



"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;"
Titus 2:13

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."
Philippians 3:20

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Facing the Future: Fearful or Faithful

The dawn of a new year always brings thoughts of the future. There is a stark difference in the way the future is viewed, directly dependent on our belief and faith in an almighty God.

Fearful

"... they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night."

I Thessalonians 5:7

"... scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?"

II Peter 3:3, 4

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

Luke 12:19

"Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Ecclesiastes 2:17

"... they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;"

Luke 17:28

"Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: ..."

Luke 21:26

"... them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Hebrews 2:15

What a difference in the views of the fearful and the faithful. As we face a new year, may it be with anticipation, watchfulness and most of all, readiness, for the coming of our Lord.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

I Timothy 1:17

Faithful

"... let us watch and be sober... let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation."

I Thessalonians 5:6, 8

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

II Peter 3:13

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, ..."

Luke 12:33

"... Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ ..."

Philippians 1:20, 21

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

II Timothy 2:4

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: ... there is no fear in love ..."

I John 4:17, 18

"... Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

I Corinthians 15:54, 55



Writings based
on God's Word

Light From The Word

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. 119:130).

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Achieving true spiritual growth is a noble motive in a believer's life. The Bible encourages believers to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). They are also exhorted to "go on unto perfection" (Heb. 6:1).

Spiritual growth is a simple, uncomplicated concept. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). How does one draw nigh to God? There is an age-old formula that never fails and is as applicable for today's modern times as it was in Bible times. Namely, engage in sincere and fervent prayer, consistent serious reading of the Word, heartfelt participation in the church (worship, fellowship, singing, and other activities) and be zealous in good works. Growth and discernment are further enhanced by nonconformity to the world so that one can better understand God's perfect will (Rom. 12:1-2).

God does not reveal himself to the wise and prudent. Rather, he reveals himself to those who are humble of heart (Matt. 11:25). The Apostle Paul stressed that he came "not with excellency of speech or of wisdom" and that he was determined only to know "Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:1,2).

Desire for growth must be motivated by love for Christ and the brethren (1 John 3:16). Charity is supreme. The Apostle Paul wrote, "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13:2). Further, the believer is taught *above all* to "put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:14).

As one turns to the Lord in repentance and becomes converted, the warmth and holiness of God's Spirit provides a deep, "first love" relationship with Christ and His body, the church. There is danger that this spiritual well-being can fade as the lures and cares of the world become more pronounced. To help prevent this possibility, the Apostle Paul exhorted believers to attain "full age" and "have their senses exercised to discern both

good and evil" through use of the strong meat of the Word (Heb. 5:13-14).

Spiritual growth aims for several basic objectives. First, spiritual growth will give the believer wisdom to recognize evil influences and strength to resist diverse temptations. Spiritual growth and maturity will result in a life of obedience that is pleasing to God. In addition, as one prospers in true spiritual growth, his life will more profoundly reflect the light of Christ, and he will be a better example to unbelievers, and a greater encouragement to fellow believers.

Spiritual growth should not be considered an end in itself, but rather a means to an end: being fruitful and overcoming temptation until life's end. Knowledge alone is not growth. Without charity, it may be a detriment (1 Cor. 8:1). Only as knowledge is applied in everyday Christian living does it constitute growth. This provides visible evidence of genuine service for Christ, who said, "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). If the Bible knowledge a believer gains does not change his life by making him more humble, more obedient, and more sanctified, he has merely looked into a mirror and walked away, apparently having forgotten what he saw (James 1:22-24).

Familiarity with the Word should not lead to overconfidence. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Rom. 12:16).

The pursuit of spiritual growth and godly insight should not result in a highly individualistic interpretation of Scriptures. Increased spiritual understanding by each member should coordinate with the functioning of the entire body of Christ. The church is "fitly framed" and "together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:21). Believers are "buildd together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). True spiritual growth enhances the fulfillment of the scriptural role of the church here on earth, bringing glory to God.

Some of the specific and very noticeable results of true spiritual growth are: humility, peace, contentment, and obedience. These attributes often develop most effectively as a result of enrollment in the school of experience.

Humility requires development of a proper concept of one's self, which is neither extreme of exalting or degrading of self. "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life" (Prov. 22:4). "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up" (James 4:10). Humility allows us to gain wisdom (Prov. 11:2) and receive grace (1 Peter 5:5).

Paul implied that through many experiences he grew in contentment. "For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:11), and . . . "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6). As believers walk each day in truth and light, realizing their sins are forgiven and they are at peace with God and man, they have great reason to rejoice and be glad. Contentment is a vital component of growth.

Obedience is another crucial aspect of growth. True Christian maturity cannot exclude obedience to God, to His Word, and to Christ's body, the church. ". . . but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17). "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecc. 12:13). Thus, these two Scriptures indicate that one should abide by the standards of the Word if he claims to be growing in grace and in the knowledge of God. Moreover, a child of God has an obligation to reflect obedience by submitting to the guidance of those who are over him in the Lord (Heb. 13:7,17). Believers must also submit to one another in the fear of God (Eph. 5:21).

May our sincere desire for spiritual growth be to ". . . come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

Tim Sauder

Resolutions: Did you make any at the start of this new year? Most of us make them all the time: after convicting sermons, challenging discussions, revealing scriptural passages, missed opportunities or failed relationships. What does God want from us? He calls us to regeneration, not just reformation. He wants lasting revival, not passing resolutions. God and those around us are looking for lasting commitment, not just passing conviction.

Parents, have you committed yourselves to choosing to read the eternal Word of God rather than the tantalizing, but transient, newspaper or magazine? Fathers, are you opting to stay a few more hours and earn a few more dollars at work rather than quality and quantity time with your wife and children? On your death bed will you be saying "Please read me some passages from Time magazine or the Wall Street Journal" or "I wish I had spent more time at the office or in the field"? No! Near the end of our lives we'll long for more time with our families and a deeper knowledge of God and His Word. Families are under attack, and we see the sad results in the course of our work at the Home. Satan is working overtime and so must we to minister to and edify our children, our mate, and

those who we have been called to serve.

Change is a constant here at the Home. We are adjusting to the departure of Bro. Chuck and Sis. Annie Fehr and their daughter, Rebekah, who served as the East Houseparents through the end of the year. We thank God for their love and service and ask His blessings as they settle in Central Illinois. Bro. Nathan and Sis. LeAnne Gerber have responded to the challenge of God's call and are now carrying the torch of parenting in the East House. May God's grace abound in their new responsibilities. Consequently, we now have an opening for a mature and committed couple to serve as Alternate Houseparents (see notice in this issue).

Bro. Ross Meyer (Chicago, IL) has joined our staff for the next eight months after serving us as a social work intern during last semester. Congratulations, Ross, on your graduation and welcome to our team. Ross will be doing counseling and treatment program development and serving in a variety of ways to fill the gaps that result from being short-staffed.

The Christmas season brought all kinds of activities such as school choir and band concerts, a super Christmas party by our friend, Dee Oliver, an outing to "The Messiah" in Indianapolis, gift exchanges, and our Sunday school program in which our children

were very involved. Christmas time also means home visits for our children and a break for our staff. We were scattered across the United States from Minnesota to Florida and from Arizona to Connecticut. Thanks to all the families who hosted our children with acceptance, love and Christian hospitality.

The construction of the new house here at the Home has begun. We have moved slowly forward through thick mud, blustery wind and driving snow. Pray for the progress and safety of our workers and the cooperation of the weather. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it . . ." Psalms 127:1.

How do you view those who are hurting around you, those fellow believers in trials, or those who are served in far-off ministries? Do you have pity or compassion?

Pity looks and says "How awful." Compassion weeps and says, "I'll help."

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHILDREN'S HOME

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me . . . For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

Jesus said it. Do you believe it? Are you responding to His call? Are you willing to be a servant for Him, to follow Him wherever He leads?

