd become confused and not get to that "Eastern Gate". Dear ones, it behooves us to be careful what we read and listen to.

CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE Michelle Virkler

"To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the
Heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1

A time to be born . . . We rejoice with
Bro. Duane and Sis. Kay Reutter as
they welcome the arrival of their pre-
cious little daughter, Ashley. Grandpar-
ents are Bro. Alvin and Sis. Loretta
Baumgartner (Cissna Park) and Bill
and Sis. Anna Marie Reutter (East
Lynn).

"Bless me now, Loving Jesus; bless
me now!

Do Anoint me with Thy Pardon,
On Life's pathway be my guardian;
More and More, Oh Let Me Be,
Joy and Honor, Lord to Thee."

Zion's Harp #152

A time to love . . . "Trust in the Lord
with all Thine Heart; and lean not unto
Thine own understanding. In all thy
ways, acknowledge Him and He shall
direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5-6. With
joyful hearts Bro. Werner Kupfer-
schmid and Sis. Esther Luginbuhl's
engagement has been announced. We
wish them God's richest blessings as
the Lord has directed them to walk
life's pathway together. A February
wedding is planned.

A time to die . . . On January 2, our
hearts were deeply saddened in the
passing of our dear Bro. Paul Lanz at
the age of 92. His victory is won and
Bro. Paul has gone to his heavenly
home. All who had the privilege of
greeting him week after week shall miss
his smile, his warm sense of humor, his
Christian love and concern for all the
dear friends and members of our con-
gregation. He is survived by his wife,
Bertha Gerber Lanz; three sons, Elmer
(Ft. Wayne, IN), Howard (Arlington,
WA) and Richard (Tolland, CT); six
daughters, Eloise Webb, Alma Lugin-
buhl (Ellington), Leona DeCarli (Che-
ster), Delvene Starks (Walpole, NH),
Florence Kloter (Coventry) and Char-
lotte (Tolland); a brother, Charles
(Vernon); 45 grandchildren; 73 great-
grandchildren and 2 great-great-
grandchildren.

"Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death, I will fear
no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod
and Thy staff they comfort me."

Psalm 23:4

Frederick Isch, 75, passed away re-
cently at his home. He is survived by
his wife, Esther Frederick Isch; two
sons, Fred, Jr. (Tolland) and Judson
(Ellington); two brothers, Nicholas
(Wethersfield) and Edward (Elling-
ton); seven grandchildren and three
great-grandchildren. Our heartfelt
sympathy and prayers are extended to
the families and may God bless them
and enfold them in His arms of love and
strength.

A time to break down and a time to
build up . . . "Have mercy upon me, O
God, according to Thy loving-kind-
ness: According unto the multitude of
Thy tender mercies, blot out my trans-
gressions. Wash me thoroughly from
mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my
sin." Psalm 51:1, 2.

This Psalm is all too familiar to the
writer, since it was this Psalm which
brought me to question where my life
was headed. Was my life really pleasing
God who had suffered so much for me?
The Lord has once again pricked the
hearts of two very dear souls who have
turned to Him, Kim Niemann (daugh-
ter of Clifford Niemann) and Robert
Schneider (son of Bro. Wilbur and Sis.
Marge).

"Rejoice, the Father loves us here,
In sympathy remembers,
And all the gifts we need to cheer,
So graciously He renders,
What lack we then, Yet further,
When our Father has such pleasure
To share with us His treasure."

Zion's Harp #206

Our annual business meeting was
held on January 8. Our Longview Vil-
lage Retirement Home addition is pro-
gressing with six new apartments being
added.

A time to heal . . . We want to
especially remember in our prayers
those recently hospitalized or in the
care of physicians: Edward Luginbuhl,
Walter Welti, Otto Hany and Edward
Aberle.

As we enter God's house:

Do we seek God's help in opening
our hearts to receive a blessing?
Do we ask and pray to be fed from
His word?
Do we take for granted God's
servants?

Let us always remember that each
day is another Gift from Thee; we have
no promise of a tomorrow here on
earth.

"Then onward, sister, brother; Let
us go hand in hand,
With joy in one another, In this
bewildered land
Oh, let us childlike be; Let here no
strife divide us,
The angels walk beside us; God's
children, they and we."

Zion's Harp #185

FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE Billie Klopfenstein

Our members gathered on a Tues-
day evening recently to hear the annual
memorandum from our elder body.
Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann assisted
our Elder Bro. Joe Braker.

We have been blessed by many in-
spired messages this past month. Our
thanks and appreciation is extended to
Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend),
Bro. Jim Rinkenberger (Bluffton), Bro.
Homer Reineck (Toledo) as well as
Bro. Dale Eisenmann. We also appre-
ciated having Bro. Joe Braker and fam-
ily in our midst during the holiday
season.

On Jan. 8 our church was filled, as
many friends and relatives gathered to
witness the marriage of Sis. Faye Ger-
ber and Bro. Mike Hohulin (Roanoke).
A lovely reception was held in our
Fellowship Hall immediately following
the wedding service. The new couple
will reside in Champaign, IL. We wish
them God's blessings in their life to-
gether.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro.
Dave Mueller (Bluffton) on the death
of his father, Ambrose Mueller (Ft.
Lauderdale).

Get well wishes and prayers go forth
for Sis. Naomi Perrine who has been
hospitalized. She is a winter resident
from Peoria.

The Ft. Lauderdale church will be
hosting the annual winter elder meet-
ing in 1985. We look forward to having
these visitors see and enjoy our beau-
tiful south-Florida area and weather.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA Doris and Diane Rocke

A potluck dinner was held as a fare-
well to our dear Bro. John and Sis. Ann
Wagler who have moved to Eureka, IL.
We miss their Christian fellowship and
will look forward to hearing from them.
May God be with them.

We, here in Florida, would like to
thank our Bros. Bryan Stoller (Gridley,
IL), Ed Bahler (Remington, IN), Ed Alt
(Cissna Park, IL), Walter Anliker (Eur-

eka, IL) and their wives for all labors of love while visiting us this month.

Best wishes were extended to Bro. Fred and Sis. Elizabeth Knapp and Sis. Minnie Neust upon celebrating their 80th birthdays this past year.

Brad Christopher was transferred from Orlando to Idaho for further schooling. His new address is 1005 Cathryn Ave., Idaho Fall, ID 83401, phone 208-529-2022. He would welcome letters from anyone who would care to write.

"Dark shadows fall in the lives of us all." Our deepest sympathy is extended to the Saladie family in the passing of Betty's father, Theodore Verwey. In this past month his sufferings were shared by his dear wife and family. May God ever bless those who give of themselves during another's endurance of pain. His final hour came on Jan. 14. Services were held at McGriff Chapel in St. Petersburg, Jan. 16 by Bros. Doug Sabo and Glenn Price. His wife, Clarabelle and Betty and George Saladie accompanied the body to Windsor, Ontario where he was laid to rest in Victoria Memorial Cemetery. Precious memories, how they linger . . . Gospel Hymns #408a. May these memories be a comfort to the dear family.

Louise Moser (Roy) was recovering from surgery when she suffered a massive heart attack. She has been in intensive care for the past week and her condition remains about the same. Her family has been here and our prayers have not ceased as she needs the prayers of those she loves. May they be strengthened from above, feeling the nearness of our Lord.

Fredona Shiffer has been attending services with us again. We are so thankful to see her again and we can see her happiness to be with us.

We welcome our winter residents and visitors as they vacation in the sunny south.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA

Nancy Foltz — Charmin Sellers

To move on from our initial conversion to spiritual maturity, we need to use the items listed below:

G - Go to God in prayer daily

R - Read God's Word daily

O - Obey God moment by moment

W - Witness for Christ by your life and words

T - Trust God for every detail of your life

H - Holy Spirit: Allow God to control

and empower your daily life

We wish to express our appreciation to Bro. Byron Stoller (Gridley) for coming to minister to us on January 8. Our congregation was small, but a blessing was received by all.

We invite all visitors to come and worship with us every second and fourth Sunday at the Ramada Inn, I-75, Marietta, GA. For information, contact Don Sellers at 404-923-0721 or Nancy Foltz at 404-451-9191.

ILLINOIS, BLOOMINGTON - NORMAL

Shirley Denick — Jan Gudeman

This month we were blessed by two visiting ministers, Bro. William Dotterer (Phoenix) and our Elder Bro. Dan Koch (Tremont). We thank these brothers for bringing us His precious Word.

"When He made a little child — then God created love." On January 12 little Kelsi Jo Nussbaum was welcomed by her parents, Bro. Kevin and Sis. Joan. Grandparents are Bro. Byron and Sis. Neola Nussbaum (Forrest) and Bro. Henry and Sis. Loree Plattner (Sabetha). Another precious little bundle from heaven arrived on January 14 at the home of Bro. Ron and Sis. Louise Walder. Caleb Christopher is his name. His grandparents are Bro. Dale and Sis. Dorothy Walder (Cissna Park) and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Lucille Unsicker (Peoria). May God smile down and be ever near these new parents and direct them as they guide those little feet upon the paths of love.

Sis. Margaret Walter had surgery recently on her hand. May God restore new strength to her according to His will.

Sis. Dorothy Harsh was back in church worshipping with us after many weeks of recuperating at home from a broken leg. It was good to see her again.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD

Shirley Kieser

But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. I Cor. 13:13. This is the month the world invites us to send cards to express love. It's really not a bad thing to do — to remind dear ones how much we love and appreciate them. For what thanks can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account? I Thess. 3:9.

Visiting ministers and families were Bro. Ken Knapp and Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor). Our thanks and may God bless them.

Rebekha Sue is the newest member of Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill Stoller's family. She is welcomed by three sisters and two brothers as well as grandparents, Bro. Elmer and Sis. Rosetta Stoller (Forrest) and Bro. Dave and Sis. Beulah Ehnle (Princeville).

After extensive knee surgery, Mark Knobloch, son of Bro. Jack and Sis. Nancy, is home and as it will take some time for full recovery, our thoughts and prayers are with him.

Thanks and appreciation to our Elder Bro. Dave Kieser for his message and assistance at the annual meeting. Bro. Loris Stisser is our new trustee and Bros. Don Knobloch and Richard Tanner are new ushers.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Kathy Schlatter

As 1984 settles into a routine, let us be careful that our prayers do not become fixed. We would not want to be like the little child who nightly prayed, "Dear God, please keep away the bad dreams, and let me have a rabbit." Night after night he pleaded for a rabbit. Finally that splendid day came when his parents consented, and they brought home a rabbit! Yet that night he again prayed, "Dear God, please keep away the bad dreams, and let me have a rabbit." His mother was obviously taken aback. The lesson for us, I think, and for myself first of all, is to be more deeply and thoughtfully prayerful so that our God is not bombarded by half-memorized prayers of repetition from us!

Those ministers who, by their presence and words of the Spirit, enriched our worship, were Bro. Ken Eisenmann (Cissna Park, IL), Bro. Arnie Gerst (Taylor, MO), Bro. Carl Wyss (Washington, IL), and Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle (Shioda, Japan). Bro. Willis spoke of the elder conference in Detroit and passionately besought us to see our elders as they are, humble servants of the Lord, thrust into authority and made accountable, crying on one another's shoulders over situations within their flocks. We need to react to their guidance as faithful followers, questioning if we must, but in a respectful manner, constructively, with all prayer and wisdom, (which is) ". . . pure, then peaceable, gentle, and

easy to be intreated . . ." James 3:17

The angels in heaven rejoiced, the church was strengthened, and another soul gave his testimony and was baptized. Elder Bro. Willis aided our Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann in proving and baptizing our new brother Randy Meyer. We were much blessed by this common beginning, the door by which we all came into the fold. As we were reminded, we declared our intention to complete salvation's journey within this church; we were not just passing through. The church dinner with Randy's family concluded an especially memorable weekend. We expect that he will be an asset to the Phoenix fellowship, where he is returning to work in construction.

Bro. Jim Lang has replaced Bro. Boyd Metzger as trustee. We owe so much to Bro. Boyd for his hours of labor and concern. May the Lord grant him his reward "pressed down . . . and running over . . ." Luke 6:38 We look forward to Bro. Jim's God-given talents at use in this special capacity for the church.

Sis. LaBeth Metz and Bro. Dale Dunham, (Alto, MI) through the work of the Lord, are engaged and hope to be married in March. Though we find it hard to think of losing Sis. LaBeth, we rejoice that the Lord has given them to one another, for spiritual support and companionship, as well as all other. And we know that, as a thoughtful convert said, they are not only right for each other now, but the Lord picks two people who will grow and change together.

Sis. Heidi Haerr, lately from Bloomington, IL, is working in the claims department of a large insurance company in the Sears Tower. We welcome her back to Chicago (she was about three when she left) and hope she will feel that she truly is "back home."

Bro. Phil Feldman and Sis. Miriam Lockwood were hospitalized. We wish for Bro. Phil a quick recovery as we include him and his family in our prayers. Dear Sis. Miriam of high age, we wish strength to whisper, "Him, Him, Him," however long she is yet to travel on this earth. We offer our prayers for her and our thanks to her family for their years of tender care.

"When" is such a little word, but it connects events, causes anticipation. Many times, however, when a loved one dies, it seems to be such an unbelievable word. We pledge our support

and sympathy, our prayers and tears to Sis. Esther Hay in the sudden loss of her daughter Mary Lu Roins. We also express our love for Jill and Steve Roins, Sis. Esther's grandchildren, and Bill and Mary Pat Hay, Sis. Esther's son and daughter-in-law, for we care that they grieve. May the Lord shoulder their burdens and give them healing balm.

There is so much in one Sunday's sermons. We were reminded not to shut up ourselves from feeling for the rest of the world. We shouldn't "write others off." We should be more patient and willing to open our hearts to obedience — love in action. We have the "love of Jesus down deep in the depths of our hearts." It should come welling up and overflow to others, that we may "pass on" our joy. We must not let our ability to reach out become constricted, squeezed. ". . . be ye also enlarged." II Cor. 6:13.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

Wilma Walder — Joan Waldbeser

Our congregation has again been blessed with a new baby boy, Brian James. Born on December 28, he brings happiness to his parents, Bro. Arlan and Sis. LaNae Rudin, and sisters, Erica and Traci. Grandparents are Alvin and Dorothy Rudin and Bro. Lester and Sis. Vera Laukhuf (Latty).

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Helen Knapp, Bro. Gerald Rudin and Sis. Twylla Beer. Sis. Twylla has improved considerably but still is in need of our prayers.

Our annual meeting was held January 4, filling our various offices. May God bless and provide for those who give of their time and talents and are willing to serve.

Our mid-winter conference of elders was held the middle of January. We are thankful for their efforts and the care and concern they have for their flocks. We were pleased Elder Bros. Art Nohl (Morris) and Sam Huber (Sabetha) decided to spend the weekend with us. Bro. Art said he had never walked into one of our churches across the land where he could not feel that God was there. We were exhorted to stand fast, to appreciate our church and to realize the importance of prayer and being a good light. We were reminded that our thankfulness to God should move us to become more righteous, not because we have to, but simply out of a deep and abiding love for our having been

rescued from the state of sin. Many good thoughts and teachings came forth during this day and it behooves us to be not only hearers, but doers of God's precious Word.

Our cup was surely filled to overflowing when we gathered together that evening and listened to the reading of the conference letter. We thank Bro. Art Bahler (Fairbury) who came to assist Bro. Steve in this work. We were reminded of our duties and responsibilities as God's children. May we strive to walk humbly, uprightly, obediently and joyfully in God's service.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Tammy Knapp — Kay Roth

Add all the love of all the parents and the total sum cannot be multiplied enough times to express God's love for me, the least of His children.

Apples of Gold

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. Acts 6:4. We are so thankful for our dear elder brothers who so faithfully serve us. We pray that they felt the love and unity of the brotherhood as they gathered together for the mid-year conference.

The engagement of Sis. Kim McClure (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sharon) to Bro. Randy Leman of Roanoke (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Marge) has been announced. May the Lord be mightily by their sides as they plan their lives together.

Those hospitalized this month were Sis. Elizabeth Zobrist, Bros. Sam Zimmerman and Virgil Funk. May we always remember these loved ones in our prayers, as their needs are special during their illness.

The summary for 1983 includes six births, five marriages, one engagement, two baptisms and three converts.

Reminder: Silver Lining dues (\$6.00) will be collected in March for our congregation.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Ruth Ann Getz

When we consider the omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience of the Lord, it overwhelms our soul. Then, when we consider that such a one has such pitiful love for fallen mankind, (not a select few, but all) we are greatly humbled. We feel compelled to bow down before this awesome Lord and

God in reverence. The Word confirms the power, presence and knowledge of our Lord repeatedly. Isaiah 50:2, 3 says, "Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness and I make sackcloth their covering." St. Matthew 18:20 tells of His continual attendance, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Finally, Proverbs 8:14-16 gives us demonstration of His omniscience, "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." Paul told the Athenians at Mars hill (Acts 17:28), "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being;..." How foolish that any would deny that power! Oh, that all men would seek out the scripture, learn of this power, Jesus, and be converted.

We have experienced the omnipotence of the Lord in a very real way this past month as a number in our community have been taken out of this life into eternity. When our loved ones lie cold in death we are keenly aware that there is a power greater than ourselves and we are comforted to know of the omnipresence of that power. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20). May those who are experiencing gnawing grief over their departed loved ones have faith to lay hold of this truth, thereby alleviating their heavy hearts.

Sis. Elizabeth Anliker, 80, passed away December 22 after long-term disability. To her sisters, Sis. Mabel Anliker and Sis. Dorothy Schambach, we wish to extend our sympathy. May they be blessed for the patient vigil they kept over Elizabeth.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Matthew Hein in the passing away (December 25) of his brother, Robert Hein. May he find comfort in turning to the Lord.

Esther Batt, 64, passed away December 28, and the richness of God's mercy was certainly made manifest when he bestowed upon her a peaceful heart before God and man just prior to her death. The sting of death is diminished when the confidence can be felt that God has engulfed that one into His

love.

Gail Kellenberger has suffered the loss of her dear mother, Gail Creed, who passed away January 3. We know she will be greatly missed by her whole family, because their affectionate bond could be seen and felt by us.

Bro. Bob Cox is bereaved in the death of his grandmother, LaVerna Cox, 85, who passed away January 4. His grandmother raised Bob as a young lad, and so here, too, was a special bond of love.

Bro. Jonathon Steffen, 87, passed away in the Apostolic Christian Nursing Home in Eureka on January 4. We are thankful for his Christian testimony to all of us here in Elgin where he lived most of his life. We know his children hold many dear memories of their father and we are glad that it can be such. May they all feel the comfort of God's love.

Sis. Rose Goll has received many loving wishes from friends and relatives over the Christmas season and feels unable to respond to each of these people but would like to express her appreciation and thanks for all those kind deeds.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Kathy L. Rocke

The sheep in the Shepherd's arm looks only into the face of the Shepherd and not to the wolves nearby seeking to harm him.

Wings of Silver

Our hearts are rejoicing for two souls who have turned to the Lord. They are Harold Wettstein (late Bro. Charles and Sis. Martha) and Mike Leman (Bro. Gerald and Sis. Velma). May God grant them grace to do His will as they walk the way of the Master.

Bro. Dale and Sis. Sue Zimmerman are thankful for Trudy Lynn, born on Dec. 22, 1983. Rachel is glad for a little sister. Grandparents are Bro. Sam and Sis. Gladys Schmidgall and Bro. Earl and Sis. Elsie Zimmerman. May God bless this little family.

We are thankful for our visiting ministers this month. Elder Bro. Ed Frank (LaCrosse), Bros. Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville), Bill Gudeman (Elgin, IL), and Harold Schmidgall (Gridley, IL) brought us many good teachings of the Holy Word.

January 1 was a special day for Sis. Brenda Zimmerman (Bro. Leland and

Sis. Lorine) and Bro. Fred Leman of Forrest (Bro. Bob and Sis. Donna) as they announced their engagement.

Loren Zimmerman (Bro. Earl and Sis. Elsie) and Mary Hartman (Bro. Gene and Sis. Carrie Lou) of Congerville also made their engagement known. May God bless both these couples as they make plans for the future.

Bro. Mike Schmidgall and Sis. Dianne Zimmerman exchanged wedding vows on Jan. 8. Their parents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Dorothy Schmidgall and Bro. Earl and Sis. Elsie Zimmerman, all of Eureka. May God be their constant companion as they walk down the road of life together.

We have had some dear ones in the hospital. Bro. Paul Tanner and Sis. Anna Wettstein (Bro. Ben) were both surgical patients, but we are thankful to report they are both home. We pray that God's healing hand will be upon them.

Bro. Jonathan Steffen from the "Home" passed away. His services were held in Elgin, IL on Jan. 7.

Praying is to the soul what breathing is to the body!

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

Carol Bazzell — Joann Zehr

As a new year is beginning, we are reminded of how time passes on and we are nearer to Christ's coming. May we all strive to do our part that the blessings of God might be upon us.

New Year's Day was the wedding of Sis. LaRae Zehr and Bro. Dewayne Dill. Their parents are Bro. Warren and Sis. Dolores, and Sis. Barbara Dill (Tremont). May God bless them as they make their home in Champaign. Adding to the blessings of their special day were visiting ministers, Elder Bro. Steve Rinkenberger (Cissna Park), Bros. Glenn Dill and Charles Sauder (Tremont) and Art Baurer (Princeville).

We thank all of our visiting brethren the past month, including Bros. Earl Banwart (West Bend), Paul Gasser (Akron, OH), Roy Ehnle (Bradford) and Earl Kilgus (Remington).

Two homes have been blessed with bundles from heaven. Little Joel Douglas was born December 19 to Bro. John and Sis. Rosemary Hartman. His family who welcomes him are two sisters, Carmen and Janelle, and three brothers, Mark, Ryan and Grant. Grandparents are Bro. Eli and Sis. Della Meiss

and Bro. Vernon and Sis. Pat Hartman. Also, we rejoice with Bro. Ben and Sis. Carol Kafer as they become parents. Christopher Benjamin was born Jan. 16. His grandparents are Duane and Pat Kafer and Bro. Bud and Sis. Sharon Kelson. Great-grandparents are Bro. Walter and Sis. Perceda Moser.

The new year has brought both joy and sadness as two families have experienced sorrow. Wesley Woodward, 82, was called from this life Jan. 1. We extend our sympathy to his wife, Sis. Carrie, and his children, Lloyd and Bud (Fairbury), Irene Sandusky (South Bend, IN), Lillianne Carpenter (Oklahoma City, OK) and Bonnie Schroeder (Pontiac).

John Mehrkens, 63, formerly of Fairbury, passed away Jan. 8. Surviving are his wife, Miriam (Leonhardt) of Pontiac, Joseph (Pontiac), J. D. (Leesburg, GA), Paul (Mackinaw) and Michael (Wytheville, VA). May God be with each of these families as our thoughts and prayers go out to them.

We want to extend our best wishes to Bro. Eli and Sis. Della Meiss as they have recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Their children are Bros. Marion and Carlos, and Sisters Dolores Zehr and Rosemary Hartman.

Sis. Elsie Denick wishes to thank all who have remembered her during the Christmas season. Being shut in, she appreciated all that has been done in her behalf, including the carolers, cards and gifts.

As the year has come to a close, we report that we have had 10 births, 11 deaths, 3 baptisms, 2 souls added to the fold and 4 weddings.

ILLINOIS, FORREST

Jan Bachtold — Kathy Leman

We thank Bro. Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin), and Bro. Duane Kilgus (Fairbury) for their visits and bringing us the precious Word of Life.

Hospital patients were Sis. Viola Metz (Bro. Chris), Sis. Sarah Koehl, Sis. Janita Koehl (Bro. Leroy), Sis. Peggy Young (Bro. Terry), and Andy Metz. May we always be mindful of those that have to spend time in the hospital.

Funeral services were held for Ed Haab on Jan. 13, conducted by Bro. Clarence Kachelmuss. He is survived

by two brothers, Sam and Chris, and one sister, Carrie Moser.

Our congregation has suffered a loss in the departing of our dear Bro. Joseph Kaisner. He has so faithfully served us in the ministry for many years and has been a pillar in the church after stepping down from his minister duties. He passed away suddenly on Jan. 13 and is now "asleep in Jesus". Bro. Perry held the funeral services on Jan. 15. His wife Ida survives along with four sons, Bro. Merle (Fairbury), Larry (Forrest), Bro. Leon (Peoria), and Bro. Hartzell (Detroit, MI), and four daughters, Sis. Alma Jean Schmidgall (Bro. Dave), Sis. Janet Farney (Bro. Roger), Sis. Lou Ida Steffen (Bro. Rich), all of Forrest, and Helen Follmer (Dan) of California. We extend our sympathy to both of these families.

The engagement of Bro. Fred Leman (Bro. Robert and Sis. Donna) to Sis. Brenda Zimmerman (Bro. Leland and Sis. Lorene) of Eureka was made known. We wish them God's blessings.

We extend congratulations also to Sis. LaBeth Metz (Chicago), daughter of Bro. Joe Metz, and Bro. Dale Dunham (Alto, MI) on their engagement. May God be with them as they plan their future together.

Bro. Bob Anliker (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy) and Sis. Linda Steidinger (Bro. Ivan and Sis. Kathryn) exchanged wedding vows on Jan. 8.

Also, Sis. Trish Gerber (Bro. Earl and Sis. Esther) and Bro. Martin Steidinger (Bro. Maurice and Sis. Alma) Fairbury, were united in Holy matrimony on Jan. 22. May God richly bless these two couples as they embark on a new way together in the Lord.

In the year 1983 we have had four deaths, thirteen births, and one baptism.

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Bev Joos

Isn't winter wonderful?! Those people who would immediately think of shoveling driveways, cleaning messy boot tracks off freshly scrubbed kitchen floors, drying soggy mittens by the heat register, and blowing runny, drippy noses each time one thaws out, would definitely not agree with this expression. However, what else can compare to awakening to view every inch of our landscape heavily blanketed with an unblemished, pure, and sparkling winter coat. Such purity could come

only from Heaven above. God blankets each of us with His loving protection and direction. One certainly feels God's control as a winter blizzard slows our hectic, rushing world. Events are cancelled and one is so thankful to remain in our warm homes. Winter not only shows God's masterful strength, but also His artistry. How amazingly fluttering flakes of snow can sculpt the largest pile of junk into interesting mounds of white elegance.

Although wintry winds whirled about us on Dec. 28, inside our Goodfield church there was a special warmth. Not only were two hearts being united but two families were becoming one. Many prayers were answered as our dear Sis. Carol Hohulin became the wife of Bro. Dale Gerber (Bluffton). Assisting our Elder Bro. Ed Hohulin in this ceremony was Bro. Carroll Gerber (Bluffton), a brother of the groom. His prayer seemed to sum up all of our deepest wishes for this very special couple:

"Lord of wonders, Lord of lights
Hear my prayer this winter night
Lord of beauty, Lord of grace
Help us run our Heavenly race
Lord of faith, Lord of hope, Lord of love
Help us reach the Heavens above . . ."

We were favored with two additional visiting ministers this past month, Bro. Steve Martin (Eureka) and Bro. Ted Witzig, (Morton).

"Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Hymns of Zion #210

On the weekend of Jan. 15, our new sister in faith, Lisa Huette told us of the need for a change in her life. May God always grant her protection and guidance in her spiritual growth.

Our prayerful hearts extend deep sympathy to Sis. Betty Wiegand in the loss of her father, Bro. Jonathan Steffen. May God strengthen her in this time of sorrow.

It is our prayer that God will ever be at the bedside of those who suffer pain. Bro. Chris Hohulin, Nettie Knapp and little Brent Knapp, infant son of Bro. Bruce and Sis. Mary Knapp, were hospital patients this past month.

Raymond Wagner wishes to thank

everyone for the prayers, cards, and kind deeds while he was hospitalized.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY
Carol Klopfenstein

Day after day, our lives go on,
 Then suddenly time stands still
 With the sudden loss of a loved one,
 Though we know that it is God's will.
 The tears come fast and the hurt is
 great,

And the reason we just can't see,
 Then the Lord takes our hand,
 and we understand,
 That He plans for eternity.

Author Unknown

Sis. Jean Hodel, 56, passed on to her eternal reward on Dec. 27. We are glad that she was able to spend Christmas with her family and they have many precious memories that linger and can give them comfort when they feel the loneliness of her absence. As the ministering brother mentioned at the funeral service, we think of the attributes of the virtuous woman as a fitting description of Sis. Jean: "She looketh well to the ways of her household . . . in her tongue is the law of kindness." (Prov. 31) Our sympathy is extended to her husband, Bro. Roy, her daughters, Sis. Victoria Hodel (Washington), Sis. Cynthia Stoller and Sis. Colleen Ringger, both of Gridley; her sons, Bro. Daryl and Bro. Dennis, both of Gridley; and her brothers, Bro. Loren and Bro. Ralph Schlipf, both of Gridley.

Bro. Richard and Sis. Kathy Schlipf welcome their new daughter, Kristi Lynn, who was born Jan. 14. Kristi has a brother, Robert, and a sister, Katy. Her grandparents are Carl and Lola Schlipf (Gridley) and Elder Bro. Jesse and Sis. Shirley Beer (Milford).

Our hospital patients have been Sis. Verena Kuerth, Sis. Naomi Grusy, Karin Kiefer (Bro. Larry and Sis. Barb) and Neal Wettstein (Bro. Lyle and Sis. Linda).

We appreciated the visits of ministering Bro. Robert Miller of Portland, OR, and Bro. Marvin Leman of Bradford.

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Marcia Metz

As we begin a new semester, we wish to welcome the transfer students who have joined us here at ISU. They are Brent Hanson, Ree Taufer, Sis. Val

Hess, Sis. Tammy Knapp, Sis. Audrey Martin and Bro. Greg Haab. As we once again feel the challenges that college presents, may we ever continue to support, encourage and pray for one another.

This semester Bible Study is held in Schroeder 244 on Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. We appreciate everyone who comes and supports us.

ILLINOIS, MORTON

Phyllis Farney — JoAnn Roecker

We welcome Henry Huette into the family of God. Bro. Henry gave his testimony of faith and we witnessed his baptism on Dec. 24. May the Lord richly bless Bro. Henry as he now walks the narrow pathway of life.

Sis. Till Kaiser has moved. Her new address is 410 East Jefferson Street, Morton, IL, 61550. May God bless her and her son, Bro. George, in their new home.

We are rejoicing with Sis. Kay Knobloch (Bro. Robert and Sis. Marvel) and Bro. Scott Sinn (Bro. Carl and Sis. Mary Ellen), Tremont, IL, as they were joined in hand and heart on Jan. 8. May Christ be the head of their home. We wish them God's blessings as they now walk life's pathway together.

We wish to extend our sincere sympathy to Sis. Alvina Zimmerman upon the passing of her sister, Sis. Elsie Hess (Peoria, IL). May God comfort her family and friends.

Sis. Mary Ann Bertschi (Bro. Rudy and Sis. Irene) and Bro. Steven Zimmerman (Russell and Sis. Alvina) exchanged their marriage vows before God and many witnesses on Jan. 15. May God bless them.

Let us remember in prayer our loved ones who are shut-in or ill. Time grows long for those who cannot go in and out.

We had twenty-one baptisms, nine weddings, four births, and twenty-one funerals in 1983.

We wish to thank Bros. Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL), Willis Wiegand (Congerville, IL) and Charles Sinn (Ft. Scott, KS) for ministering God's Holy Word unto us. May God richly bless them for their labors of love.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA

Susi Herman — Margo Marx

Through the miracle of birth a beautiful baby girl was born to our Bro. Ken and Sis. Pam Ober. Anna Christine is fortunate to come into a loving family, joining two brothers, Kenny and

Christopher, and one sister, Angela. Her grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Ethel Waibel and John and Pat Ober of Peoria.