Many, many times here at the Children's Home, we cry out to God, ". . . the harvest truly is great and the laborers are few . . . Lord of the harvest, send more laborers!" And we wonder, "Where are the laborers? Is God not calling? Or are His children not listening and responding?"

We need a married couple to serve as our Alternate Houseparents. (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Annie Fehr, East Houseparents, left us in December after nearly two years of service. Bro. Nate and Sis. LeAnne Gerber, our former Alternate Houseparents, are the new East Houseparents.) This is a challenging and rewarding opportunity for a couple to work as a team, with a dedicated and unified staff of fellow brothers and sisters as they strive to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of abused, neglected and disturbed children.

Please call or write either of the brothers listed below for information on responsibilities, salary and benefits:

Bro. Tim Sauder, Administrator
P. O. Box 151
Leo, IN 46765
219/627-2159

Bro. David Bertsch, Counseling Elder
11520 Souder Road
Grabill, IN 46741
219/627-2923

THE SILVER LINING

Grabill, Indiana 46741
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David Bertsch
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IN MEMORY — EDITORS:

HENRY SOUDER
EDWARD SOUDER

Pity looks on from afar. Compassion rolls up its sleeves and pitches in to help.

Pity waits for a convenient time. Compassion knows no office hours.

Pity is cheap and plentiful. Compassion is rare and priceless and costly.
(borrowed from *Closer Walk*)

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

First of all, we, here at the Home for the Handicapped, wish you a blessed New Year — a new year filled with the presence of God. Whether there be happy or sad times, want or plenty, sickness or health, if the presence of God is felt, it will be a blessed year.

Our small group home is really coming along nicely. The brick work is done on the house. The garage bricks have not been laid yet. The electrical work, heating and air conditioning work has been roughed in and the plasterers have about three weeks of work. After that, the electrical work will proceed. We feel very fortunate that the home is closed in, heated and all inside work can now progress during our winter months. We plan to have the home ready for occupancy in spring. We are grateful for the many volunteers who have come to help on this project. On December 14 the last brick was laid on the house and 360 plus tons of gravel were hauled in for the drive and parking area. Making these events signifi-

cant was the severe sleet and snow storm we had that same night and early morning. We thanked God as we felt His hand held back the storm until all was ready at Oakwood Estate. We cannot help but think of Psalms 127:1 where it says, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: . . .". Oakwood Estate will be a home for those who need some supervision, yet are capable of doing much for themselves. We are excited about this home. We hope when Oakwood Estate is "on its feet" and all is going well, we can consider another small group home in some other vicinity. There is such a need in this mission, and we are thankful we can serve God in this mission.

We hear so many favorable comments about our Home for the Handicapped from those who visit and from the families of our residents. Although this pleases us, we keep in mind that it is God's love in your hearts that have made this home what it is. Without your help in many areas, we would not have the home we do. We thank you for this. We thank God for this.

Sheila Steffen came to live with us November 30. Sheila lived in Peoria, IL, with her mother, Eleanor, before coming to the Home. Her father, Elmer, is deceased. Three sisters and four brothers, along with 12 nieces and nephews, make up the rest of her family. Sheila was born March 9, 1968. Her favorite foods are Reeces Peanut Butter Cups and soda and her favorite

pastime is listening to tapes. We welcome Sheila and hope she will be happy in our family.

Birthdays in January are: Edith Wagenbach (8); Mary Schramm (13); Karen Blunier (14); Brian Birkeland (19); Bruce Steffen (19); Jackie Willett (19); Laverna Zobrist (25); Becky Huber (26); John Eddy (27); and Tom Sides (31).

As the new year begins, many stores will be taking inventory. It might be a good time to take inventory of our life this past year.

I took an inventory of my life.
From all the deep recesses of my heart,
I hauled the half-forgotten pain and fears.

The memories of dark and brighter years;
Passed in review the faces of old friends,
The smiles, the tears, the scenes both drear and gay,

A score or more of unrelated things
To which my recollection fondly clings.
I dusted all the corners out with care.
The disappointments and the sadder scars

That living brought and failed to erase,
I banished from my conscience as dross;

And then I sought a lesson, if I might!
And lo, when I had counted all the laughter,

The joyous thoughts and happiness stored away,

My inventory was a proving ground that showed life good.

May you find life good, too.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

Bibles Distributed By Our Churches

First Year — August 1983 thru July 1984 —	13,890
Second Year — August 1984 thru July 1985 —	10,812
Third Year — August 1985 thru July 1986 —	18,247
Fourth Year — August 1986 thru July 1987 —	23,048

Bibles Distributed — Fourth Year

	MONTH	TO DATE
August 1987 —	2358	2358
September 1987 —	1023	3561
October 1987 —	1605	5166
November 1987 —	2264	7430
December 1987 —	1029	8459

NOTE: Sets of Braille Bibles are available to give to the blind and KJV, Old and New Testament, on cassette tapes for those who can no longer read the large print. Also, pocket testaments with Psalms and Proverbs are available.

ELGIN COOKBOOK 'FAVORITE FIXINS'

Once again, the Elgin congregation has republished our cookbook, "Favorite Fixins". The proceeds from the sale of these cookbooks are benefitting our Apostolic Christian Resthaven nursing home in Elgin. If you would like to purchase one of these cookbooks, please contact Apostolic Christian Resthaven at 2750 W. Highland Avenue, Elgin, IL 60123 or you may call 312-741-4543. The price of our cookbook is \$14.00 plus \$2.00 for postage and handling. If you have a multiple order, please contact Resthaven prior to ordering.

**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
PRESCHOOL OF ATHENS, AL
Marilyn Walder**

We have learned about Christmas, winter, emotions and music in the month of December. The children learned about the real meaning of Christmas as they presented a play to parents and friends December 14. They did so well saying their lines and singing and looked so cute in their costumes. Every child had a part. It took a lot of practice but it paid off because they knew their parts so well. The parents were enthused, too. We had about 100 parents, friends and also children who were formerly enrolled in our Preschool who are now in public schools. We were pleased with the turnout of parents and very pleased with the children's performance. We believe it would be a good idea to do the play every year to emphasize the real reason for Christmas.

We close the Preschool for two weeks each December. It gives us all a great break and also makes it nice to have time off over the holidays. This is the only time we close during the year except for the other major holidays.

We are looking forward to a new year and hope we will increase our enrollment. As always we ask for your prayer support.

**ALABAMA, ATHENS
Marilyn Walder**

We have enjoyed the messages brought to us by Elder Bro. Steve Rinkenberger (Cissna Park, IL) and Bro. Elmer Schrenk (Alto, MI). Other visitors were here from Cissna Park, Goodfield, Princeville and Peoria, IL, Rittman, OH, Philadelphia, PA and Rockville, CT.

As we end another year and start a new year, I always try to stop and review my life. What have I done for God this past year? What else should I have done? Was I a good witness for Christ in all I did and said? Is God pleased with my life? As I ponder these questions, I ask God for forgiveness where I have failed and for His strength to do better. We need to be continually aware of our thoughts and actions. If we stop and think about our actions at the end of each day we can keep ourselves in check and concentrate on being more perfect. If we pray without ceasing, we can more easily do what is

right. Let's be more willing to give of ourselves for others, more enthusiastic in our daily walk with God, and more humble and submissive to God so we can have a more full and joyful life in 1988!

**ARIZONA, PHOENIX
Ron and Evelyn Hoerr**

At our annual business meeting in early December, the following brothers were elected to serve the church: Trustee, Jay Leman; Maintenance Trustee, Lyle Huette; Song Leaders, Erick Langhofer and Herbie Knochel, Jr.; Ushers, Steve Roth and Dennis Frank; Congregational Room, Keith Kaufman and Ron Lindenbaum; Lunch Fund, John Gerber.

Sis. Ora Schrenk was a recent hospital patient and Bro. Kenny Schmidgall and Sis. Emma Sanders have not been to church for a few weeks. May the Lord bless these dear ones according to His will.