Those hospitalized this month are: Sis. Mary Bertchtold, Sis. Sophie Hybarger, Sis. Martha Elsasser, Sis. Eva Baurer, Bro. Ray Wiegand and Bro. Elvin Domnick. We pray for the recovery of each one.

We extend our sympathy to the families of these loved ones who passed away: Sis. Carrie Stiegle, Sis. Elsie Hess and Harlan Schaefer. May God richly bless and comfort their families and friends.

We would like to thank Bro. Bill Dotterer (Phoenix, AZ) for being with us and ministering the Word.

At our monthly hymn sing we rejoiced in hearing the voices of our Bible class, young members, and their guests. We want to thank our Bro. Dean Ramseyer for doing a fine job in leading this young group in songs of praise to our Lord.

We apologize for failing to mention these few things in our Silver Lining.

We welcome Sis. Mary Ann Thiems into our congregation who has moved here from Morris, MN, to be with her sister, Sis. Viola Messner. May she find a special blessing in worshipping with us.

The engagement of Sis. Jane Leuthold and Bro. Jim Rieker was announced. The parents are Fred and Sis. Norma Rieker and Bro. John and Sis. Shirley Leuthold. We wish them the best gifts in life that only God can give.

It was a joy and a privilege to witness the testimonies and baptisms of Bro. Bill Waibel, Bro. Jeff Waibel, and Sis. Carol Messner. We welcome them into our congregation and wish them God's grace and a special closeness to Him.

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

Arlene and Arlys Martin

Through the Holy Spirit we can have the power and ability to have peace in every circumstance.

Visiting ministers have been Bros. Willis Ehnle of Shioda, Japan; Don Manz (Junction, OH), Roy Ehnle and Kenneth Dietz (Bradford).

Marsha Rumbold and Chris Stickling announced their engagement on Dec. 24. Parents are Russell and Sis. Roma Rumbold (Princeville) and Ben and Sharon Stickling (Peoria).

Ty Matthew Endress was born on

Dec. 20 to Bro. Jerry and Sis. Luann Endress. Clint, Troy, and Brett welcome another boy to their family. Grandparents are Sis. Mildred Endress (Princeville) and Bro. Dean and Sis. Betty Nussbaum (Forrest).

Those on the sick list are Sis. Lucy Woertz, Sis. Elizabeth Stoller, and Annette Streitmatter.

The following was determined at our business meeting on Jan. 4. Church trustee: Bro. Gene Siebenthal replaces Bro. Gene Herrmann. Ushers: Bros. Fred Christ and Erik Givens replace Bros. Kenny Gehrig and Larry Baer. Fellowship Hall Trustees: Bros. Jordan Feucht and Don Streitmatter replace Bros. Erik Givens and Bill Streitmatter. Song leader contact: Bro. Lawrence Wagenbach replaces Bro. Richard Seidel. Hail aid contact: Bro. Jordan Feucht replaces Bro. Dave Ehnle. Custodian: Bro. Dave Ehnle replaces Bro. Allan Herrmann.

These articles were left at our fellowship hall: Man's Van Heusen Windbreak short coat, size 40, black plaid, fur lined and fur collar. Man's Jack Nicklaus tan unlined jacket, size medium or large. Tie, Surrey collection, brown with tan and gold stripes.

On Nov. 27 these two articles were left in a blue Chevelle at church: Man's western style, short sleeve shirt, size 16½, Wrangler, plaid (white background). Man's navy corduroy pants, size 38x34.

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

Joyce Hodel — Carol Rumbold

It has been said that having a baby is a journey through the land of love. How true! Randy and Laurie Ferrero are happy to have Brittney Rose in their family. Brooke and grandparents, Bro. Dave (the late Sis. Fran) Fischer and Bro. Frank and Sis. Donna Ferrero (Peoria) enjoy her too. Brittney was born Dec. 27.

Among our shut-ins is Bro. Otto Scherer (Sis. Clara), who hasn't been able to come to church for several months. Let us remember all of our shut-ins with prayers and visits, especially during these confining winter months.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Linda Steffen in the death of her father.

We wish God's guidance to Bro. Randy Leman (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Marge) and Sis. Kim McClure (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sharon, Congerville) as

they plan their future marriage in the Lord.

As this month we have had no ministers visit with us from another congregation, we want to take this opportunity to extend long overdue appreciation to our home ministers who so unselfishly give of themselves Sunday after Sunday. We are thankful for their patience with us, the fine examples that they and their faithful wives are, and for the time that they give to all of us, whether it be at family weddings, funerals, hospital visits or counseling new converts. And last but not least, for the time they spend communing with God and in scripture study, which is to our benefit. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. II Timothy 3:16-17.

1983 has given the Roanoke congregation 23 births, 6 baptisms, 5 marriages among our members, 4 among our friends and 7 deaths. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Ecc. 3:1.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

Dorothy Wagenbach Carolyn Bolliger

We were recently reminded to evaluate our prayer life. Are we really praying as sincerely as we ought? I think it gave us all much work to do. It was brought out how we should pray more sincerely for our friends, that they might find their soul's salvation.

Bro. Richard Steiner was hospitalized again with more surgery on his leg. He is recuperating at home at this time. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family.

We are glad to have Sis. Royaldine Hodel back in our midst again. Sis. Royaldine and Bro. Robert wish to thank everyone for the food, visits and cards while she was sick. May God bless you all.

The engagement of Sarah Gschwind and Dale Knapp has been announced. Parents of the couple are Aaron and Iris Gschwind (Mackinaw) and Bro. Glenn and Sis. Jeanette Knapp (Congerville).

We wish a belated welcome to Sis. Sandy Lane and family. We are happy to have them worship with us as they

were formerly from the Peoria congregation.

Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville) was here to help at the proving of Kurt Pflederer (Bro. Chris and Sis. Ruth) on Jan. 14. Bro. Dale Frank (Oakville) was also with us. The following day Kurt was welcomed into our congregation as our brother. It was indeed a blessed weekend. We wish to thank the dear brothers for visiting us and giving of themselves.

Also a word of sympathy to Sis. Lydia Brunner and the Elmer Brunner family in the passing of their brother-in-law, John Oyer.

ILLINOIS, URBANA Cheryl Joos

"When thou passest through the waters"

Deep the waves may be and cold,
But Jehovah is our refuge,
And His promise is our hold;
For the Lord Himself hath said it,
He, the faithful God and true:
"When thou comest to the waters
Thou shalt not go down, BUT
THROUGH."

Seas of sorrow, seas of trial,
Bitterest anguish, fiercest pain,
Rolling surges of temptation
Sweeping over heart and brain —
They shall never overflow us
For we know His word is true;
All His waves and all His billows
He will lead us safely through.

Threatening breakers of destruction,
Doubt's insidious undertow,
Shall not sink us, shall not drag us
Out to ocean depths of woe;
For His promise shall sustain us,
Praise the Lord, whose Word is true!
We shall not go down, or under,
For He saith, "Thou passest
THROUGH."

Annie Johnson Flint

Our dear Sis. Ethel Wiegand remains in the hospital but is daily gaining strength. God has helped Bro. Dave and Sis. Ethel pass through the troubled waters as they slowly mend. We are thankful to have Bro. Dave Wiegand in our midst and look forward to when he can bring forth God's Word. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18.

We always appreciate our visiting ministers but are especially grateful for their support to Bro. Virg in this past month. Bro. Ken Weertz and Bro. Steve Rinkenberger (Cissna Park) and Bro. Kevin Knapp (Bloomington) were very willing to bring us God's Word. May they continue to be blessed for their spirit of love.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON
Lily Pfaffmann — Elaine Winkler

"Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:6, 7

How easy it is to be caught up in the worries of the day. How easy to carry our burdens on our back rather than give them to Jesus, Who is waiting to take them and to give us His incomprehensible peace. The passage says to be "careful" or "full of care" about nothing, but to thankfully (yes, even in trials and heartaches) give our requests to God. And in what more capable hands could we give them! "O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!" Hymns of Zion #161.

We were privileged to have Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) minister unto us this month, and we are thankful for his time and labor in the Lord.

Also, we are so grateful to the Lord that He has answered our prayers, and that Bro. Rusty Plattner is back with us after a long and trying surgery and recovery. Sis Sally and Troy are happy to have him home and feeling better, and our prayers join with theirs, that God's healing hand will continue to abide!

INDIANA, BLUFFTON
Etta Steffen
Sue Neuenschwander

God has blessed three families with His miracles. Tom and Pam Livingston welcome into their home Hans, born on Dec. 18. Grandparents are Bro. Harold and Sis. Louella Aeschliman.

Bro. Greg and Sis. Bev Meyer are the parents of Kole Anthony born on Dec. 27. Grandparents are Bro. Dale and Sis. Glenda Meyer and Bro. Dwight and Sis. Lucille Gerber.

A daughter Kristen Michelle was born to Bro. Ken and Sis. Jodi Dubach on Jan. 7. She was welcomed home by big brother, Danny. Grandparents are Al and Billie Dubach and Bro. Ken and Sis. Carolyne Isch.

Loved ones hospitalized included Sis. Lydia Liechty, Sis. Delores (Bro. Eugene) Maller and Bro. Noah Aeschliman, who is now living at Meadowvale Nursing Home with his wife, Sis. Esther. Children hospitalized this month are Gyrkin Schwartz (Bro. Ernie and Sis. Robin) and Dustin Kaehr (Scott and Sis. Karen). We are thankful they are both home again. Recuperating from a car accident is Rob Parker. He is married to the former Karen Steffen.

On Christmas day the engagement of Bro. Kim Troxel (Bro. Ken and Sis. Joyce) and Sis. Lisa Gerber (Bro. Bob and Sis. Evelyn) was announced. They are planning April 15 as their wedding day.

On Jan. 1, Bro. Randy Ringger (Bro. Dave and Sis. Maxine) and Sis. Lisa Bailey (Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bailey) announced their engagement. March 11 is their wedding day.

On Jan. 8, the engagement of Bro. Sam Kaehr (Bro. Charles and Sis. Dorothy) and Sis. Connie Baumgartner (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Jean) was announced. We wish them God's richest blessings.

We thank Bro. Max Reimschisel (Wichita) and his wife, Sis. Judy, for spending Christmas Day with us and bringing forth His Word in truth.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH
Peg Fiechter
Kathy Longenberger

Three homes in our congregation have been blessed with new babies. On Dec. 17, Seth Adam was born to Bro. Dennis and Sis. Jan Drayer. Seth was welcomed home by Bryce, Ashley and grandparents, Bro. Herman and Sis. Marie Drayer, and Bro. Walter and Sis. Imogene Aeschliman.

Heather Marie was born on Dec. 22 to Mike and Sheryl Mayne. Big brother, Christopher, welcomes his sister home. Grandparents are Bro. Jay and Sis. Dorothy Kipfer.

Ron and Margo Haiflich are first-time parents to Beth Ann, who was born on Jan. 8. Bro. Wendell and Sis. Wanda are Beth's grandparents.

Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Bill Dotterer (Phoenix). We were

thankful that Bro. Bill and Sis. Sharon were with us at Christmas.

Several in our church have turned their hearts to the Lord. Lawrence and Melvina Gerber, Karen Neuenschwander (Bro. Walter Jr. and Sis. Joyce) and Dick and Patti Troxel. We encourage everyone to pray for these souls as they begin their walk with the Lord.

Believing it is the Lord's will, Bro. John Baumgartner and Sis. Tammy Gerber have chosen May 27 as their wedding date to be united as one. Parents of the new couple are Bro. Truman and Sis. Marge Baumgartner and Bro. Jerry and Sis. Pauline Gerber. We rejoice with them and look forward to a new Christian home in our church.

Bro. Dale Gerber and Sis. Carol Hohulin were married on Dec. 28 in Goodfield, IL. We all want to welcome Sis. Carol and her children to Bluffton North. May God bless their lives together.

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE
Jacki Huber

"Every man has a train of thought on which he rides when he is alone. The dignity and nobility of his life, as well as his happiness depend upon the direction in which the train is going, the baggage it carries, and the scenery through which it travels."

Joseph Fort Newton

If we picture ourselves as daily riding on trains of thought, it'd be beautiful if our trains were all headed for heaven, carrying the fruits of the spirit as baggage, and seeing only the scenery described in Phil. 4:8; true, honest, just, pure, lovely and praiseworthy scenes. We wouldn't need to be concerned about sluggish or wrecked trains!

The annual Christmas Sunday School program was held on Wednesday, Dec. 21. It's always a joy to hear the Sunday School classes relate the true meaning of Christmas by inspiring songs and verses.

Our church caroling was cancelled due to inclement weather, but packages were still delivered by brave members of the "Young Group".

A beautiful way to begin any new year is by praising God through songs and verses. Many gathered New Year's Eve for the annual New Year's Eve Program. We especially thank Bro. Mike Thomas (Valpariaso) for sharing in the program.

We're so thankful our hospital patients are all home and recovering nicely. They were: Sis. Heidi Gutwein, Kevin Wuethrich and Bro. Bob Pflederer. We're especially glad Bro. Bob is home in Indiana as he was hospitalized in Illinois for some time.

The engagement of Cheri Erb to Bill Delph (Buffalo, IN) was announced. Bro. George and Sis. Elaine Erb are Cheri's parents. A summer wedding is being planned. Our prayer is for God's binding presence in their marriage.

A new little addition to Bro. Todd and Sis. Penny Denton's home came on Jan. 10. Tabitha Michelle is the first child of Bro. Todd and Sis. Penny. Grandparents are Bro. Perry and Sis. Sally Neihouser and Bro. Jim and Sis. Sharon Denton.

Hearts were saddened as we said goodbye to Duc and Thu Nguyen and their precious family. About two years ago, some concerned brothers and sisters "sponsored" the family. Duc and Thu came into our community after being what were known as "boat people". They had been through very hard times but seemed to adjust beautifully here. We will miss them but understand their desire to move to Florida where some of their friends from South Vietnam are living. We pray for God's nearness and guidance throughout their lives. Many tears were shed as goodbyes were said.

"If on earth we meet no more,
Let us meet at God's right hand
Where we shall each other greet
'Mid the glories of that land."

Gospel Hymns #774

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS

Judy Dubach — Lynn Winslow

You've all heard of "fair weather friends" — the kind who flock to you when everything is going right, and disappear when things start going wrong. But have you ever heard of "foul-weather friends", the kind who cling to you when everything is running smoothly? "Foul-weather friends" is a perfect description of the children of Israel. During their times of need in the wilderness, Israel followed after God despite occasional grumblings and rebellions. But God warned the nation that coming prosperity would bring indifference toward Him. When the Promised Land was conquered and occupied, the nation would turn to idols. Deut. 31:16.

When you're standing face-to-face with a crisis, it's natural to turn to God and cry for help. But what about the times when things are running smoothly? Times when the wind is at your back, when your health is excellent, when there's money in the checkbook and the bills are all paid . . . what then? Then is the time to sing a few verses from the "Song of Moses" Deut. 32, expressing your devotion to God in the good times as well as the bad. Try it.

This month we were so privileged to have Elder Bros. Willis Ehnle (Japan), Don Sauder (Roanoke) and Alfred Bahler (Wolcott) share the memorandum and brotherhood conference minutes with us. Hospitalized this month was Sis. Ginny Zeller and we are glad it was a short stay.

INDIANA, LACROSSE

**Lu Ann Troxel
Connie Knobloch**

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." I Cor. 1:18. We were blessed with such preaching by brethren many miles from their homes. Bros. Corbin Bahler (Rockville, CT) and Paul Butikofer (Elgin, IA), were with us Jan. 14-15. They shared with us the reading of the conference report. Special Sunday evening services were attended by Bros. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville) and Alfred Bahler (Wolcott). We truly did feel "the power of God."

The engagement of our dear Sis. Amy Bucher (Sis. Gwen) and Bro. Jim Paarlberg (Valparaiso) was announced. Jim is the son of Bro. Conrad and Sis. Donna. We wish them much grace as they plan a July wedding.

First-time parents, Bro. Joe and Sis. Jackie Feller, received their daughter with much joy on Dec. 28. Jessica Rene's grandparents are Bro. Lynn and Sis. Mary Ann Feller and Norm and Marge Jacobs.

"It has been wisely said that money will buy a bed, but not sleep; books, but not brains; food, but not appetite; a house, but not a home; medicine, but not health; sin's pleasures, but not salvation's peace. Yes, the things that really matter in life cannot be bought. They are priceless gifts from God."

Anon.

Give Your Address Change
to Your Reporter

INDIANA, LAFAYETTE PURDUE UNIVERSITY Lynne Bucher

"Help me, Lord, to consider the well-being of others before thinking of my own comfort. Remind me to offer myself."

By Gail Cunningham

It's hard to believe that a new year has begun. For the college students, it's a brand new semester of challenges. This new year will bring many situations where we can prove our faithfulness to our Lord. We need to remember His promises. He will lead us through every trial if we rely totally on Him. We are so fortunate, so let's share His love so others will know.

Our Purdue services started the first week the students returned. It is such a blessing to gather together and be lifted up. We want to thank Bro. Art Ringger (Indianapolis) for lending himself. We all appreciate the willingness of the ministers who come, especially when they are so busy. Also, we encourage all to come visit and worship with us. We love to see our church overflowing.

INDIANA, LEO Thelma Schlatter

Our prayers accompany Elder David Bertsch, Bros. John Klotzle (Altadena, CA) and Jim Hoerr (Peoria, IL) as they travel on their mission to Japan and India. May their efforts be blessed and His name glorified.

The congregation thanks Elder Bro. Sam Anliker (Lamont, KS) for his visit and ministry.

Sis. LeAnn Wulf (Morris, MN) is welcomed as she comes to give self and time in His service at the Children's Home.

Realizing that even God's little ones face suffering, we are thankful that little Joel Kizer (Claudia Kizer) is recovering from a bout with pneumonia.

Some February notes on LOVE:

"If God loved you as much as you love Him, where would you be?"

A little of the oil of Christlike love will save a lot of friction.

He loves not Christ at all who does not love Christ above all.

God's love will leak out of our hearts if we are not watchful unto prayer.

God loves every one of us as if there were but one of us to love."

A most precious message of Love is

found in John 3:16. "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."

What a miracle of grace — God's loving us into loving Him!

INDIANA, MILFORD

Shelby Beer — Gwen Steffen

Encouragement to love and to serve the Lord more faithfully was among the closing remarks of ministering Bro. Elmer Hartter's New Year's Eve sermon. (What better advice could anyone give us when facing a new year?) Bro. Elmer retired from his position on the pulpit January 1. We are thankful for the many years of untiring service he has so willingly shared with us. May God bless him for his labors.

We wish to thank our visiting ministers, Bros. Vernon Leman (Eureka), Ray Sinn (Latty) and Willis Ehnlé (Japan) for teaching us more about our Heavenly Father.

As we reflect back on our own life, there has never been a more precious time than when we received that peace from God. Feeling that peace in her heart, Teresa Hively (Lynn) was announced for baptism. We look forward to this time and wish her God's richest blessings as she begins her new life with Him.

We share the joy of two young couples whose engagements were recently announced. Lynn Kaiser (daughter of Bro. Dick and Sis. Clara) and Phillip Garber (son of Mr. and Mrs. R. David Garber, Goshen) have plans for an April wedding. Phil Beer II (son of Bro. Phil and Sis. Millie) and Kathy Butt (daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Burton Butt, Syracuse) are looking forward to a summer wedding.

January 7 marks a special day for Jim and Marla Simpson (Omaha, NE). A little baby boy, Robert James, was entrusted into their care. Grateful grandparents are Don and Sis. Ginny Hoover and Mr. and Mrs. Morris Simpson (Omaha).

At our annual business meeting of January 4, Bros. Will Schieler, Tim Steffen and Lee Beer were elected to serve in Sunday School. Bro. John Lehman, Jr. was chosen to serve as trustee and Sis. Shelby Beer as Silver Lining reporter. May each one feel the privilege of serving the Master!

INDIANA, REMINGTON

Beth Virkler — Annette Bahler

At this time of year when our attention is drawn to the thought of "hearts", let's consider our hearts' condition in the light of the Word. The heart of man is the central object of his salvation. Jesus Christ gave His life on the cross for a purpose, the possession of a willing heart.

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he . . ." Prov. 23:7

"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief." Prov. 28:14

"An high look, and a proud heart . . . is sin." Prov. 21:4

"Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord." Prov. 16:5

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." Matt. 15:8

Christ endeavors to circumcise our heart (in the putting off of the body of the flesh) by teaching us how to love God with all our heart.

"With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments." Ps. 119:10

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jer. 29:13

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." II Tim. 2:22

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10:10

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. 2:28, 29

The condition or attitude of our heart will either condemn us or justify us before God on judgment day. What is the condition of your heart?

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

Pauline Laidig

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1

How much we take for granted on

Sundays when we meet and worship in church. This privilege was denied on Christmas Sunday, due to snow-bound roads. The day just didn't seem right. It causes us to be more mindful of the shut-ins. One of these dear sisters says she can read in the Bible and listen to sermons but she misses the fellowship. It behooves us to make an effort to be in attendance whenever possible.

We were happy to have Bro. Ken Hoerr (Peoria) with us on New Year's Day. Many good teachings were dwelt upon which can be helpful in our spiritual walk through the coming year. We also appreciated having Bro. Walter Steffen (Milford) minister to us in his loving way on a recent Sunday.

Bro. Ernest and Sis. Marie Germann have had the privilege of spending sixty-seven years of their lives together. At present, they cannot come and go as they'd like to, but when warm weather comes again, we hope they will be able to assemble with us. May God continue to bless them.

Two precious babies have arrived, bringing joy into their respective homes. Bro. Robert and Sis. Sue Beebe are the loving parents of Kara Suzanne, born Dec. 29, who is blessed with four brothers and a sister. David and Sis. Margaret Kupferschmid and Mr. Kenneth Beebe are her happy grandparents (Cissna Park). Benjamin Wayne brought much happiness to his first-time parents, Bro. Don and Sis. Jill Lehman, on Jan. 14. Needless to say, the joy has spilled over into the lives of his grandparents, Jack and Kathy Myers (Nappanee) and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Shirley Lehman. May God bless them all as they assume the responsibilities of nurturing these little ones, both physically and spiritually.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Jill Hitz — Vera Nuestr

God tells us in His Word the importance of a daily study of the Bible. We read in II Timothy 2:15: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

So often we will read the word and not remember anything of the chapter. Below I have a quiz that will challenge your memory of the scriptures.

1. Which two Israelite spies favored going into Canaan?
2. Name the third king of Israel.

3. Quote Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore . . ."
4. What Jewish queen saved her people from destruction?
5. Jesus healed 10 lepers. How many thanked Him?
6. Who lived first, Moses or Abraham?
7. Which New Testament writer was a doctor?
8. What memorial did Joshua set up in the Jordan River?
9. List in order the last 12 OT books. "Hosea, . . ."
10. Who was the first Christian martyr?
11. What three objects were in the ark of the covenant?
12. Where were the disciples first called Christians?
13. In what book can you find the "whole armor of God"?
14. Who led 300 Israelites to victory over the Midianites?
15. What do we call Jesus' talk given in Matthew 5-7?

Answers: 1. Caleb, Joshua (Numbers 14:6); 2. Solomon (I Kings 2:12); 3. Look it up.; 4. Esther (1-4); 5. One (Luke 17:11-19); 6. Abraham; 7. Luke (Colossians 4:14); 8. 12 stones (Joshua 4:1-9); 9. Look it up.; 10. Stephen (Acts 7:54-60); 11. Manna, Aaron's rod, ten commandments (Hebrews 9:4); 12. Antioch (Acts 11:26); 13. Ephesians (6); 14. Gideon (Judges 7); 15. Sermon on the Mount.

We rejoice with Jim and Kathy Baske in the birth of their daughter, Stacie Ann. Welcoming Stacie home are brother Jordan and grandparents, Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy Paarlberg.

Trusting they have followed the Lord's direction for their lives, we rejoice with Bro. Jim Paarlberg (Bro. Con and Sis. Donna) and Sis. Amy Bucher (Sis. Gwen, LaCrosse) as they have become engaged. May the Lord richly bless their lives as they will soon be united in Him.

Our visiting ministers this past month have been Bro. Art Ringger (Indianapolis), Bro. Lenny Meyer (Chicago), Bro. Loren Stoller (Latty) and Bro. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott). May God bless you for your labors with us.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT

Lorene Furrer — Elaine Bahler

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord . . ." Psalm 127:3. Bro. Tim and Sis. Rachel Schwab are enjoying a sweet addition to their family. Katie

Lynn was born January 6 and has a sister, Teresa, at home with her. Grandparents are Bro. Vernon and Sis. Arlene Schwab and Sis. Elizabeth Schambach (Elgin).

Congratulations to several new grandparents in our Wolcott church. Bro. Richard and Sis. Viola Stoller are grandparents to Alisha Ann, born to Bro. Kurt and Sis. Denise Rager (Latty). Bro. Gene and Sis. Verna Lehman are happy about Rebekah Anne, born to Bro. Max and Sis. Suzanne Hoerr (Peoria). Sis. Marilyn Schieler also has a new granddaughter, Marla Mae, born to Bro. Darl and Sis. Cindy Schieler (Latty).

Our annual business meeting was held on January 2. Each of us can do our part to help our church home run smoothly and grow in love.

IOWA, BURLINGTON

Dixie Messner — Edith Massner

We started the New Year with our annual business meeting resulting in the following: Trustee, Bro. Marvin Woodward; Silver Lining reporter, Sis. Dixie Messner; Food Committee, Sis. Evelyn Massner; Children's Home representative, Bro. Milo Weissinger. A special thank you is extended to those who finished their terms.

Announcement was made of the betrothal of our Sis. Beverly Woodward (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Verna) to Bro. Larry Moser (Bro. Rod and Sis. Naomi, Oakville). We trust that God will direct them in all their plans.

We thank our visiting ministers, Bro. Uriel Gehring (Leo), our Elder Bro. Ed Lanz and Bro. Merle Kaisner (Fairbury) for sharing with us and bringing their families.

As Bro. Uriel read Mark 12 and meditated, we realized that even though the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection, they were still asking Jesus questions about the resurrection.

Bro. Merle mentioned of the brevity of life and how quickly death can come. Before he left here the sad news came of the sudden passing of his dear father, Bro. Joe Kaisner. We offer our sympathy to Bro. Merle and his family.

IOWA, ELGIN

Gloria Frieden

We were happy to have ministering Bro. Noah Gerber (West Bend) with us on Jan. 15. May God richly bless all our elders and ministers who faithfully and

humbly bring us the Word of God from the pulpit. May the seeds that are planted bring forth good fruit.

Rebekah Jean is the name that has been given to the 3-year-old adopted daughter of Sis. Gloria Frieden. Becky came from San Salvador, El Salvador on Dec. 27. Grandparents are Edwin and Sis. Joy Frieden.

IOWA, LESTER Alice Metzger

Welcome visiting ministers on New Year's Day were Bros. Alphai Moser (Morris) and Jon Schmidgall (Oakville). Because of severe weather on Christmas Day, we were unable to hold church services so it was a special blessing to have the brothers here as well as many other visitors. On Jan. 8 we were again recipients of a special blessing when Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski) spoke the Word of Life in truth and purity.

Glen Louis was born on Jan. 3 to Bro. George and Sis. Charlyn Meyer. He is getting lots of love from his seven brothers and sisters as well as his grandparents, Sis. Emma Meyer and Bro. Lou and Sis. Norm Bauman.

Hospital patients were Bro. John Gerber and Roger Myrlie. Both are convalescing at home.

In 1983, we welcomed 15 new babies and one little girl by adoption into our church family. There were 2 deaths. 16 souls have repented and there were 6 baptisms.

IOWA, OAKVILLE Debbie Wagenbach

"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him." Genesis 2:18. With this thought in mind, we heard the engagement announcement of our Bro. Larry Moser to Sis. Beverly Woodward (Burlington, IA). Larry's parents are Bro. Rod and Sis. Naomi Moser and Bev's parents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Verna Woodward (Burlington, IA). We wish Larry and Bev God's richest blessings as they plan for their future together as man and wife.

We were privileged to have three visiting ministers recently at Oakville. Bro. Arnie Gerst (Taylor, MO), Bro. Bill Gerst (Alto, MI) and Bro. Paul Eisenmann (Burlington, IA) have fed us from God's Holy Word. We thank these brothers for willingly lending themselves in the Lord.

At our annual business meeting on January 1, Bros. Norm Frank, Curt Frank, Kent Grimm and Sis. Kate Heiniger were elected to serve on the various church committees. We certainly want to extend our support to them throughout their appointed time of service on these committees.

Recently I read Proverbs 15:29. The verse really impressed upon me the utter importance of our continual and fervent prayers. "The Lord is far from the wicked: but He heareth the prayers of the righteous." Let us never neglect this spiritual lifeline that we have to our Father in Heaven.

IOWA, PULASKI

Mary Wiegand — DeAnn Wuthrich

We'd like to say a special "thank you" to our visiting ministers this past month. Among them were Bro. Dale Frank (Oakville, IA), Bro. Dale Strassheim (Milford, IN) and Bro. John Schmidgall (Oakville, IA). Also, a "thank you" to Bro. Carl Wyss (Washington, IL) who, I failed to mention, was here to visit in one of the past months. We thank each one for their words of encouragement.

For the past few weeks, we've been gathering together on Wednesday nights to listen to the tapes. What an encouragement they are. Hopefully we can remember all the good messages we heard, and apply them to our lives.

Bro. Bill Wuthrich had surgery this past month, and is doing better now. We hope he will be home soon.

IOWA, WEST BEND

Elma Mogler — Polly Zaugg

Our hearts were warmed to again hear the Christmas story from visiting Bros. Dale Moore (Elgin, IA) and Joe Gerst (Iowa City) even though the sub-zero, blustery weather kept us from having morning services.

Our love and sympathy is extended to the family of Frank Dogotch. After a lingering illness, he passed away at the age of 96 on December 12. He is survived by his beloved wife, Sis. Katie; three sons, Bro. Leo (Morris), Delbert and Frank Jr. (Whittemore); and a foster daughter, Dorothy Mergen (Esterville). He was preceded in death by a son, Lewis.

On December 26 we again assembled at our church to pay our last respects to Leona (Jurgens) McCue, 76, who passed away after a short illness. We will all miss her friendly

manner. Surviving are four sisters and two brothers. She was preceded in death by her husband, parents, one sister and one brother.

Hospital patients this past month have been Dennis Schmidt, Philip Fisher and Rosa Zaugg. May we breathe a prayer for the welfare of these dear loved ones.

We wish God's blessings upon the engagements of Terry Banwart (son of Dean and Irene) to Deb Holland (daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Don Holland). An August wedding is planned. Chuck Wirtz (son of Bro. Verner and Sis. Beverly) is engaged to Trela Marti (daughter of Bro. Gene and Sis. Mary, Lamar). A March wedding is planned.

We sum up 1983 with fourteen births, six deaths, five weddings and one baptism.

JAPAN, SHIODA

Margie Heintz

The holidays here in Shioda were a busy and rewarding time. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. When we begin the New Year with the Word and with God, we have begun with the "Best and Only Assurance" of a happy New Year.