Once again we learned how important it is "to be ready, for death can come like a thief in the night." On December 10, Bro. Henry Schrenk phoned his wife, Sis. Ora, at the St. Joseph's Hospital to tell her that he wasn't feeling well and would be over to see her a bit later. Bro. Henry died at home of a heart attack. Besides his dear wife, Sis. Ora, Bro. Henry leaves two sons, Bro. Loren and Wayne; six grandchildren; and a sister, Sis. Frances Schrenck (all of Phoenix) and other relatives living out of state. Memorial services were held at the church Sunday, December 13. The church chorus sang the lovely hymns, "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" and "My Heavenly Mansion". Elder Bro. Schupbach had services based on Psalms 23, Psalms 39:4-5 and I Corinthians 15:51. Bro. John Kokanovich and Bro. Bill Dotterer assisted in the services as well as at the graveside. Interment was in East Resthaven Park Cemetery. We will surely miss Bro. Henry and his wonderful "Kind Heavenly Father Prayers". Yet, how great it was that he did not have to linger and suffer.

Bob and Betty Lemons will give their testimonies of faith and be baptized the weekend of December 19. We are rejoicing with them.

Our Sunday school Christmas program will be December 20, since it was

postponed because of Bro. Schrenk's funeral.

Bro. Loren and Sis. Evelyn Knapp came from Tucson one weekend when he was our guest minister.

**ARIZONA, PRESCOTT
Harvey and Ethel Smith**

"The smaller we become, the more room God has to work."

"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," — Almost — Almost, but lost. This must be the saddest fate that could become of a human soul. These were the words spoken by King Agrippa unto Paul and Paul's reply was: "I would to God that not only thou but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Bro. Todd emphasized the importance of being an altogether Christian and a diligent worker for our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The Lord provided the Prescott assembly with two ministers when we gathered December 6. We thank Bros. Todd Feller and Bill Dotterer for their labors.

Doug Schmidgall and Susan Kirken-dall were united in marriage October 9. We wish them God's blessings.

We were saddened by the sudden passing of Bro. Henry Schrenk. He was a strong supporter of the Prescott church. Our prayers ascend for Sis. Ora and family.

Services are held the first and third Sundays at Prescott. Inquiries may be directed to Harvey Smith (602) 445-2164 or 778-6130.

**ARIZONA, TUCSON
Lisa Knapp**

Ministering Bro. Al Langhofer (Wichita, KS) recently visited Tucson for the day. We wish to thank Bro. Al and his wife for remembering us here. Their presence was certainly a blessing.

We were saddened to hear that Bro. Henry Schrenk (Phoenix) passed away. Of course, the sadness is with those who are left behind for Bro. Henry has a greater life awaiting him. He and his wife, Sis. Ora, lived in Tucson many years ago, so his passing has touched

many hearts here. Our prayers are with his family during this time.

Our friend, Paul Gandell, has recently moved to Illinois. He will be residing in the Eureka home. He leaves with our prayers and good wishes. His wife, Sis. Dorothy, is staying behind for awhile but will also be relocating to Illinois.

Our Sunday school and young members delighted us with their Christmas program. What a delight to hear the tiny tots and the young adults sing about our Saviour.

Many gathered recently to visit nursing homes and loved ones to sing carols and spread a little Christmas cheer.

I often find myself complaining of being too busy with so many church and family activities. Wouldn't we be ashamed to talk with the homeless and destitute and murmur of all our activities when they would be thrilled to partake in all our singing, fellowshiping and our usual bounty of food?

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Elaine Graf

"Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation."

Psalms 62:1

Lisa Steiner has found her salvation in the Lord. Sis. Lisa was baptized at Sabetha, KS December 13. She attends Kansas State University in Manhattan. Her home is in California. Sis. Lisa's parents are Dr. Lyle and Kathy Steiner.

Bro. Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT) was a visiting minister at Altadena. Thank you, Bro. Dan. May the Lord bless you for your service.

On December 5, there was a children's activity day at the church. Single members and friends took care of most of the children of our church for several hours. This provided time off for parents during which many of them did Christmas shopping.

The Sunday school students put on a Christmas program Sunday afternoon, December 20. The program consisted mainly of scripture, both memorized and read aloud, as well as Christmas songs sung by the children and the congregation. May God bless the Sunday school teachers for their efforts.

One of our Sunday school teachers, Sis. Nancy Martin, left our area and returned to Princeville, IL, the day

after the Christmas program. About a year and a half ago, Sis. Nancy Martin came to Altadena from Princeville, IL. She has been living in Altadena while attending school and doing internships in Occupational Therapy. It has been such a blessing to have Sis. Nancy in our congregation. Sis. Nancy, may "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Numbers 6:24-26.

Doris Kaisner wishes to thank all who have remembered her in her time of need during her husband, Don's, illness and death.

COLORADO, DENVER

Mike Martin — Marlene Leman

We each have many reasons to be thankful, but our friends, Karl Braun and Mitzi Ellerman, had a special reason to be thankful on this past Thanksgiving Day as they two became one in marriage on that day. The wedding ceremony was held at the home of Bro. Tom and Sis. Marlene Leman with the ceremony being performed by Bro. Tom Leman. Karl is stationed at Fort Hood and they are making their home in Cooperas Cove, TX. May the Lord ever continue to draw them close to each other and may He become the center of their lives.

A Christmas present has arrived for Bro. Tom and Sis. Marlene Leman in the form of a granddaughter, Jaclyn Diane, born to Doug and Melinda Leman (Elgin, IL). At home to welcome her are Becky (6 years) and Scott (3 years). May the Lord be with them that she could be brought "up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord". Ephesians 6:4.

It's been said, it's been sung, it's been read, it's been hummed and told a thousand different times; and it's still just as true as it ever was. It has been a blessing to hear, from the mouths of our Sunday school children, the story of the birth of our Saviour. May the plan which was begun with this birth be fulfilled in their lives. May the Lord bless our dear brothers and sisters who have so willingly given of themselves to teach these dear children. May He ever be with them that they could continue to fulfill this responsibility.

CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE

Martha Hany

As another new year dawns, Zion's Harp #188 comes to mind, "The time flies on and death draws nigh, Unite us Lord with Thee on high! Prepare us now to live for Thee, Forever in eternity!". What a wondrous thought as we reflect upon God's faithfulness and many mercies to each of us in the past year. How we rejoice to know He has promised never to leave nor forsake us as we continue with Him! We extend our sympathy to the families of loved ones who recently died. These include Edna Foote, 91, who passed away November 27. She was the beloved mother of Bro. Art, Bro. Paul, Wade III, Bernard and Gwendolyn Mosley, all who live in the area. Bro. Alfred Kupferschmid (Pennsauken, NJ), 82, leaves his wife, Gertrude; and a son, Robert; as well as a sister and brother, Sis. Julie Bourque and Bro. Werner Kupferschmid. Bro. John Luginbuhl, 93, died December 10, and leaves three sisters, Sis. Rose, Sis. Emma and Sis. Louise Ballasy.

"David Edward" was born December 6 to Sis. Karen and Bro. Bruce Luginbuhl. The happy grandparents are Lillian Luginbuhl and Bro. Ken and Sis. Aline Bahler.

On Sunday, December 13, Sis. Lynne Gerber and Bro. Gene Beutel were united in holy matrimony before many witnesses. May the Lord bless their marriage of faith as they start their life together. Parents are Bro. Everett and Sis. Phyllis Gerber and Bro. Alvin and Sis. Carol Beutel (Tremont, IL). December 13 was a day for rejoicing as we also heard of the engagement of Bro. Vern Bahler (Bro. Ken and Sis. Aline) and Sis. Jeany Skipper (Bro. Joe and Sis. Alma). As they prepare for the future, may they continue to seek His guidance and direction in all things.

We are thankful that Carole Bahler has accepted the invitation of Christ to come and follow Him in repentance. May the Lord grant her much grace as she turns from the many evil influences prevalent in our society that are contrary to God's Word.