A small group of us went caroling for Saegusa Oji San, now 94 years old. He lives with his son and Sis. Saegusa Haruko, his daughter-in-law. He is alert and has been able to get up almost every day. It was inspiring to see her gentle love for him as she tended to his needs while we sang and visited with them. We also caroled for Sis. Ucida at her home and enjoyed the singing and fellowship.

On Christmas Eve an invitation was extended to all the friends, brothers, sisters and their families to join us for a potluck dinner at the church. Many came and enjoyed the meal, fellowship and the Christmas Eve service which followed. The afternoon services on Christmas Day were devoted to the Sunday School Christmas program. Through the songs and words of the children, the story of Jesus' birth and the teachings of His life were shared with all who came.

Recently a visit was made to Sis. Asakawa, hospitalized in Tokyo. For many years she had been the live-in caretaker at the Shioda Church. She suffered from a stroke several years ago, but her recovery has been remarkable for her age (approximately 92

years old). Sis. Asakawa told us she has memorized the words for 80 hymns! What a storehouse of strength and blessings she has within her heart and mind.

Bro. Willis left for the States on the day after Christmas, and we have missed his cheerful and loving "good mornings" and his constant spiritual support. But we are happy that many brothers and sisters in America will have the opportunity to share and be encouraged by him.

During Bro. Willis' absence, Bro. Akito came to minister to us on Jan. 8. It was a blessed day, as it always is when we spend special times with Bro. Akito, Sis. Marie and their family.

We want to thank all of you who remembered so many of the brothers, sisters and friends of the Shioda congregation during the holiday season. All of your prayers, cards, letters and gifts were greatly appreciated. It is strengthening for us to feel your prayerful support.

JAPAN, TOKYO

Marie Inoue — Yoshio Yamazaki

Recently I read in a Japanese newspaper that someone said, "The earth becomes smaller and smaller day by day." I also think it is very true. A half century ago it was so difficult to visit overseas and communicate with other countries and people. But today we can do these things much easier by the development of science. As you know, our daily lives run much faster and easier by electricity and other mechanical systems. However, our spiritual growth seems far from us and it seems much more difficult to find peace, love and happiness in this world. Only the Bible answers questions about real true peace, happiness and the true love of God.

We had a real blessed Christmas service on Christmas Sunday here in the Tokyo church. Some of the children memorized quite long sentences. They worked with one mind together. None of them had worldly things in their hearts and they were praising God. It was wonderful and really great. How can we say, "We found peace, love and happiness here on this earth" without the children of God's creation?

We wish all of you dear ones a real blessed New Year in 1984 and thank you for your love and prayers as we pray for you all.

KANSAS, BERN**Linda Esslinger**

Sis. Peggy Baumgartner and Bro. Kyle Strahm have announced their engagement. Parents are Leslie and Leora Baumgartner, and Sis. Mamie and Bro. Alpha Strahm. A March 4 wedding is being planned. We wish them God's richest blessings as they walk life's pathway together.

On January 1 we held our annual business meeting. Bro. Leroy Meyer was reelected as trustee, and will serve with Bro. Allen Rokey and Bro. Neil Hartter. Bro. Jim Meyer replaced Bro. Joe David Rokey on the public address system and will serve with Bro. Arden Stoller and Bro. Richard Strahm. After many years of serving on the cemetery committee, Bro. Joseph Rokey asked to be replaced. Bro. Eldon Plattner was elected to fill this position.

Sympathy is extended to Bro. Paul Grimm and Sis. Florence Rokey in the passing away of their sister, Sis. Elsie Hess (Peoria, IL).

Margaret Hundley has answered the call and plans to join our fellowship in the future. She is the daughter of Sis. Lila and Bro. Joseph Rokey.

Church services on Wednesday evenings were cancelled for several weeks due to the weather.

Sis. Julia Plattner appreciated all the cards, visits, phone calls and signs of thoughtfulness she received. May God bless each one of you.

KANSAS, FT. SCOTT**Jamie Marti**

On Christmas Day we were blessed with visits from Elder Bro. Sam Huber (Sabetha) and Bro. John Lehman (Bern). Also, on January 7, Bro. Al Langhoffer (Wichita) ministered to us. We thank these brothers for ministering God's Word to us.

On January 6 we had a farewell singing for Bro. Harvey and Sis. Ethel Smith. Their ready smiles will be greatly missed in our small congregation, but we wish them God's blessings as they take up residence in Prescott, AZ.

When we asunder part,

It give us inward pain,

But we shall still be joined in heart

And hope to meet again!

Hymns of Zion #156

KANSAS, KIOWA**Gay Lee Farney — Janice Bahr**

On December 26, Bro. Jeff and Sis.

Janice Bahr were blessed with a beautiful angel, Stephanie Leigh. Stephanie's grandparents are Bro. Joe and Sis. Mildred Frieden (Burlington, OK) and Bro. Rudy and Sis. Eileen Bahr (Gridley, KS).

We had our Sunday School New Year's party, along with our monthly singing and Bible study Sunday evening, Jan. 1. We had a nice attendance with lots of fellowship, songs, food and games for all who attended.

Our hospital patients this past month have been Sis. Janice Bahr, Stephanie Leigh, Bro. Ronald Nelson and Bro. John Hoffman. We pray God's blessing and good health to each of them.

Note: February is collection month for the Silver Lining in Kiowa.

KANSAS, LAMONT**Jill K. Luthi**

As we stand at the threshold of a brand new year, let us each take a silent moment to think back on all of the blessings God has granted us, and examine ourselves where we have erred. A day does not go by where we don't complain, murmur, feel sorry for self, feel lonely or just feel blue. I believe a little "big" word makes us complain more, and to me it is an evil word Satan is always intending for us to use too often. That word is IF. I, myself, know the use of IF is a large test of faith. Perhaps we would not complain IF we could trade burdens and crosses for just one day. We never know the loneliness and heartache others suffer. Some will never bear certain burdens and crosses as we, individually.

For me, the burdens of loneliness, no (self) way of transportation because of no driver's license (over ten years ago), and now unemployment, are my test of faith. But, I know not what others suffer. Without question, some of you brethren have not and will not experience unemployment. Some don't know what loneliness is really like. And I believe everyone of us fail to realize what a convenience a car or truck is. We really don't realize it, do we? For whatever purpose, you simply get into your vehicle and drive to your destination — wherever you want. So many times, I just cry inside, as I would like to go visit someone — short distance or far away. I have faith that I will overcome my trials as said in St. John 14:1. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me" and

verse 18, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

Thursday, Jan. 5, was our annual meeting. Those elected as teachers were Sis. Mary Wernli — Primary, Sis. Ruth Kellenberger — Secondary, Bro. Jay Luthi — Intermediate, and Sis. Maria Schrader and Bro. Tom Knobloch for substitutes. Others elected were Bro. Steve Schrader, Jr. — usher, Sis. Dorothy Schrader — food committee, and Bro. Lloyd Luthi was re-elected as trustee. May the Lord direct them to their new duties.

Bros. David and John Wernli left Jan. 6 for a two week mission in Ecuador with some other brothers and sisters in faith. Had I known this sooner, it would have been in a previous writing. At this time they have just safely arrived back home in the U.S.A.

"Shared joy is double joy and shared sorrow is half sorrow."

Swedish Proverb

KANSAS, SABETHA**Clara Steiner**

A reception was held on Jan. 1 for Bro. Tim and Sis. Charleen Hartter who were married Dec. 18. We welcome Sis. Charleen into our community and ask the Lord's blessings on their union.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Edwin Bahler (Remington) and Bro. Gene Marti (Lamar).

We welcome Natalie Wysong (Bro. Ben and Sis. Janice) and Lori Aberle (Bro. Roger and Sis. Lavonne) into our precious fellowship. May the Lord lead and guide Sis. Natalie and Sis. Lori as they follow in His steps.

We are thankful the waters are still being stirred. Erin Wysong (Natalie's sister) has also made a beginning. We wish her much grace in her chosen walk of life.

Sis. Lena Steiner (Bro. Noah) is in the St. Francis Hospital in Topeka where she had surgery. She is slowly improving. May the Lord give her health and strength so she can return home. Also hospitalized this month was Sis. Evelyn Wysong. She has returned home.

KANSAS, WICHITA**Laurie Gallatin**

Ministering Bro. Glen Funk and family (Garden Grove, IA) visited our congregation Jan. 1. It is always a joy to

have them with us. May God bless them.

Jodi Reimschisel, daughter of Bro. Max and Sis. Judy, suffered a broken leg as a result of slipping on the ice. She was in the hospital, but is now recuperating at home. We pray God will comfort her and that she will recover quickly.

In this winter season with all the snow, ice and cold weather, we may tend to grumble a little more (at least I do). It certainly is harder to get around in the snow, easier to get hurt and it's COLD!! But God's creativity is definitely seen in the winter time. The falling snow is beautiful. We just experienced another snowfall. One night it was calm and clear; the moon reflecting on the snow seemed to light up the darkness. The snow on the ground was just beautiful. Everywhere it sparkled like millions of diamonds on the ground. I had to stand there gazing at it for awhile, really impressed with God and His creation.

"... though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Is. 1:18. The snow symbolizes Jesus' work on the cross. Just as the snow covers the earth in whiteness, Jesus covers our sins with His atoning blood. We become clean and as white as snow in the sight of God. The blood of Christ is able to make the darkest sin as pure snow.

"The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth His handiwork." Ps. 19:1. God's creation is truly marvelous! Nature is so detailed and full of variety. You can go from the beautiful plains of Kansas with its golden wheat fields, to the majestic mountains of Colorado, to the colorful Ozarks, etc. . . Have you ever stopped to think of how many different kinds of trees, flowers or animals there are in this world? It is amazing when you think of it. God surely did make a beautiful world for us to live this life in. If earth is this beautiful, can you imagine what Heaven will be like?

Anyone going south for the winter is welcome to stop in Wichita and visit us!!

MICHIGAN, ALTO

Liz Blough

In this month of the year we think of our sweethearts or loved ones near and dear to us in special ways — giving sweets, flowers, or cards which express our inward thoughts.

The test of love is loyalty. God expressed His inward thoughts and love to us through His precious word, the Bible. God's love for us is a permanent love as should our love be towards all mankind, not only on Valentine's Day,, but all year through. The Bible puts love at the head of the list of virtues.

More love to Thee, O Christ, more love to Thee!

Hear Thou the prayer I make on bended knee;

This is my earnest plea; more love,

O Christ, to Thee;

More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

Prentiss

The best proof of love for God is in love for one another.

Our annual business meeting was held Jan. 27. The newly elected officers are as follows: Sunday School teachers: Bro. Jim Blough; Bro. Wes Daniels is substitute. Sis. Donna Oesch, Sis. Sue Daniels; Sis. Judy Gerst is substitute. Trustee: Bro. Marvin Blough; Kitchen helper: Sis. Helen Steffen; World Relief Committee: Sis. Marguerite Blough. Luke 10:7, "The labourer is worthy of his hire." We wish you all the Lord's richest blessings in your labor of love.

Good exercise for the heart: bending down and helping another up!

Love is a plant. Tended well, succeeds; Untended it is starved and choked with weeds;

Love cultivated, roots, grows strong with living,

And blossoms like the rose, with giving.

Emily Carey Alleman

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

Linda Ramseyer

This past month we once again had dear ones who were hospitalized. Bro. Robert (Sis. Betty) Schlatter was a recent surgical patient. Medical patients were Bro. Paul (Sis. Esther) Waibel, Bro. Herb (Sis. Naomi) Ramseyer, Laura Mudge and Kery (Norm and Sis. Linda) Andrzejewski. We pray that the following words will comfort them.

Waiting helps to learn patience.

Hurt teaches us tenderness.

Trying times are times to try more faith.

Never give up.

Keep on hoping, for God is certainly helping.

He is there, He is listening,
And He cares very deeply about you.

Robert Schuller

Bro. Don Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN) and Bro. Homer Reineck (Toledo, OH) were here one Sunday to minister God's word to us. We are always thankful for visiting ministers who are willing to come and share the Lord's teachings.

We pray that the Lord will guide Bro. Don Jackson in his recent move to Phoenix, AZ. He will be attending school there and our thoughts and prayers are with him.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace." St. John 16:33. Clay Ramseyer has been able to find this wonderful peace through the Lord. Our prayers continue to go with him. His parents are Bro. Joe and Sis. Dorothy Ramseyer.

Jim and Sis. Cindy Sochacki are happy parents of Carmen Leigh. She is welcomed home by her sister, Rachel and her grandparents, Henry and Sis. Helen Meylan. Also welcoming a new addition are Girard and Sis. Diana Jacobs. Sara and Jonathan are pleased to have a new sister, Ann Marion. Her grandparents are Clinton and Sis. Lula Meier.

Recently our annual business meeting was held and new duties were placed on some of the brethren. Bro. Fred Munsel is our new trustee and Sis. Dolores Munsel was appointed to the Dinner Committee. Our Sunday School Superintendent is Bro. Bill Waibel. Our prayers are with these dear ones as they fill their positions.

February is collection month for all Bay City subscribers. Please give your donation to your reporter.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

Dawn Bahr

What a joy and a privilege it was for our congregation to host the mid-winter elder conference on Jan. 11-13! We were blessed with the opportunity to become better acquainted with these brethren from far and near who so willingly give of themselves in service to our God and to our church. Surely they must often grow weary, yet they continue their work, that each one of us may benefit. Let's remember to pray for them daily, for they depend upon our prayers, support, and encouragement. We thank each of the

elder brethren and their wives who came and shared this special time with us.

We pray for God's richest blessings on Doug Maibach and Carole Basford, as they have announced their engagement, and are looking forward to an October wedding, following their graduation from Michigan State University. Their parents are Elder Bro. Ben and Sis. Lorene Maibach, and Mr. and Mrs. Michael Basford.

We thank Bro. Don Wagenbach (Washington, IL), Bro. Wallace Ramsier (Mansfield, OH), and Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach (Phoenix, AZ) for coming and ministering to us.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Mary Kaisner and their family in the death of Hartzell's father, Bro. Joe Kaisner (Forrest, IL). May they feel God's comforting hand, and entertain the hope that they will one day meet their loved one in heaven.

In 1983, we had four births, one death, two marriages, and three baptisms.

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS

Deb Tilbury

Bro. Floyd Schmidgall (Morris) worshipped with us on New Year's Day. We are thankful to him for bringing us God's message.

A little bundle from heaven was added to the family of Sis. Leslie and Bro. Gary Schmidgall. Jeffrey Douglas was born Jan. 10. He has a year old brother, Jacob. His grandparents are Bro. Gene and Sis. Dorothy Schmidgall (Morris) and Carrol Eggleston (Phoenix).

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Rhonda Zeltwanger — Jan Schock

The Lord has once again showered us with many blessings. We have three new babies to welcome. Randee Marie is the second daughter of Roy and Ginger Nohl. Bro. Noah and Sis. Shirley Nohl are happy for another grandchild. Brent Davis was the name Bro. Davis and Sis. Nancy Wulf chose for their first son. His sisters, Ginny and Kara, and grandparents, Bro. Leonard and Sis. Violet Wulf and Bro. Roy and Sis. Helen Zimmerman (Gridley, IL) are eager to get acquainted. Bro. Beirne and Sis. Joyce Messner have a son, Nick Benjamin, who is new at their home. His playmates will be his sisters, Julie, Heide, and Katie and grandparents, Bro. Frank and Sis. Gladys

Messner and Bro. Phil and Sis. Lydia Mogler (Lester, IA). Raising children is a privilege and great responsibility. May God grant us the grace to do our best and turn to His Instruction Guide often.

Our visiting ministers were Elder Bro. Sam Huber (Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Ken Lawson (Ft. Lauderdale, FL). We thank the Lord for them, and our own ministers, who so faithfully serve us and refresh us in the Lord.

Bro. Otto Schaefer, Bro. Orville Nohl, Sis. Mabel Schmidgall and Sis. Kathy Nohl were all hospital patients this month. It seems we take our health for granted, but we're all reminded at times how frail we are, how little we can do and how much God can do. May we all appreciate the bodies God has given us and take care of our physical and spiritual needs.