Hospitalized for the month were Bro. Wilbur Schneider, Sis. Patty Condry and Bro. Mannie Luginbuhl. Our prayer is that the Lord will grant them a speedy recovery and patience during their time of illness.

The time and efforts of the children

and teachers in presenting a program December 20 commemorating Christ's birth was greatly appreciated. We want to especially thank our brothers and sisters who give of themselves and their time throughout the year, diligently teaching our children the pure Word of God.

Reminder: January is collection month for our congregation. Subscription cost is \$7.00. Please make your check payable to Martha Hany.

FLORIDA, FORT LAUDERDALE Terri Huber

The Christmas season is filled with many plans and opportunities for helping others! Again this year the Sunday school sponsored an under privileged family. Each child brought food items and chose a gift for one member of the family. We wrapped the gifts at our Sunday school program rehearsal and dinner, and the week before Christmas, the food, packages and a Bible were presented to a thankful mother and her children.

Many of us helped in a small way by donating our services as "bell ringers" for the Salvation Army. It is a good reminder for us to "be a cheerful giver" and not a grumpy or resentful one. We saw both types!

The Sunday school program was delightful. It is heartening to see the enthusiasm and work the children put into learning their pieces and songs. The choir also presented two numbers.

We had a tremendous turnout for Christmas caroling. It was such a blessing to sing for and with the elderly and those who are confined at home while recovering from recent illnesses. The traditional Christmas songs give new meaning to the word "rejoice". We would like to thank everyone who joined us to make this one of the best carolings yet.

We were privileged to sing for Sis. Florence Sutter, who is home and (Bro. Harry says) making good progress toward walking and eating by herself. We also caroled for Sis. Mary Ann Klaus, who, praise the Lord, sang along with us! She is also home from the hospital after undergoing open-heart surgery last month.

Bro. George Fulop is welcomed back after several weeks in Europe where he was visiting family.

FLORIDA, NORTH FORT MYERS Kay Eisenmann

Visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN), Elder Bro. Ben Maibach (Detroit, MI), Bro. Dave Wiegand (Urbana, IL) and Bro. Art Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN and North Fort Myers).

When we are ill we go the doctor for help. Do we think we are so strong by ourselves that we don't need to be with God-fearing people to fight Satan? Jesus did not send anyone out alone to teach His Word! He knew we would need each other, not only to love, but to admonish one another. It's not easy to admonish in "love" instead of anger. Shouldn't we make a New Year's resolution to try to gather closer to God's children? Let's not criticize, but love and understand the battle we are all fighting! We make Satan happy when we go our own way, not even bothering to go to church, saying "I worked hard all week, I'll just sleep in. Maybe I'll be a better person if I get my rest." We must know what we do to ourselves. The bottom line is we must repent and be converted to enter heaven. The rest is immaterial, and if we want to bring joy to Satan, we'll just keep going our own way. But, there is joy in God's heart and in heaven when one sinner repents. If we let God have open access to our will, it will make our life better in 1988 and bring joy to God in heaven.

For those of us who are looking for help, God's promises are true. "He will never leave us nor forsake us." Where on earth can we find a truer friend and Saviour? We should not neglect giving God thanks for His blessings in the past year. We thank Him for the answered prayers for our children who have turned their lives over to Him! We have had a measure of good health, the remission of a deadly sickness, (Dathan is still going to school half days), and daily grace. Can we realize what a great God and Father we have? Let us all try to be more thankful children of God!

We are thankful for Bro. Art and Sis. Mary Gudeman's return for the winter. We are especially thankful for his forty years in the ministry. He is to retire January 10. May the Lord richly bless them in their remaining years together. We know Bro. Art will continue to support God's Word as he has all these years.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA Lucille Heiniger

The Sunday school children shared with us their version of Christmas as they so willingly took their part in our Christmas program. If only everyone would realize the real meaning of Christmas instead of making it so commercial. One should not stop at the cradle, but go to the cross with Jesus as that was the real reason for His coming so we all have a chance for salvation. If it were not for Jesus and God, we would have no hope and be as men most miserable; maybe not realizing it until judgment day. Maybe we would be like the poem that was recited to us by one of our visiting ministers some time ago, called "The Night Before Jesus Came".

We extend a hearty welcome to Sis. Marilyn Bryant into our fellowship with God as she gave her testimony and was baptized and became a dear sister of our Lord and Saviour.

Twin sisters, Krista and Kristine Price, have received peace with God and their fellow man. They are looking forward to giving their testimonies and being baptized.

Our visiting ministers for the past month who gave so willingly of themselves in proclaiming the Word in truth and sincerity were Elder Bro. Ben Maibach (Detroit, MI), Bro. Homer Reineck (Toledo, OH), Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN), Bro. Marvin Stieglitz (Leo, IN), Bro. Larry Weninger (Latty, OH) and Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL).

A note of sincere thanks for the love and prayers shown in my behalf at the time of my surgery. May God bless each of you for your care and concern.

Sis. Suellen Ott

THE NIGHT BEFORE JESUS CAME

Tw'as the night before Jesus came,
when all through the house
Not a creature was praying, not one in
the house
And Bibles were laying on the shelf
without care
In hopes that Jesus wouldn't come
there.

The children were dressing to crawl
into bed,
Not one ever kneeling or bowing their
head.
And mom in a rocker with a babe on her
lap,

Was watching a late show, while I took
a nap.

When out of the East, there rose such
a clatter
I sprang to my feet to see what's the
matter.
Away to the window, I flew like a flash,
I tore open the window and threw up
the sash.

And what to my wondering eyes should
appear,
But angels proclaiming that 'Jesus was
here'!
Its light like the sun, sent forth a bright
ray.
I knew in a moment this must be the
day.

The light on His face made me cover
my head,
It was Jesus returning just like He said.
Though I possessed earthly wisdom
and wealth,
I cried when I saw Him in spite of
myself.

In the Book of Life which He held in
His hand,
Was written the name of every saved
man.
He spoke not a word as He searched for
my name,
When He said, "It's not here," my head
hung in shame.

With all the people whose names had
been written and loved
He gathered to take to His Father
above.
With all who are ready He arose without
a sound
And all the rest were left standing
around.

I fell on my knees, and it was too late
I waited too long and thus sealed my
fate.
I stood and I cried as He arose out of
sight
Oh! if I'd only been ready tonight.

The words of this poem, its message
is clear
The coming of Jesus is drawing near,
We have only one life, and when comes
the last call
Will find that the Bible was true after
all.

Give Your Address Changes
To Your Reporter

ILLINOIS, BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

Donna Hodel — Karen Brummitt

On November 20, Bro. Kevin Knapp
and Bro. Ron Farney showed slides of
the World Relief project in Haiti.

Bernie Fehr and Susan Wendt were
united in marriage November 21. Wal-
ton and Mida Fehr and Robert and
Joann Wendt are the parents of the
happy couple. We pray God will bless
their life together.

Our congregation enjoyed an even-
ing of caroling for the elderly and less
fortunate December 12. It was fol-
lowed by a lunch at church.

The afternoon of December 13 was
our Christmas program and we could
once again hear the beautiful Christ-
mas story in song and verse. We ap-
preciate all the efforts the students and
teachers put forth.

We said our goodbyes to Ron and
Louise Walder and Caleb and Olivia,
as they moved to Champaign. We will
miss them, but know God has led them
in this direction. We wish them well.

We welcome Bro. David and Sis.
Malinda Aberle and Laurel as they
recently moved here from the Wash-
ington congregation.

God has blessed two homes with
precious new sons. Bro. Dave and Sis.
Debbie Huber are the parents of Dus-
tin Robert, who was born November
29. He has two brothers, Jaron and
Eric. Dustin's grandparents are Bro.
Bob and Sis. Doris Huber (Fort Laud-
erdale, FL) and Bob and Judy Zim-
merman (Normal).

Samuel James is the new son of Bro.
Gary and Sis. Peggy Ifft. He was born
December 2 and has two sisters, Angie
and Becky. Bro. Harvey and Sis. Velma
Jean Ifft (Forrest) and William and Sis.
Elsie Rager (Latty, OH) are his grand-
parents.