"The family of Bro. Donald Luthi wishes to thank each of you sincerely: Relatives, friends, ministers, and nurses who remembered him with visits, prayers, cards, gifts, and tender care during his last illness. Your help and kindness shown at this time of sorrow and loss was deeply appreciated. May God bless you all. Also thank you to everyone who remembered our family at Christmas with cards, gifts, and fruit baskets. Wishing each of you many blessings in this new year."

Humbly,
Sis. Della Luthi

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

Carol Ann Messner

Mary Lou Schmidt

Gratitude was in the hearts of our congregation for the labors of love shared by Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA), Bro. Donald Miller (Minneapolis, MN), and Bro. E. Hartzell Kaisner (Detroit, MI) this past month. "The Lord your God which goeth before you, He shall fight for you." Deut. 1:30.

Elder Bro. Harold Messner and Sis. Gerry traveled to the annual elder meeting. We are thankful for our watchmen on the wall!

We thank the Minneapolis Bible Class for coming and sharing an evening with our Bible Class here at Winthrop. We took advantage of all the snow, and went on a sleigh ride in Hutchinson, MN. The children seemed to have a good time and enjoyed the fellowship.

The Winthrop annual Brother meeting was held on Jan. 7. Bro. Dick

Schmidt was voted in for trustee. Bro. Mark Schmidt was voted in for an usher. Bro. Verl Schmidt was put on personal property. Bro. Bruce Messner was voted in as trustee of the fellowship hall. We pray God will give each dear brother in Christ understanding and grace to carry out their duties.

We had several young friends on our sick list this past month. Sarah Messner, daughter of Duane and Mona Messner, had ear surgery. She attends Gaylord High School. Wesley Schmidt, son of Gene and Sis. Ella Mae, broke his wrist at school during wrestling practice. Wes is also a student at Gaylord High. Rachael Schmidt, daughter of Bro. Dick and Sis. Mary Lou, was hospitalized one Sunday for tests. She is now home and doing much better.

Keep looking to Jesus, He never can fail;

And walk in His footsteps in every detail.

The world's vain allurements will vanish from sight,

If you look to Jesus, Your Saviour and Light!

Anonymous

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

Janice Lehman

Our small congregation enjoyed a very blessed Christmas day with Bro. Roy Wernli and family (Lamont). May God Almighty bless Bro. Roy for his words of love and encouragement.

Bro. Kent Miller (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Pearl, Ft. Scott) has graduated from Cleveland Chiropractic College. We are so thankful he has decided to stay in the Kansas City area, as we appreciate his presence and all he has done for our little church.

How many times we begin a new year wondering how we will be able to overcome life's obstacles. Then the Spirit reminds me of Christ's words in Matt. 6:31-34: "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it-

self. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

New Year's Sunday we sat under the sound of God's Word ministered to us by Elder Bro. Raymond Banwart (Ft. Scott). We thank him and those who came with him to add to our small group.

After ministering to us Jan. 8, Bro. Loren Strahm (Gridley, KS) was willing to visit Sis. Lydia Young and her sister, Catherine Knapp at Indian Creek Nursing Home. Those who went were again blessed and uplifted by the singing, reading of the Scriptures and the love of the Spirit.

We thank all of the brothers who ministered unto us in 1983, and ask that God bless each one of you.

We assemble every Wed. evening at 7:30 for Bible Study and Singing, and welcome anyone in our area to attend. Any ministering brethren who may be in the Kansas City area during the week would be encouraged to have a mid-week service.

MISSOURI, LAMAR

Becky Hohulin — Sandra Luthi

It seems like time passes so quickly, as many days have already passed in the new year. We need to ask ourselves if we are using time wisely. As we sing in one of our hymns: Teach us to follow Thy example; Teach us to devote our time; This so short a time, though ample for eternity sublime.

Zion's Harp #203

Sisters Linda Banwart, Janelle Braker and Mary Kellenberger have spent some time in the hospital this past month. We're thankful that we can feel God's help in time of sickness as well as every day of our lives.

Kevin Marti and Kathy Connors were united in marriage on Jan. 13. Their parents are Bro. Dale and Sis. Corrine Marti and John and Mabel Connors. We wish them God's rich blessings in their life together.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Becky Gudeman

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

Psalm 27:14

We thank Bro. Merle Kaisner and all those of the Fairbury congregation who assembled with us on Jan. 8. We truly

appreciate the fellowship and may God bless them for their efforts.

Services are held the second and fourth Sundays of the month at the Ben Franklin Motel; 4645 N. Lindbergh Blvd. Please call Dan and Becky Gudeman at 314-275-2227 for further information.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Loida Hodel — Lori Marquart

"Today is a slender bridge which will bear its own load, but it will collapse if we add tomorrow's. In every year there are 365 letters from the King, each with its own message — 'Bear this for Me.' What shall we do with the letters? Open them a day at a time. Yesterday's seal is broken; lay that letter reverently away; yesterday's cross is laid down, never to be borne again. Tomorrow's letter lies on the table; do not break the seal. For when tomorrow becomes today, there will stand beside us an unseen Figure; and His hand will be on our brow, and His gaze will be in our eyes, as He says with a loving smile, 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.' The golden summary of our life is to be this: as to the past, a record of gratitude; as to the present, a record of service; and as to the future, a record of trust."

Streams in the Desert — D. M. Pantou

Events of 1983 at our "Little White Church on the Levee" were two baptisms, two marriages (one here and one away), five births and one family moved away.

"Love is like magic
And it always will be,
For love still remains
Life's sweet mystery!"

Helen S. Rice

Buddy and Barbara (Hoerr) Plank announce the engagement of their daughter Bonnie, to Gary Lutener. We wish Bonnie and Gary God's blessings as they make plans for their future together.

Bro. Greg Haab (Bro. Paul and Sis. Kathy) has moved to Normal, IL and is a student at I.S.U. May God's blessings rest on all the young people, especially those who are away from "home" for the first time. May they realize that only when education is coupled with a genuine concern for others and an earnest desire to honor

God with the abilities He has given, can they be truly wise and useful in His vineyard.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Ron and Sis. Chris Joos at the death of Sis. Chris's grandfather from the St. Louis area.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Ps. 27:1

NEW JERSEY, UNION CITY

Ed Aeschleman

We are experiencing a severe winter in our area with continued cold weather and enough snow to make passage through the city streets very difficult. This caused us to cancel church one Sunday. We trust in the Lord that this New Year 1984 will bring blessings to the brethren everywhere, and that we, in turn, can be faithful to His will.

NEW YORK, CROGHAN

Alice Virkler

We began the New Year of 1984 with the Naumburg congregation assembling with us. We heard about the beginning of time when the creation story was meditated upon. We were also reminded of the rewards of the final ending of life when we could hear what was recorded in the book of the Revelation. May each of us think upon these words throughout 1984 and may we live each day striving for that upper and better kingdom on high.

On Wednesday evening, Jan. 11, we gathered at the Croghan Church for a covered dish supper and evening of fellowship and singing.

Urban Farney, 65, was called from this life on Jan. 11 after suffering bodily afflictions for several years. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his mother, Sis. Lovina Farney, and the family. He is also survived by two daughters, Mrs. Bonnie (Charles) Cobb (Glenfield), and Mrs. Cynthia (Richard) Stratton (Blossvale); one son, John (Croghan); a grandson, Chuckie Cobb, and two sisters, Mrs. Catherine (Harold) Virkler and Mrs. Elizabeth (Richard) Babel, both of the Syracuse area. Funeral services were held by Bros. Norbert Steiner, Duane Farney, and Leland Hirschey on Saturday, Jan. 14.

NEW YORK, NAUMBURG

Rachel Snyder

Funeral services were conducted for

William Stockberger of Castorland by Elder Bro. Robert Beyer and Bro. Leland Hirschey. He left one sister, Elizabeth (at home) and three brothers, Gorden, Bro. Raymond (at home) and Casper.

Elder Bros. Robert Beyer and Norbert Steiner attended the conference at Detroit. We are very thankful for their safe return home, knowing that this time of year weather isn't so good.

Our sympathy goes to Sis. Pearl Calgrove in the death of her sister, Catherine Woolslager of Boonville.

Bro. Jess Karcher was taken from Lowville Nursing Home to Watertown Hospital for eye surgery.

OHIO, AKRON Joyce Gasser

"Busy here and there". In I Kings 20:31-42, the story is told of a man who said to King Ahab that in the midst of the battle another man had brought him a prisoner to keep, warning him that if he allowed the prisoner to escape, he would have to pay for his negligence by forfeiting his own life. The man's pathetic confession was: "As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." I Kings 20:40. In this account Ahab was busy here and there and failed to execute God's plan to take the life of Ben-hadad. Therefore Ahab's life was required for Ben-hadad's life, and upon hearing the sentence Ahab went to his house heavy. We can be busy about many things, our businesses or our pleasures. If we are busy with our Father's business, we have faith in His Word that when our earthly life is ended, we will hear the reward "well done" and have eternal life.

We were blessed the evening Bro. Joe Ramsier, Bro. Henry Dotterer and our Elder Bro. Gene Pamer shared and explained the Brotherhood Conference Memorandum.

Elections were held to fill vacancies of positions for those whose terms are expired. Newly elected are: Bro. Duane Collins, Jr. for usher, Sis. Gail Spangler for kitchen committee and Bro. Art Graf for Akron's representative for the nursing home board. Bro. Glenn Greenbank will be assisting in the Sunday School. We thank those retiring from these positions: Bro. Bob Ritzman as usher, Sis. Joyce Gasser as kitchen committee, Bro. John Palitto as nursing home representative, and

Bro. Steve Pamer and Bro. John Rufener as Sunday School teachers.

OHIO, COLUMBUS Andy Hunyady

HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE?

"God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person . . . Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; . . ." Heb. 1, 2.

Salvation, deliverance from sin and its consequences, was preached by our Lord first, and later by His holy apostles. It is a solemn warning to all believers, to impress upon us the importance of giving our utmost attention to these teachings which we have heard.

It is one thing to accept these teachings intellectually and profess membership to a church today without being converted or born again. And it is another thing to receive the truth into our hearts, being born of God, through Christ and regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

In our present day there are a lot of false teachers of strange and false doctrines, presenting a great danger to the children of God. Let us therefore, be on the guard, let us not be deceived and led into destruction. "For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Heb. 10:26.

Our appreciation to the visitors who joined our small number in worshipping our great God and the Lord of our life. Special thanks to Bros. Ben Hartzler (Rittman) and Henry Dotterer (Rittman) who ministered unto us out of the precious Word of God. May God bless and reward them for their labors of love.

OHIO, JUNCTION Les Manz

Scott Baur and Deborah Manz ex-

changed wedding vows on Jan. 13. We beseech God's blessings on them as they begin their married life. Deb's parents are Bro. Ben and Sis. Carolyn Manz.

At our New Year's meeting, Bro. Ralph Schlatter and Sis. Becky Reinhard were chosen as our new Sunday School teachers.

Hospitalized this month for surgery were Bro. Paul Manz, Sis. Sandra Manz and Sis. Henrietta Manz.

Having completed an electronics course, Bob Manz (Bro. Alvin and Sis. Betty) was able to obtain employment in Dallas, TX. We all miss Bob who attended church regularly with us. Although many miles separate us, our thoughts and prayers are often with him. Bob's address is:

1919 Walnut Plaza
Apt. #1043
Carrollton, TX 75006

OHIO, LATTY

Patty Riggenschach — Laurie Stoller

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. (Psalm 95:1). Our annual Christmas program was held on a Wednesday evening. Despite the severe weather, the children and young folks warmed our hearts with their songs and recitations about the baby Jesus.

The beauty and brightness of Christmas was apparent the following Sunday morning through God's handiwork. The cold and winds prevented us from gathering together in Christ's sanctuary; however, we received many blessings as families worshipped Him in their homes.

Bro. Curt and Sis. Denise Rager welcomed Alisha Ann into their home. David also welcomed a new playmate. January 1 was not only the beginning of a new year, but also a new life. Marla May was born to Bro. Darl and Sis. Cindy Schieler. Jeremy and Rachel were happy for their new little sister. Bro. Dennis and Sis. Connie Gorden gave birth to Douglas James. Although he is currently in Riley's Children's Hospital in Indianapolis, his older brother Curt is anxious for him to get better. Our prayers are with Bro. Dennis and Sis. Connie during this trying period.

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Christy Keysor (Bro. George and Sis. Sharon), Sis. Ollie Laukhuf, Wesley Stoller (Bro. Gale and Sis. Janet), Curt Gorden (Bro. Dennis and Sis.

Connie), Sis. Nettie Ringger (Bro. Nat) and Sis. Barb Stoller (Bro. Bill).

We were saddened by the passing of Bro. John Stoller. He is survived by his wife, Sis. Martha; a daughter, Mary Louise Porter; and a son, John. Also surviving are two brothers, Bro. Ezra (Gridley) and Robert; two sisters, Sis. Juliet Graf (Akron) and Sis. Louise Graf (Bro. Ernest, Akron); eighteen grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. Bro. Gary Maibach (Rittman) visited us that weekend.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office (Romans 12:4). Our annual business meeting was held January 2. Results of the election were: Sunday School teachers - Bro. Dwight Stoller (Sis. Lori), Sis. Renee Sinn (Bro. Walter), Sis. Delores Reinhard (Bro. Daniel) and Sis. Ede Laukhuf (Bro. Rodney); Church trustee - Bro. Ed Wenninger (Sis. Alice); Fellowship Hall trustee - Bro. Stanley Sinn (Sis. Ja-Nahn); World Relief sewing - Sis. Florence Stoller (Bro. Bill, Sr.); Kitchen committee - Sis. Ruth Stoller (Bro. Ralph); Secretary/Treasurer - Bro. Rodney Stoller (Sis. LeAnn); and Cemetery - Bro. Rex Plummer (Sis. Ann). May God bless them as they serve in their appointed offices.

As we reflect back on the year, 1983, our congregation experienced thirteen births, three converts, one baptism, one wedding and five deaths.

The engagement of Sis. Lanna Stoller (Bro. Gale and Sis. Janet) and Bro. Doug Harmon (Bro. Howard and Sis. Colette, Toledo) was recently announced. May God guide them in their planning for their approaching marriage.

OHIO, MANSFIELD
Lucille Groh

A friend loveth at all times . . . Prov. 17:17. Someone once said to another, "Tell me, what is the secret of your life that I may make mine beautiful, too." He replied, "I had a friend." How it fills our hearts with joy, when a brother or a sister-in-faith goes out of the way to extend a warm handshake or does some little extra deed of love. Sometimes we are neglectful in remembering the "nobodys". I am reminded of an article I read once and it went something like this: "From a western prairie home a young father had gone on a business trip to a distant city. He was detained overnight and as he laid down

to sleep he prayed for God's protection for his young wife and baby alone at home.

At that very moment his wife was tucking the baby in its little crib. As she did so, she noticed a man's foot showing from below a heavy drape. She turned pale and terror filled her heart, but on glancing around the room her eyes lighted on a text on the wall, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." Psalm 103:13. This assurance calmed her, "God saw and God cared."

She knelt down by the crib and prayed in a low voice that sinners might be led to Christ, and that those who were meditating crime might repent and be saved. Then she prayed for God's care over herself and her babe, claiming His power and promise to save. She then calmly sat down, a look of peace settling on her face.

With a sudden movement, the robber stood before her. In a low, husky voice he told her he had heard her prayer for protection and that her prayer was already answered for he would not harm her. "My mother prayed for me, too, but now she is dead and I am a wanderer for whom no one cares. Oh, lady, pray for me as long as you live. Pray for "Nobody's son", and he hurried out.

Years later as she was listening to a preacher tell the story of his conversion to a large company, he told of the prayer that first awakened him. She realized her prayers had been answered, for the robber for whom she had prayed so long was now telling others of the great salvation offered to all who will repent and take Jesus as their own Saviour.