We are thankful for our Elder Bro.
Dan Koch (Tremont) and his willing
service in our congregation.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD Marilyn Tanner

On December 20, our congregation
shared in the joy of the announcement
of the engagement of Bro. Wes Kieser
and Sis. Lena Hangartner. Their par-
ents are Bro. Verle and Sis. Vonnie
Kieser and Bro. Roy and Sis. Norma
Hangartner (Eureka). We wish them

God's blessings as they plan their lives
together.

Our Sunday school students pre-
sented their annual Christmas pro-
gram December 20. It is always an
inspiring evening as they remind us of
the birth of our dear Savior. May our
heavenly Father richly bless all who
helped and all who were in the program.

If there is righteousness in the heart,
there will be beauty in the character,
If there is beauty in the character,
there will be harmony in the home,
If there is harmony in the home,
there will be order in the nation,
If there is order in the nation,
there will be peace in the world.
"Apples of Gold"

Sis. Carole Ehnle was a hospital
patient but is home again and feeling
better.

ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN LaRae Dill

Our congregation is thankful for the
visits of ministers, Bro. Ted Witzig
(Morton, IL) and Bro. Ron Heiniger
(Bloomington, IL). We are also happy
to see Sis. Verna Roth assembling with
us again after a short illness and hos-
pital stay.

The Champaign congregation says
"welcome" to Bro. Ron and Sis. Louise
Walder and children, Caleb and Olivia,
as they have moved from Bloomington
to Mahomet and will be making Cham-
paign their church home. We appre-
ciate their fellowship and pray God's
blessing upon this family in their new
home.

A big thanks is extended to our
college students who helped sponsor
the annual babysitting service Satur-
day, December 5. Parents were glad for
a chance to do Christmas shopping
knowing that their youngsters were
well entertained and well fed!

December 13 marked the Sunday
for our annual church Christmas
events, the first being the Sunday
school Christmas program. "That at
the name of Jesus every knee should
bow, of things in heaven, and things in
earth, and things under the earth."
Philippians 2:10. Through this verse
the Sunday school students presented
a very interesting and enlightening
picture of the Christmas story. They

told of those "in heaven" who worshipped Jesus, the angels; and those "in earth", the shepherds, wisemen and also Simeon and Anna. It was then pointed out that even in the midst of this miraculous event, evil appeared, as those "under the earth", namely Satan, who influenced King Herod with thoughts of selfishness and greed, even to the point of attempting to kill the Baby Jesus. The students concluded with this message: someday, "every knee should bow . . . (and) every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father". Philippians 2:10-11.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO
Kathy Schlatter

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10b. In this brand-new year may we be more sensitive to the needs of others, knowing that what we experience is often to teach us how life "feels" for someone else. May we be ever more aware of ways to use our talents as the Lord directs, not that we become involved in actions without the love nor become full of pride because of our supposed service, but that we are more ready to live sacrificially for others. May our schedules be adaptable and our hearts ready to expand and remember others, today in their trouble or tomorrow in perhaps lonelier times. May He provide us with His strength, His grace, His sensitivity.

We appreciate the sacrifice of Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) who ministered unto us.

In our Christmas season there is always a special place for our Sunday school Christmas program and caroling. This year was no exception. On Saturday evening, December 12, the children truly worshipped Him, the theme being "King of Kings." "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords . . . Hallelujah . . ." Handel's Messiah. Christmas caroling Saturday, December 19, was again a delight to the singers and the listeners. This season is ever one of remembrance of Christ's coming to earth as man but living onward even now and still offering us His joy, His peace, His love.

We welcome Bro. Dave Kiefer, originally from Oakville, IA, as he spends more time with us. He has a position at Motorola in Schaumburg. Yet we must say farewell to Bro. Scott Wegman who is directed to other work in another place. To both our dear brothers we extend our Christian love and desire for the Lord's continued will and work in their lives.

Bros. Darrell Gerber and Brad Parrish have had surgery in the past month. We are grateful for their recoveries and wish them increased strength physically and spiritually in the coming days.

Louis Adam, 74, died December 15. He was the editor of the Hungarian newspaper in Chicago. He is survived by his wife, Sis. Sara Adam, and it is to her we give our deepest sympathy and support in her lonely hours. May she feel His comfort and love through us. We also have sympathy for Sis. Martie Grivet and Bro. John Schrenk and Sis. Pauline on the death of their brother, Bro. Henry Schrenk, from Phoenix, AZ. The Lord knows their sorrows, and He alone can comfort but may we be ready to speak love with our hearts.

Oh, those nephews! I watched another little one in church Sunday. He cheerfully stepped further and further away from his mother. Suddenly he was at the end of the bench. Now what? Would he go a greater distance away and become totally lost? He did look back. His mother smiled and held out some Cheerios. He hesitated, but then he came back — almost eagerly even — to her food and her love. There are mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, waiting, praying for their children and friends to look back, to recognize the spiritual nourishment and love awaiting them. Let us all stay near to our spiritual mothers and fathers and be ready with much love always and food for the spirit for all who would come close enough to ask us the "reason of the hope that is in us." I Peter 3:15.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK
Mary Knapp — Elaine Sauder

The weather was beautiful for our evening of all church Christmas caroling. We gathered at the fellowship hall and then departed in groups to sing for our shut-ins, several nursing homes and others in the area. We apologize to those who were unintentionally missed.

Surgical patients this past month were Sis. Ellen Hofbauer and Bro. Elmer Kaeb. Cleo Feller (Emanuel) has undergone radiation and chemotherapy treatments in the past year and is quite ill. May all our problems be placed in the hands of the Lord so He can mend and heal according to His will.

Sis. Kathryn Enz will be spending the winter months at the home of her daughter, Evelyn Seymour. Her address is 105 North Elm Street, Onarga, IL 60955.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Bro. Melvin Stock, Sis. Violet Maul (Bro. Clarence) and Bro. Gilbert Stock in the loss of their brother, Frederick Stock. He was married to the former Wilma Hari.

The children of Bro. Earl and Sis. Mary Knapp honored their parents in an Open House in observance of their 40th wedding anniversary November 21. They wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who remembered them at this time and to their children for their efforts.

We only had one visiting minister this past month. Bro. Ken Schneider (Remington, IN) left us with many good thoughts to ponder. We always appreciate Bro. Ken and thank him for coming.

We're looking forward to the Sunday school Christmas program December 23. What a blessing it is to hear the children's recitations and songs which once again review the blessed story of our Lord and Savior's birth.

We would like to thank everyone who has remembered us with prayers, gifts, cards and encouraging words over this past year. We appreciate your kindness.

Bro. Dennis and Sis. Sharon Walder
& family

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE
Gail Leman — Susan Zobrist

As the New Year arrives, so do God's blessings and bundles of joy. Janel Suzanne was born to Bro. Larry and Sis. Marilyn Wettstein and Bradley Allen was born to Mark and Terry Schrock. Little Henry also welcomes home Rueben Lewis, born to Bro. Dennis and Sis. Emily Wettstein.

Starting out the New Year renewing our lives to the precious Savior, our congregation rejoices as three souls

commit their lives as a holy sacrifice to our Lord. They are Becky Ott (Bro. Don and Sis. Carolyn) and Jeff and Marilyn McClure (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sharon and Roger and Elaine Hodel). May God's blessings be with them as they begin the pathway towards heaven.

God's healing hand once more has been applied. We are thankful to have Bro. Dale Leman back assembling with us again after a short hospital stay.

We once more extend our thanks to Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN) for bringing us God's message of love.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Elizabeth Schambach

Betty Bachtold

Amid the rush of the season, it was a blessing to quietly sit and listen to our Sunday school children relate "The Story That Never Grows Old." If only we could keep the Spirit of Christmas alive in our hearts each day of the new year.