It was a joy to them to meet, and thanking her for her prayers, he told her how he was no longer "Nobody's son" but a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

John Archer

Prayer can and does calm the troubled hearts. Our love and prayers are belatedly extended to Sis. Katherine Stoller Oesch in the recent passing of her beloved father, Bro. Mike Stoller (Latty). Those of us who knew him loved him also.

Loving prayers have been said on behalf of Sis. Christine Dotter (Bro. LaVern) who was in Cleveland Clinic for tests, Bro. Richard Banks (surgery) and Bro. Alvin Beer (surgery). We are

thankful to report that all are now home and we trust the Lord will restore health to them once again.

Two precious bundles of love were born since our last report. Bro. Fred and Sis. Connie Domka have a new son born on December 22, named Ryan Frederick.

On January 9, a new baby girl was born to Bro. Clair and Sis. Beverly Keever. They named her Tecca Jean.

Love has drawn two couples together. Wesley Washington and Margaret Mayer are making plans for their wedding on January 27. Wesley's parents are Bro. Barney and Sis. Beverly Washington.

February 18 is the date chosen by Karla Beer and Douglas Stricker for their wedding day. Bro. Alvin and Sis. Janet Beer are Karla's parents.

We are thankful that Sis. Catherine Morrison and Sis. Linda Morrison have safely returned from their recent trip to Anchorage, AL. They visited Sis. Catherine's daughter, Nellie February, who was recently hospitalized and now is recuperating at home. Sis. Catherine stayed for several weeks until Nellie was well enough to look after herself and family.

Recently, while repairing a roof, the ladder which Bro. Frank Graszl was using slid out from under him, causing him to fall approximately 18 feet to asphalt. He was knocked unconscious and had suffered head and leg injuries. How thankful we are that God spared his life and that he did not suffer any broken bones, only severe bruises.

Give of your best to the Master;
 Give Him first place in your heart;
 Give Him first place in your service,
 Consecrate every part.
 Give, and to you shall be given;
 God His beloved Son gave;
 Gratefully seeking to serve Him,
 Give Him the best that you have.

Author Unknown

OHIO, RITTMAN
Janette Blough
Florence Hartzler

January 1 was the wedding day of Sis. Luanna Davis and Bro. David Dotterer. Sis. Luanna is the daughter of Joe and Wilma Davis and Bro. Dave is the son of Bro. John and Sis. Betty Dotterer.

General elections were held at the beginning of the year and brethren were elected to replace those whose

terms had expired. The following offices were filled: Trustee, Bro. Mike Miller; Fellowship Hall trustee, Bro. Dale Pelfry; Kitchen, Sis. Cheryl Indermuhle; Song leader, Bro. Bert Gasser; Usher, Bro. Ron Gasser.

Those of our congregation who were hospitalized this past month were Sis. Esther Saylor, Sis. Mary Ellen Bauman, Eric Maibach, Marsha Hartzler and Bro. Steve Stoller. We are happy to report they are all home again. We pray our Lord will bless them with good health once again.

Sis. Barbara Mathys' latest little granddaughter was born to Russell and Karen Mathys. Her name is Annemarie Buss. Little Diane Rene was born to Bro. Dave and Sis. Connie Maletich. Diane's little sisters are Anita and Pam and her grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Mary Maletich and Bro. Bob and Sis. Inez Ramsier.

We are so thankful that we have souls who are seeking their salvation through repentance. They are Sara Winkler (Bro. Andy and Sis. Mary Jane Winkler), Heidi Trent (Bro. Ed and Sis. Marilyn Trent), Jim Gasser (Bro. Ron and Sis. Hope Gasser), Sandy Zollinger (Bro. Rudy and Sis. Brenda Zollinger), Lillian Rupp and Marjorie Weber. We pray they may each find the peace that passes understanding.

OHIO, TOLEDO
Mary Ann Weigle
Josephine Rehklau

Our congregation is saddened at the death of our dear brother-in-faith, Ben Schlatter. He departed this life on Dec. 19 at the age of 77. Surviving are his wife, Sis. Lydia; daughters, Mrs. Carol Quick and Mrs. Virginia Cosgrove; son, Larry; and 15 grandchildren. Bro. Ben was a pillar in our Toledo church and will be greatly missed. He spent more than 20 years as our Sunday School superintendent and had a great impact on many of our lives. I, for one, will remember his patience with the children and his willingness to answer all of our questions.

Sis. Kathryn Rager has suffered a fall resulting in a hip injury. She will be residing at Lake Park Hospital and Nursing Care Center, 5100 Harroun Rd., Sylvania, Ohio 43560, while she recuperates.

I'm sad to report that Sis. Minnie Schick was found unconscious in her home a week and a half ago. She has

been hospitalized and her condition remains unchanged.

Elder Bro. Lester Hartter and his wife, Sis. Ella (Bern, KS) were with us on Jan. 15 for Sunday services. We enjoyed his inspiring sermons. When he began he mentioned that he was over 800 miles from home in a place he'd never been before. When he walked in he could hear the same familiar hymns and feel the same Christian love he felt at home. This is truly a blessed part of our fellowship.

On Jan. 15, the engagement of Bro. Doug Harmon (son of Bro. Howard and Sis. Colette) to Sis. Lana Stoller (Latty, OH) was announced. May they enjoy the rich blessings of the Lord on their union in Him.

We welcome into our congregation Bro. Bob and Sis. Sharon Harris and their three children who have moved here from Phoenix, AZ. (Sis. Sharon's mother is Sis. Frances Laidig). Our little church is so happy that several families have moved here in the past year. God does hear our prayers. We pray that our congregation may continue to grow and prosper.

OREGON, SILVERTON
Rosa Lee Kuenzi

Nineteen eighty-three is history. Our small flock recorded the following events as a part of that year: four baptisms, one single sister moved to the midwest in August, a brother and sister and their five children moved to the midwest, also, in November, there were two babies born and one baby adopted. Thankfully, there were no deaths.

When it is all said and done, it takes so few lines to tell just the hard facts, but only we who lived those facts (whether it be here in Oregon or wherever you are) know the joys and sorrows, the struggles and the all-sufficient grace that is written between the lines of history.

The third Sunday in January we held the elections to choose the brothers and sisters needed for the orderly operation of the church. The ministers and the congregation extend their thanks and sincere wish of God's blessings upon those brothers and sisters who have completed their terms: Bro. Nick Kuenzi, Sunday School; Sis. Bette Metz, Sunday School; Bro. Ben Bolliger, usher; and Bro. Ray Cooper, trustee. Newly elected for two-year terms of service to the Lord and the

church are: Bro. Gus Dietrich, Sunday School; Sis. Pam Kyburz, Sunday School; Bro. Nick Kuenzi, usher; and Bro. Jim Dietrich, trustee. We wish them God's grace in abundance in their labors of love and service.

Sis. Judie Knecht (Bro. Ed) and Sis. Connie Steffen (Bro. Garth, Portland) were hostesses recently at a baby shower at Sis. Judie's home for Sis. Liz (Moser) Jones (Bro. Ron). Little baby Jones is expected to arrive in February and will be Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz's first child. Many gathered from both Silverton and Portland for the fellowship and the opportunity to shower the new parents.

PENNSYLVANIA,
PHILADELPHIA
Ed Aeschleman

Sometimes in small congregations such as ours, there is no special news to report for the Silver Lining. Winter has been severe here as it has in most other parts of the nation and the flow of visiting brethren to our area has slowed.

Six children, ages 4 to 10, participated in our Christmas program which was held on Christmas day. The presentations followed a theme that took us from the prophecies through the miraculous birth of our Lord. We were duly inspired once again with the greatness of our God.

WEST VIRGINIA,
NEW MARTINSVILLE
Minnie Weltz

Elza Ritz, 85, New Martinsville, died Friday, Jan. 6 in the New Martinsville Health Care Center after a long illness. He was a retired employee of PPG Industries and a member of the First Baptist Church. Surviving are his wife, Elda Barth Ritz; a daughter, Kathleen Murdock; one sister; two grandsons; and four great-grandchildren. Services were held at the Iams Funeral Home on Jan. 8 with interment in Greenlawn Memorial Park, New Martinsville.

Miss Margaret Witschey was a patient in the Cleveland Clinic the week of Jan. 9. She was accompanied by her two sisters, Naomi and Elizabeth.

Mr. and Mrs. David McIntire and Mrs. Lillie Wade visited recently with Mr. William Riggensbach in the Nursing Home at Walnut Creek, OH.

We are having very cold weather here with some snow and ice. At times

traveling on the highways has been very dangerous.

Mrs. Edna Brookover Schupbach passed away on Dec. 31 after a long illness. Surviving is one son, Keith (Colorado); one sister and one brother.

TEXAS, ZAPATA

Mary Plattner

Most of our winter resident family has returned for the season. Elder Bro. Ed Hohulin has returned from the mid-winter elder conference, and he along with Bro. Gene Bertschi (Roanoke) and Bro. Elmer Schrenk (Alto, MI) are our winter-resident ministers. We have also had visitors which included Bro. Bill Emch (Lamont, KS) and Bro. Tom Schrenk (Athens, AL).

The Valley residents held their first winter service of this year on Sunday, Jan. 15. They will be served by ministers from Zapata every other Sunday through March. On Sunday, Jan. 15, there were 28 gathered to worship. The services were held in Donna, TX. Anyone traveling that way should contact Bro. Lloyd Nohl for service information. His telephone number is 512-682-0219, McAllen, or Bro. Leland Plattner, 512-765-4961, Zapata.

The Zapata and Rio Grande Valley area suffered a large loss when we experienced a heavy freeze in December. All of the citrus crop was lost along with many shrubs and other trees. It is all evidence of an All-Mighty Power.

KANSAS, GRIDLEY

Julie Bahr — Doris Bahr

A new year is already well on its way. Each day God deals with His spiritual children as good parents deal with their physical children. Are testings from God good for us? Testing develops our "proven" faith, patience within ourselves and testing also develops maturity. Because each of us possess the nature for sin, there is a tendency to rebel against God's will for us. God desires to develop a strong, complete and mature Christian character within each of us. God does not want us to be always craving for that which He sees fit to withhold from us. He withholds certain things from us because, in His wisdom, He realizes they would not contribute to our spiritual maturity. James wrote in chapter 1:4, "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Our sincere sympathy is extended to

Sis. Liseten (Loren) Strahm and her dear family in the death of their oldest sister, Inez (Vern) Banwart. Sis. Dora (Robert) Young, still at her home in Wichita, is their dear mother. We pray they can feel our Lord's comfort in the loss of their loved one.

Two precious bundles from heaven have blessed the homes of two of our families here. Sis. Barb and Bro. Tim Zimmerman welcomed little Heidi Lynn on Dec. 22. They also have a daughter, Stacie Marie, age 4. Grandparents are Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Nadine Kraft and Bro. and Sis. Orville Zimmerman (Congerville).

Samuel John Somerhalder, Jr. came to bless the lives of Samuel and Sandy on Jan. 6. They have another son, Chris, age 9, to share in their joy. Grandparents are Bro. Joe and Sis. Edna Somerhalder and Jean Schwindt (Hartford).

OHIO, GIRARD

Karen Laparo

Our dear Sis. Mini Emch was hospitalized this month for eye surgery. She is home again and appears to be doing well. We thank God for her successful operation and ask His presence and healing power for Sis. Mini.

A POET'S GRACE

O Thou, who kindly doth provide
For ev'ry creature's want!
We bless the God of Nature wide
For all Thy goodness lent.
And if it please Thee, heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent;
But whether granted or denied,
Lord, bless us with content.

Robert Burns

We were all thankful for a visit from Bro. Gary Maibach (Rittman) who ministered to us this month. May God be your rewarder, Bro. Gary, and all who visited our small congregation. Your support uplifts us all.

April is the month for Girard dues of \$6.00. Please see your reporter.

Silver Threads

It's just a good thing God above
Has never gone on strike
Because He wasn't treated fair
Or things He didn't like.
If He had ever once sat down
And said, "That's it! I'm through

I've had enough of those on earth
So this is what I'll do
I'll give my orders to the sun,
Cut off your heat supply,
And to the moon, give no more light,
And run those oceans dry.
Then, just to make it really tough
And put the pressure on,
Turn off the air and oxygen
Till every breath is gone."
Do you know He'd be justified
If fairness was the game;
For no one has been more abused
Or treated with disdain
Than God. And yet He carries on,
Supplying you and me
With all the favors of His grace
And everything for free.
Men say they want a better deal
And so on strike they go.
But what a deal we've given God
To Whom everything we owe!
We don't care whom we hurt or harm
To gain the things we like;
But what a mess we'd all be in
If God should go on strike!

Morning Glory

UNBROKEN CIRCLES

Jill K. Luthi

(Lamont, Kansas)

As we begin another fresh new year our Creator has given us, I had to remember our unity of faith in Christ. After reading the following, I had to submit it as, for a new year, it deeply reminds us of the importance of our circles of love and friendship. May neither of these circles be broken, ever, as each and every soul on earth is in deep need of them.

"A world is round so that friendship may circle it."

Pierre Tielhard De Chardin

HOW LARGE A CIRCLE?

He drew a circle that shut me out —
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle and took him in.

Edwin Markham

So much of life is spent keeping other people out of it. Private rooms and houses, private clubs and officers, private roads and beaches — with all of them the point is the same: "This isn't your property. It's mine. Keep out!" Of course, in one sense, a circle that shuts the world out is needed by everyone. We all need places of refuge. We are all porcupines, and our quills are less troublesome if there is a little space

around us.

But there is another sense in which the size of a human being can be measured by the circles he draws to take the world in. A few people are too small to draw a circle larger than themselves. Most go a little further and include their families. Still others draw the line at the edges of their own social group or political party, their own race and color, their own religion or nation. The people are too few who have the bigness of interest and compassion to draw a circle large enough for all.

The smaller the circle, the smaller the man. A strong man is not afraid of people different from himself, and a wise man welcomes them. If he knows nothing else, he knows that human beings have no place to live except the earth and that unless we want to die together we must learn to live together. But the wise man probably knows, too, that when he draws a circle to shut out his brother he does less damage to his brother than he does to himself. He puts himself in solitary confinement, and he locks the door from the inside. He denies himself the riches of other men's experience. He starves his own mind, hardens his own heart.

When a wise man names his brothers, he draws no circle smaller than the first one ever drawn on earth. In the beginning, God gave the world its shape. He made it round.

Roy Pearson
(The World of Friendship
by Reader's Digest)

MY JESUS, I LOVE THEE

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art
mine,
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art
Thou,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus 'tis now.

I love Thee, because Thou hast first
loved me,
And purchased my pardon on
Calvary's tree;
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on
Thy brow;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus 'tis now.

I will love Thee in life, I will love Thee
in death,
And praise Thee as long as Thou
lendest me breath;
And say when the death-dew lies cold
on my brow,

If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus 'tis now.

In mansions of glory and endless
delight,
I'll ever adore Thee in heaven so bright;
I'll sing with the glittering crown on my
brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus 'tis now.

WONDERFUL GRACE OF JESUS

Wonderful grace of Jesus,
Greater than all my sin;
How shall my tongue describe it,
Where shall its praise begin?
Taking away my burden,
Setting my spirit free;
For the wonderful grace of Jesus
reaches me.

Chorus

Wonderful grace of Jesus,
Reaching to all the lost,
By it I have been pardoned,
Saved to the uttermost,
Chains have been torn asunder,
Giving me liberty;
For the wonderful grace of Jesus
reaches me.

Chorus

Wonderful grace of Jesus,
Reaching the most defiled,
By its transforming power,
Making him God's dear child,
Purchasing peace and heaven,
For all eternity;
And the wonderful grace of Jesus
reaches me.

Chorus:
Wonderful the matchless grace of
Jesus,
Deeper than the mighty rolling sea;
Wonderful grace, all sufficient for me,
for even me,
Broader than the scope of my trans-
gressions,
Greater far than all my sin and shame,
O magnify the precious name of Jesus,
Praise His name!