Our loved one, Frieda (Scholl) Schambach, 89, passed away November 18. She was preceded in death by her husband, Fred; a grandson and several brothers and sisters in Germany. We share sorrow with her family, Barbara (Robert) Roswold, Margaret (Mel) Horton and Robert G. Schambach.

Also, sympathy is shared with Bro. Ron and Sis. Nancy Schambach as her uncle, Bro. Henry Schrenk (Phoenix, AZ), was taken quite suddenly. May our heavenly Father comfort all whose hearts are bereaved.

Karl Braun and Mitzi Ellerman (Englewood, CO) exchanged wedding vows November 26 in Denver, CO. We wish them God's blessings. He is the son of Herman and Sis. Sharon Braun. Presently he is serving in the Army. Their new address is 145 Maple Drive, Cooperas Cove, TX 76522.

The hearts and home of Doug and Melinda Leman rejoice in the birth of Jaclyn Diane, born December 12. Big sister and brother, Becky and Scott, are also happy about this arrival. Grandparents include Elvis and Gail Kellenberger (Elgin) and Bro. Tom and Sis. Marlene Leman (Denver, CO).

Bro. Al and Sis. Joan Scheitlin became happy first-time grandparents when Lena Marie was born to their daughter, LeeAnn and Steven Vein-

otte November 27. Ernest and Linda Veinotte (Epsom, NH) are also happy grandparents.

God again has been merciful and brought our hospital patients through surgery. These include Sis. Emily Lehman (Bro. Gottlieb) and Richard Anliker (the late Bro. Joe and Sis. Beth Anliker). Both have been able to return home.

What blessings are ours each time we assemble around the Word of Life. We thank our visiting ministers, Bros. Charles Sauder (Tremont, IL), Wayne Miller (Fort Scott, KS), John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Nathan Stoller (Bradford, IL) who ministered to us.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Kathy L. Rocke

In prayerful supplication and beseeching God's direction, we were asked to seek His guidance in selecting a brother for the ministry. In unity this duty was placed upon Bro. Jim Vierling. We pray that Bro. Jim and Sis. Linda will be submissive unto His direction and may they feel our prayers for them. "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Acts 6:4. We thank Elder Bros. Dan Koch (Tremont) and Art Bahler (Fairbury) for their assistance in this undertaking and for ministering unto us this day.

Bro. George Martin passed away December 10 at the "Home". Our sympathy goes to his sons, Melvin, Bro. Roland, Wilmer and Roger; and daughters, Esther Hoffman, Mary Brand, Verna Lott and Marjorie Honeg. He has one sister, Sis. Edna Martin. May His family be comforted knowing their father had made preparation for this time and longed for his heavenly home.

Sis. Lydia Rocke (Bro. Harry) and Bro. Leland Zimmerman were hospital patients this past month. May we remember them in prayer and may God heal them according to His will.

We held our annual business meeting December 2. We thank those whose terms have ended for their willingness to serve and pray God will bless them. For those who have now assumed duties within the church, may they seek His guidance in all they undertake.

We held our Christmas program Wednesday evening, December 16. What a beautiful time to reflect upon

our Lord's birth and His purpose of entering this world. It is so easy to get caught up in the activities of the season, but may we never lose sight of the humble birth of our precious Saviour.

Bro. Alan and Sis. Sharon Martin welcomed Holly Kristine into their hearts and home December 15. She has a brother, Brent, waiting for her. Grandparents are Bro. Richard and Sis. Edna Leman and Bro. Lester and Sis. Ruth Martin (all of Eureka).

Reminder: Silver Lining collections are due in January. The cost is \$7.00. Please submit any address changes as soon as possible.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

Jean Bachtold — Crystal Fehr

Another year is dawning,
Dear Master, let it be,
In working or in waiting,
Another year for Thee.

Another year of service,
Of witness for Thy love:
Another year of training
For holier work above.

Hymns of Zion #150

On November 29 and 30, we witnessed with joy in our hearts the testimony and baptism of Bro. Ryan Steidinger (Bro. Donald and Sis. Alice) and Sis. Janis Moser (Bro. Lloyd and Myrna). May our heavenly Father continue to guide them as they strive to walk this narrow pathway of life.

Bro. Ben and Sis. Carol Kafer and Christopher welcomed into their hearts and home their new baby son and brother, Brad Allen, who was born December 10. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Bud and Sis. Sharon Kelson and Mr. and Mrs. Duane Kafer.

On Wednesday evening, December 9, the brethren of the Fairbury and Forrest congregation gathered to hear the conference memorandum. Elder Bro. Bob Grimm (Goodfield) along with our Elder Bros. Arthur Bahler and Perry Zimmerman gave us words of teaching and warning. May we strive to be obedient in all His ways.

We are so thankful for those who have shared of themselves this past month. Visiting ministers were Elder Bros. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) and Perry Zimmerman (Forrest) as

well as ministering Bros. Earl Gerber (Forrest) and Vernon Schwab (Wolcott, IN).

On December 4, Elaine Steidinger and Dale Mowery were united in marriage. Parents of the couple are Bro. Maurice and Sis. Alma Steidinger and Russell and Rosie Mowery.

Also united in marriage December 19 were Robert Kelson and Christy Max. Parents are Bro. Bud and Sis. Sharon Kelson and Gary and Rebecca Max (Normal). May God bless these two couples as they begin their married walk of life together.

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Leona Broquard, Sis. Lydia Wiedman and Bro. Don Kaisner (Sis. Leona).

The wonderful Christmas story was told to us when the Sunday school presented their annual Christmas program December 13. May the Lord bless them and their teachers for their efforts.

ILLINOIS, FORREST

Sharon Adams — Patsy Stoller

We were blest recently when Elder Bros. Bob Grimm (Goodfield) and Art Bahler (Fairbury) assisted Bro. Perry with the reading of the memorandum. It was an uplifting evening and once again we could be encouraged to put on the whole armor and press toward the mark of perfection.

Visiting ministers this past month were Bros. Ken Knapp (Taylor, MO), Ken Weerts (Cissna Park), Jim Plattner (Princeville), Virg Metzger (Chicago), Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), Merle Kaisner, Duane Kilgus and John Hartman (Fairbury), and Larry Weninger (Latty, OH). We appreciate their love and willingness to serve us and pray God will bless them and their families.

Our Sunday school Christmas program was held December 16 and once again our children reminded us of how Christ was born in a stable so long ago and how He has changed the lives of so many.

Our prayers and thoughts are with Sis. Leona Ricketts (Bro. Meredith), Bro. John Kyburz (Sis. Nettie) and Bro. Harold Honegger (Sis. Clara) who have been hospitalized this past month. May God grant them grace and patience to wait upon His mercies and trust His promises.

May our friend, Sarah Ricketts (Bro. Nick and Sis. Jean), feel the grace and mercy of our Lord as she has begun a new life in Him.

Bro. Fred and Sis. Brenda Leman rejoice in the birth of a new son, Seth Alan. Happy to have a little brother is Caleb. Grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Donna Leman and Bro. Leland and Sis. Laurene Zimmerman (Eureka).

Our joys of the Christmas season were suddenly changed to sorrow when we learned of the tragic death of our Bro. Terry Adams. Sis. Sharon survives, along with four daughters, Shawna, Jennifer, Kelli, Amber, and a foster daughter, Tonya Craig, all at home. May the love of God comfort the hearts of those left behind as only He can.

Jesus knows thy sorrow, Knows thine every care;
Knows thy deep contrition, Hears thy feeblest pray'rs;
Do not fear to trust Him, Tell Him all thy grief;
Cast on Him thy burden, He will bring relief.

Trust the heart of Jesus, Thou art precious there;
Surely He would shield thee From the tempter's snare;
Safely He would lead thee by His own sweet way,
Out into the glory of a brighter day.

Jesus knows thy conflict, hears thy burdened sigh;
When thy heart is wounded, hears thy plaintive cry;
He thy soul will strengthen, overcome thy fears;
He will send thee comfort, wipe away thy tears.

Hymns of Zion #74

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Trish Gerber

Our Sunday school children shared the Christmas story with us in word and song. It's encouraging to see so many young people eager to tell God's story. They are our future church and we pray for God's guidance in their lives. As we reflect back over the Christmas season, we are reminded of thoughts and feelings we should have, not only at Christmas, but throughout the rest of the year as well.

During the Christmas season
When my heart is filled with cheer,
I often stop and ask myself
What am I doing here?

Why wasn't I born in some far-off land
In a hut made of grass and clay?
Where we hardly had enough clothes to wear
And we hungered for food every day?

Or, why wasn't my home in a communist land
Where most freedoms were not ours to have;
Where to worship and pray threatened lives every day
And a country lacked true peace and love.

Why wasn't I born in the big city slums
To parents addicted to drugs?
Where I'd run through the streets,
afraid for my life
Dodging winos and robbers and thugs?

But no, I was born in a God-fearing home
Where I always was clothed and fed.
Where the Bible provided the rules for life
And contentment could be found instead.

So, I'm sure God wants me to share what I have
With those of a lesser estate
And to spread His good word the best that I can
Before it's forever too late.

Our young people shared God's love with Bible classes from West Bend, Pulaski and Iowa City, IA, Taylor, MO and Minneapolis, MN. They enjoyed an eventful weekend together and developed new friendships that will hopefully last a lifetime.

It's good to know Sis. Lori (Bro. Larry) Wiegand and Sis. Mary Ellen (Bro. Steve) Wiegand are both recovering well after their time in the hospital.

We are looking forward to hearing the testimony of our dear friend, Warren Miller, as he shares how God has guided his life in repentance.

Our thanks are extended to Bro. Arnold Gerst (Taylor, MO), Bro. Vernon Leman (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Jim Rinkenberger (Bluffton, IN) for ministering unto us.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY**Perry Klopfenstein**

Our congregation enjoyed the annual Sunday school Christmas program presented December 20. The recitations and singing of our precious youngsters conveyed with clarity the glorious message of Christ's birth. A moving aspect of this program was the final song when the entire Sunday school stood before the church and sang, "Silent Night". The entire church joined in during the last two verses. The melody and message of that beautiful hymn was an appropriate ending.

On December 19 our Sunday school teachers and students (125 scholars) gathered together for a lunch of pizza and Pepsi, followed by presents. Held in our fellowship hall, this is a special tradition for our young people.

As December came to an end, our new ten-unit congregate living complex neared completion. Four apartments are now occupied. Sis. Pauline Witzig was the first resident, moving in November 28. The facility — to be called Sunrise Manor — consists of ten apartments, a dining room to serve one hot meal six days per week and a special World Relief work area. A basement under the World Relief area can be used for storage and special projects.

On the evening of December 9, Elder Bros. Chuck Hemmer (Peoria) and Joe Braker (Morton) assisted Elder Bro. Edwin Ringger in reading the conference letter. In view of the declining morality of our culture, it was both refreshing and inspiring to listen to the Biblical insights intended to draw brethren closer together as we unite to resist our devious enemy. One elder, in referring to our precious church, said, "We really have something going for us!!".

Sis. Kathy Stoller (Bro. Donald and Sis. Vyra Stoller) was united in marriage to Bro. Dennis Meyer (Bro. Harold and Sis. Violet Meyer, Bluffton, IN) December 6. Bro. Bob Meyer, uncle of Bro. Dennis, assisted in the wedding ceremony.

Walter Yergler, 82, was laid to rest December 5. He is survived by four sisters, Lillian Yergler, who resided with him, and Sisters Hermine Miller, Lulu Schlipf and Laura Martin, all of Gridley.

Sis. Julia Schieler was a hospital patient this month.

Sis. Anna Klopfenstein moved to the

Apostolic Christian Home in Peoria December 1.

Bro. Wes Knapp (Goodfield) was a guest minister December 20.

**ILLINOIS,
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Karen Unsicker**

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."

II Peter 1:2

May God be praised for His help and guidance during this past semester. Everyone here at I.S.U. is thankful that finals are over once again and, as promised, rest can now come to the weary.

Before we dispersed to our various home towns for a welcomed Christmas break, on November 19 all of the I.S.U. students gathered together at the Bloomington church for a Christmas program. A special warmth filled our hearts as we sang and praised God for sending His Son to be born for us. Bro. Jaye Rinckenberger (Goodfield) then further blest us with a few thought-provoking words.

God has truly blest us over and over again with the presence of His Spirit. When one reflects over His past love and care, it can only result in further trust. Spring semester will soon arrive, but we anticipate the future fellowship with each other and God.

**ILLINOIS, MORTON
Phyllis Farney — Marcia Kelley**

Sis. Lydia Laidig wishes to thank everyone for their prayers, cards and gifts of love received while in the hospital and since returning home. God bless all who were so thoughtful.

Two dear couples have recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Both couples were married on the same day, November 24, 1937! Bro. John and Minnie Herrmann were married in Seneca, KS, and Henry and Martha Schock were married in Atlantic, IA. It was good to see their families gathered together to help them celebrate this very special occasion as each couple's family hosted an open house in their honor. We wish both couples God's richest blessings as they con-

tinue to walk down life's pathway together, hand in hand.

**OPEN THE WELLS
OF SALVATION**

Lord, I am fondly, earnestly longing
Into Thy holy likeness to grow;
Thirsting for more and deeper communion,
Yearning Thy love more fully to know.
Open the wells of grace and salvation,
Pour the rich streams deep into my heart;
Cleanse and refine my thought and affection,
Seal me and make me pure as Thou art.
Hymns of Zion #171

Yes, the wells of grace and salvation were opened! How we rejoice with Bro. Lawrence and Sis. Annette Tanner as three of their children, Curt, Donna and Brian, gave their testimonies of faith December 6. How wonderful to see three from one family baptized December 6. Now, not only are they a family in the flesh, but also brothers and sisters-in-faith. We pray that our precious new converts will find true peace and happiness in walking with our Lord.

Our Sunday school children and young people presented their Christmas program December 10. We were presented with a challenge to pray that all who participated in and attended the Sunday school Christmas program would receive a blessing, and indeed it was a real blessing to hear about our Savior's birth through verse and song. We thank all, the three-year-olds through the Bible class, for telling us the story that never grows old.

God has blessed first-time parents, Bro. Phil and Sis. Sara Rapp, with a precious little bundle of joy. Allison Ann was born December 12. Her excited and happy grandparents are Bro. Henry and Sis. Bernice Rapp and Bro. William and Sis. Sarah Dietrich (Congerville, IL).

We were thankful to be able to go Christmas caroling December 20 to loved ones who are shut-in. Young and old blended their voices together to sing those beautiful Christmas carols.

This past month was one of birth, rebirth and death for our Morton church. As mentioned, we rejoiced with three new souls born into the family of God, and we welcome a new baby into our congregation, but the

death angel also touched our congregation five times.

Our loved one, Keith Baum, 31, was called into eternity after a lengthy illness. His funeral was November 28. We pray our heavenly Father will comfort and bless his parents, Melvin and Linda; his twin brother, Kenneth; his sister, Melinda; his brothers, Kurt and Craig; and his many other relatives and friends.

Carl F. Uhlman's funeral was December 5. May our Lord extend His comforting hand to Carl's wife, Emma; his sons, Carl J. and Bro. William; his daughters, Elsie Deppert, Wilma Hess and Alice Moser; his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We express our sincere sympathy to the family of Bro. Anton Rother whose funeral was December 9. May Almighty God send His Comforter to heal and bless those who have felt the sting of death, especially his daughters, Sis. Kathryn Miess (Gridley, IL) and Verla Weers (Peoria, IL).

Jesus knows the sorrow felt by the family and friends of Bro. Henry Huette whose funeral was December 11. We extend our sympathy to those loved ones who remain here.