Disappointments are shafts sent to
the very bottom of our souls, and
whatever is there, whether gold, or only
copper, they bring it to the surface.

Unknown

Sorrow is a fruit: God does not make
it grow on limbs too weak to bear it.

Victor Hugo

A hero is one who knows how to hang
on one minute longer.

Anonymous

Little minds are tamed and subdued
by misfortune; but great minds rise
above it.

Washington Irving

Sermon . . .

(Continued from Page 28)

ered Lamb of God, for you and me. He
took our place and he wrote eternal
salvation. He suffered on that cross.
We cannot express with words how it
must have been. Nails were pounded
into His hands and feet, and the
Roman soldiers pierced His side. Can
we imagine what suffering that was?
The blood flowing from His side was
writing eternal salvation. The Author,
an emblem of suffering and shame,
wrote it with blood upon that cross.
The sins of the world were borne by
one man, One for all.

From the first Adam, we inherited
the sentence of death. But there was a
Second Adam who became a quicken-
ing Spirit. At the cross the burden of
our sins rolled away. That is where
Jesus Christ took our sins and the
burden that you and I had. The guilt
was taken away. God looked upon that
scene and we believe that Jesus Christ
became "the propitiation for our sins."
I Jn. 2:2. We know that He had to suffer
so that the penalty for sin could be
paid. And it was. Then He could say,
"It is finished," and "Father, into thy
hands I commend my spirit." Jn. 19:30
and Lk. 23:46. Jesus wrote salvation.
He is the Author of it. He is the One
whom we look to. We are called upon in
today's reading to look to Him.

"For consider him that endured such
contradiction of sinners against him-
self, lest ye be wearied and faint in your
minds." Heb. 12:3. They took Him in
the garden. He could have had twelve
legions of angels to help Him, but He
didn't come here to live; He came to
die. That was His purpose. His hour
had come when He found Himself
taken prisoner in the garden.

As you and I struggle to serve our
God, to labor and toil for Him, we are to
look to Jesus and what He has done for
us. What have we done for Him? Oh,
yes, we thanked Him. We could not
help but thank Him for what He has
done for us so that our sins could be
forgiven, and we could become free
from sin and alive to God. We needed
to thank Him upon our knees, in our

closet or by our bedside, alone. To think that there was One who loved us enough to send His Son to die in our place. The guilt of sin could only have been removed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Now we can become free from sin, a new person alive unto God. Just think what an eternal blessing God provided when He gave His Son. Those who look in faith to Him and believe in Him will never have to die again.

The prophet Isaiah said that God will wipe away all tears, that there will be no more death, and there will be no sighing. We can live and reign with our Lord and Saviour for ever and ever and ever, and it will never end! There is no time element there.

Who here today would want to miss out on that place, that home in heaven that Jesus is preparing? Who would want to miss it? Is there anyone who wants to raise his hand and say, "I want to pass by the cross. I want to go up some other way?"

What did Jesus teach in the tenth chapter of John about entering into the sheepfold? He said if a man goes up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. "But," He said, "he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." Jn. 10:2. Then He said, "I am the door . . ." Jn. 10:9. We look to the Author and Finisher of our faith; we look to the Door. There is an emblem of suffering and shame, a Door upon the cross of calvary. We need that cross.

When the apostle Paul came to the Corinthians, what did he say? He said, "I came not with excellency of speech . . . and I was with you . . . in fear, and in much trembling." I Cor. 2:1, 3. What did he have to preach to them? He said that he knew nothing else but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I believe that is what he was trying to tell the Hebrews, the believers, who were scattered abroad. I believe that the same Word that he preached and taught in that day is still needed.

We are called upon to speak God's Word. We are called to look to the Author and Finisher of our faith, who gave His all that we might have life and have it more abundantly; and that beyond this life, we might have a home that is eternal in the heavens. The apostle Paul also taught in Corinthians that the Lord and Saviour and the Almighty God were preparing a mansion for us when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved. There is a mansion, a home, prepared for those who love

Him and serve Him in this life. There is a mansion not made by the hands of men but by an Eternal God, reserved in heaven for you and for me. Those are eternal words. Those are words that are going to be fulfilled. They are going to be carried out by a just God, an Eternal God who loves us. He wants us to live for Him and to serve Him. The Lord and Saviour verified the Words and promises of the Eternal God. He taught His disciples when He was about to leave them to go to the cross.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Jn. 14:1, 2, 3.

Some of the people didn't know the way unless He told them. Likewise there are many today who do not know the way. But Jesus is still trying to tell them through His Word. It is hard to comprehend, beloved ones, that this Word has been preached from the time of the apostles of old. The Lord and Saviour taught it Himself in the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:3.

He sent His disciples out two by two. They were the apostles who went out to preach the Word. The apostle Paul was chosen of God to go to the Gentiles. He preached that anyone who believed in God and was converted would never have to die, but would have an eternal home in heaven. Yet, there are people who are not willing to come to God. Belief is by faith. It is impossible to believe God without faith. So, beloved brothers and sisters and dear friends, we walk this pathway of life by faith. We are the children of Abraham, who was the father of faith. Dear friends, we have to have faith to believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Faith is a wonderful thing. It can move mountains as we read in Corinthians in the thirteenth chapter. Faith is very precious, but as we also read, if we do not have the love of God, we are nothing. God's love was written upon the cross of calvary. We can read in the first chapter of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Jn. 1:1. But there came a time, beloved ones,

when that Word became flesh, and It dwelt among men. That was when God sent His Son into this world as a Saviour. A Saviour for what? For your soul and for my soul. Our souls are lost eternally unless we believe in the name of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

We need to look to Him. He is our only hope, our only salvation. There is no other way. If we try to go up some other way, we are doomed. The way of Jesus Christ calls us now. He taught it in the seventh chapter of Matthew. He taught clearly and plainly that there will be few who find it.

In the time of the reformation, there were many who suffered and died. But an incident happened in which a multitude of people wanted a man to believe and to go along with them upon the broad way. They told him, "Look, you're the only one of a very few who are not going with us." He reminded them that Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the straight gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7:13, 14.

We do not want to forget that, do we? We do not know what is ahead of us. We have not yet resisted unto blood, have we? Many of our loved ones in foreign lands today are deprived of the opportunity to worship as you and I do. A few of our beloved elders (and I had no thought of this when I stood up), journeyed in the European area. Those people, those believers, were praying for you and me in our land of luxury, a land where the material blessings flow freely, that we be not deceived and led astray by the error of the wicked. They were praying for us.

We pray for them, do we not, for comfort in their hardship and for the opportunity to worship as you and I do today. We are gathered here, unmolested from without, in the freedom of worship that our benevolent government gives us. Do we really appreciate it, and do we take advantage of opportunity? Yes, we are gathered here, but many of our loved ones are not. I can think of many of my beloved family, relatives, and dear friends and neighbors who are not in church today, who are not concerned enough about their soul's salvation to take the time to assemble around God's Word.

In oppressed lands it's different.

The people value it and appreciate it. It's a thought that I like to think upon so that I do not forget my God. I try to appreciate what he has done for me, and to look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

There are many instructions in this chapter, beloved ones, and one of them is that we endure chastisement. God loves us, every one. Our fathers loved us, and they corrected us, did they not? They wanted us to grow up to be good citizens. They wanted us to obey, but we know that it also was to satisfy themselves. But God above, our Father in heaven, is concerned for our soul's salvation. He wants us to walk according to the Word of Life. He is going to correct us. If we endure chastisement, beloved one, it will be to our profit and gain. It doesn't seem joyous, does it, but, it yields a "peaceable fruit of righteousness." Heb. 12:11.

When we sidestep the narrow way or try to broaden the way, isn't it good that God through His Holy Spirit and Word, shows us that we are doing something that we should not? I'm sure that every one of us experiences this. Not one of us is perfect. Not one of us is able to always do as this Word says. We include ourselves, your servants, first. If we heed and obey then we are not bastards, but have the title of sons of God. In the old Scripture we are told that those who were as bastards were not able to enter into the tabernacle. Therefore, we want to receive the chastisement of our God. Though it sometimes is grievous and causes our hearts to become burdened, beloved ones, it is God working in us. We read here that chastisement can yield forth a "peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." We need to submit ourselves so that God can speak to us through His Spirit.

We are called upon to "lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees." Heb. 12:12. We are not to give up. We are not to fall back. We are not to faint, but we are to take hold upon the Word of Life, to take hold upon eternal life.

We read here, "... make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." Heb. 12:13. God has a prescription for every part of our lives as members of His mystical body of believers. He wants the church to become and to remain a chaste virgin for the time when our Lord and Saviour

comes to claim His own. We can then go to the marriage feast.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12:14. It is rather exacting, isn't it, to think that we are to follow peace with all men? With all men! We are to try to get along with every man as much as it is possible.

Holiness, then. We are to live a holy life. It's really important, isn't it? The words are not mine, but it's God's Word speaking to you and me. We ministers are only instruments that God has called upon with the approval of the congregation to convey this Word to the believers, to the hearers, and to the dear friends. God can bless it in each and every heart.

"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God..." Heb. 12:15. We can't attain holiness by ourselves. We have to lay hold on this kingdom of God. We know that "... the kingdom of God suffereth violence." Matt. 11:12. There is a terrific struggle in the life of a sinner when the Word of God begins to penetrate his heart. As a little seed of the Word of Life enters therein and begins to take root, there is a terrific battle. There is a struggle between the old man, the old serpent Satan, and the Almighty God to claim that individual. Satan may try to hold him by a mere thread, or he may have him shackled from the top of his head to the soles of his feet; but he has him bound to go to hell. However, through God's Word and by His grace, man can attain the kingdom of God. You have put forth an effort, (as I had to put forth an effort, but salvation is by the grace of God. You cannot attain it by yourself nor I by myself, for we are nothing. By His grace God leads souls to repentance and faith so that they can live in peace with all men and with holiness. Without that, no man shall see the Lord. That's a sentence. That's a judgment of God.

If a man does not seek peace with all men and does not have holiness in his heart, he is revealed as a sinner. We were all born into this world as sinners from our mother's womb, and we remain sinners until we are born of the Spirit. We must become broken and call upon Jesus Christ, the Rock and the Lamb of God who was suspended on a cross between heaven and earth. Look to that cross and beg for mercy as the publican did when he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Lk. 18:13.

What did the Pharisee say? He said

something like this: "I don't want to be as this man. Look at what all I have done, God." He was a self-righteous man. What was the judgment of God upon those men? The publican smote upon his breast. He could hardly look up to heaven, and he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus taught: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that . . . humbleth himself shall be exalted." Lk. 18:14. He that exalts himself, beloved ones, will not enter into God's kingdom. He is going to be lost in all eternity. We will not see the Lord unless we humble ourselves and fall helpless into the hands of the Almighty God.

When Moses wanted to give the Israelites the law, they said that they couldn't endure it. They didn't want to hear it. We believe that we live in a time today when people have "itching ears," and they don't want to hear the Word of Life. The Israelites had a judgment put upon them, and so will the people of this time.

In the time of Nineveh, Jonah preached to the people. They didn't have Jesus, but they repented at the preaching of Jonah when he told them that God was going to strike them down and destroy them. They repented in sackcloth and ashes. We know that they will rise up against this generation and condemn it. Why? Because we fail to repent at the preaching of the Word of Life. There is a greater than Jonah here today. It's Jesus Christ. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Every one of us needs to look to Him.

A mount was shaken in Moses' time. The whole earth and heaven above will shake in the future. It's going to crumble and fall. It's going to be dissolved with a fervent heat and everything that you and I possess, or that we leave to our heirs if we pass out of this life, is going to be dissolved.

However, there is a mountain which we can approach. A heavenly Jerusalem will descend upon this earth. God wants us to come to that mountain. He wants us to come to Jesus Christ who paid it all.

We read here in closing, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire." Heb. 12:28, 29.

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SERMON BY BRO. ROY WERNLI OF LAMONT, KANSAS

Text: Hebrews 12

As we read God's Word, we soon realize, do we not, beloved, that it is "... sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing . . . of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (and minds of men)." Heb. 4:12. We are aware of that as believers, and I hope that God will reveal to the dear friends that He knows our "downsitting" and our "uprising". He knows our thoughts from afar.

One of the Psalms tells us that if we would take the wings of an eagle and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, if we would find ourselves in the depths of hell or in the depths of the sea, God is there.

We believe that He is here this morning. We believe that He is present in our midst through His Holy Spirit and through His Word. He has already spoken to us. He still allows poor and fallible brethren through the "foolishness" of preaching to proclaim the Word so that it may be received in the hearts of men and bring forth intended fruit by an Almighty God.

We read here that "... our God is a consuming fire." Heb. 12:29. We need to fear Him. I hope that we have come together in humbleness of heart and mind and in the fear of His Name, realizing that he is a rewarder of those who do good or evil, and that we will receive our just and due reward for the things that we have done in this life. May we also realize that our God is not a respecter of persons. He is a God of unbounded love and mercy.

When we assemble around God's word, we come to a great God through Jesus Christ, the Intercessor who can plead our cause. Through this Word may He now speak to us, beloved ones, so that we can be fruitful. May we be soldiers of the cross of Jesus Christ, believers in the Lord and Saviour, so that we are able to fight against the

enemy of our souls. Let us uphold this precious Word of Life and live it each day.

Verse one in today's reading begins with the thought that we are surrounded by a very great cloud of witnesses. We are even as in a glass bowl, are we not? Our beloved friends, neighbors, and unconverted children may not read the Bible. (Perhaps we don't always read it as we should either.) There are many people who do not go to church and perhaps do not believe in God or in the Lord and Saviour. They may not read the Bible, but they read something else. What do they read? They read you and me as believers. That is the "Bible" that they see, because they know that we profess and adhere to the Word of Life. They observe us as God's children. As we read here, "... we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." Heb. 12:1. Therefore the exhortation is given to "... lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us" and to "run with patience the race that is set before us." Heb. 12:1.

In the time of the apostles of old, there were great athletes. There were Greeks who were excellent runners. When people run a race, they have scant attire on them so that they can run faster and not be held back from victory.

You and I are running a spiritual race. In like manner, we are to lay aside every weight that would hinder our spiritual walk of life. Then we are to run with patience the race that is set before us. In this spiritual race we who are running can all become victors! All those who finish the course in our Lord and Saviour will receive a crown of righteousness. You and I are called upon to lay aside whatever would hinder us in serving our Lord and Saviour, so that we might be led by the Spirit of God and obey the Word of

Life.

We are called upon to look to Jesus. Who is Jesus? He is the Good Shepherd, the Bishop of our souls, the Captain of our salvation. He is many things. He is a Rock and a Defense. We know that He is the Author and Finisher of our faith.

We read that we should look to Jesus. We can look to Jesus, beloved ones, every day of our lives. We looked to Him in faith when we were in repentance. When our sins were very heavy upon us, we felt the judgment of God and found ourselves eternally lost and guilty before Him. We were eternally lost, I must repeat, separated from God without hope and with a promise to "be cast out into outer darkness: (where) there shall be weeping and gnashing of teth." Matt. 8:12.

As we repented for our sins and became broken in spirit, we looked to Jesus, did we not? He became very precious to us. We found that He was the Author and Finisher of our faith. What did this Author write? He wrote eternal salvation! How did He write it? Beloved friends, He wrote it with His death. He wrote it upon the cross of calvary. When I read that Scripture, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith . . ." Heb. 12:2, I believe that it refers to the plan of God, the plan of redemption and salvation. Jesus is the One, beloved ones, who wrote salvation, and He is the Finisher of our faith.

Jesus was suspended between heaven and earth and all the sins of the entire world were pressing upon Him. He had to cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Mk. 15:34.

Our Saviour felt the whole weight of the sins of all the world. He felt His separation from His God because he became sin for us, He who knew no sin. He became the sin offering, the slaught-

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