Sis. Marie Belsley was called into eternity. Her funeral was December 20. We wish to extend heartfelt sympathy, and trust that supporting prayer will help comfort her dear helpmate, Bro. Clarence; her daughter, Mary Holmes; her grandchildren; and Sis. Marie's many other relatives and friends.

May the Comforter visit each one who has been bereft of a loved one and provide the healing balm.

We wish to thank Elder Bros. Richard Schupbach (Phoenix, AZ), Bob Grimm (Goodfield, IL), Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO), Ben Maibach (Detroit, MI) and ministering Bros. Dave Wiegand (Urbana, IL), Walt Steffen (Milford, IN), Charles Sinn (Fort Scott, KS) and Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL) for sharing God's Word with us this past month.

May each of you have a very blessed New Year with God's blessings continuing to be yours.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA

Kathy Huthmann

During the Christmas season, we tend to get all caught up in the many

activities and the endless list of things to do, but God had a way of slowing us down. A week before Christmas, we had our first snowfall which turned into a severe snow storm. Our whole city almost came to a complete halt. Many of us were snowed in and had no electricity for a while. Even though we were confined, it was good to stop and spend time at home with family or friends.

We have three new bundles from heaven. Bro. Jim and Sis. Jane Rieker are first-time parents of little Jena Lyn who arrived November 23. Her grandparents are Fred and Sis. Norma Rieker and Bro. John and Sis. Shirley Leuthold (Princeville). On December 15, Joel Christopher was born to Bro. Chris and Sis. Marsha Stickling. Joel's big sister, Julia Kay, also welcomes him home. His grandparents are Ben and Sharon and Russell and Sis. Roma Rumbold (Princeville). Bro. Carl and Sis. Debbie Hoerr have a new daughter. Little Polly is welcomed home by Ryan, Cassie, Carrie and Abby.

"And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

John 16:22

Our deepest sympathy is offered to Sis. Shirley Triplett, Sis. Linda Leathers and their families as their mother, Sis. Kathryn Witzig, passed away suddenly. Our condolences are also extended to the family of Ruth Hansen. May God be near and comfort these families at this time.

We enjoyed a blessed evening December 13 when the children of our Sunday school classes presented the annual Christmas program.

Hospital patients this month were Art Pfister, Sis. Emily Schumacher and Sis. Esther Welk. We pray God will grant unto them His healing power.

We were privileged to hear testimonies December 12 and witness baptisms December 13. We welcome Bro. Todd Schafer (Sis. Barb) and Sis. Terri Hodel (Bro. Irv and Sis. Sharon) into our family. May the Lord guide and direct them as they continue their walk with Him. Our thanks are extended to Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA) for being with us for this special occasion.

Several in our congregation wish to express their thanks. Bro. Dave Sauder would like to thank each one for the

cards, gifts, love, concern and the prayers that were offered on his behalf because of his eye injury. Bro. Jesse and Sis. Lillian Schrock would like to thank everyone who remembered them with prayers, cards and gifts during their recent illnesses. Sis. Donna Ferrero would like to thank all the loved ones for the prayers, gifts, cards and visits she received while in the hospital and since returning home. They were deeply appreciated.

A note of thanks to our relatives and friends for your presence at our 50th anniversary reception; your beautiful cards and gifts, your caring and sharing made our day very special. May your special reward be God's rich blessing. Our grateful thanks to all.

Bro. Joe and Sis. Lydia Hermann

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE Marjean Lehman

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:13, 14

We give thanks again to our visiting ministers, Elder Bro. Robert Beyer (Naumburg, NY), Bro. Harold Schmidgall (Gridley, IL) and Bro. Willis Wiegand (Goodfield). We appreciate their willingness to share the inspired Word of God with us that we may press toward the mark of our high calling.

"Love of all gifts is the greatest..." On November 15 the engagement of Bro. Kurt Christ to Sis. Connie Rumbold (Bradford) was announced. Parents are Bro. Walter and Sis. Doris Christ and Bro. Elwin and Sis. Loretta Rumbold (Bradford). May God bless them as they plan to walk life's pathway together.

Stephanie Regier (Bro. Dana and Sis. Martha) was a hospital patient. John Hager was also a patient in the hospital. May they feel God's healing hand.

"Do not limit the Limitless God! With Him face the new trail and follow on unafraid, for you walk not alone."

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE**Judy Luginbuhl — Marge Leman**

Another New Year has begun. What does it have in store for us? Only God knows. May we always put our trust and confidence in Him.

On November 29, we were privileged to hear the testimonies of Nathan Hoffman (Bro. Tim and Sis. Jean), Karel Braker (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Michaleen) and Tami Zimmerman (Bro. Bob and Sis. Madlyn). May the Lord ever be near to them.

On November 17, Bro. Brent and Sis. Marge Hodel welcomed a new little son, Jacob Matthew, into their home. His brother and sister are Sarah and Nathan. Grandparents are Bro. Joe and Sis. Mardell Aeschleman and Bro. Bill and Sis. Betty Hodel.

Bro. Dan and Sis. Cheri Maher are the parents of Zachery Nathaniel, who was born December 3. He has two brothers, Josh and Cody. Grandparents are Bro. Irvin and Sis. Alice Kempf and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Maher (Princeville).

Some of our loved ones have spent some time in the hospital. They are Brad Sauder (Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan), Sis. Elsie Beer, Sis. Judy Blunier (Bro. Marvin), Sis. Mary Ann Klaus (Bro. Bill) and Tyler Kupferschmidt (Joe and Nancy). Our prayer is that God will grant them a full recovery.

December 13 was the Sunday school Christmas program. It is always a special event for the children and a blessing for all who are present.

We were blessed to have several visiting ministers this past month. We wish to thank Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Morton), Bro. Rod Huber (Valparaiso, IN), Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO), Bro. Ed Aeschleman (Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Will Schieler (Milford, IN) for sharing God's Word with us.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT**Carolyn Bolliger
Dorothy Wagenbach**

As another New Year dawns, we can all look back and count our many blessings. God has been good to us.

A special blessing was a recent addition to the fold of two new sisters and one brother. Our new sisters are Kerin Holmes (Marshall and Sis. Phyllis) and Gail Glueck (Bro. Karl and Sis. Velda). Our new brother is William Schmid. Elder Bro. Bob Grimm (Goodfield)

assisted our Elder Bro. Dan Koch in this blessed weekend of testimonies and baptisms.

We wish to thank Bros. John Steiner (Oakville, IA) and Vernon Wettstein (Congerville) who also gave of themselves ministering to us this month.

We are thankful Helen Bolliger is able to be back in her apartment again after having spent some time in the hospital.

A dear baby son was welcomed into the home of Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kathy Zuercher December 4. Little Mark Andrew has one brother, Aaron, and sisters, Tricia, Tamara, Marci and Melissa.

Our Sunday school children again presented their annual Christmas program. It is always a joy to listen to the children sing and speak of the birth of our Saviour.

Bro. Bob and Sis. Royaldine Hodel wish to thank all who remembered Royaldine with cards, food, gifts and visits during her recent illness.

It was recently made known to us that Bro. Simon Wagenbach is retiring from the ministry after 42 years of service. We thank Bro. Simon for his many years of faithful service and wish him and his wife, Sis. Louise, God's special blessings in their years ahead.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON**Carol Schick**

Greetings from Washington! As I write this newsletter, our community is digging its way out from under ten inches of snow. It came during the night, but most of us were prepared because we were warned by the National Weather Service the day before. As I stood watching the snow fall, the thunder and lightning shook our home and I had to wonder how many people could be saved spiritually, too, if they would only heed the warnings that go out from the pulpit every week.

This month we were blessed with two visiting ministers. Elder Bro. Don Sauder and Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger both shared their love of God and His Word with us. We thank them and enjoy having them and their families with us.

Bro. Ed Wyss, Sr. and Bro. Steve Elsasser were both hospitalized for a time during this past month but both are at home and joining us once again

for services. It is nice to see them among us again and to see God's healing hand at work.

Sis. Sue Ruppert is in the hospital and we are all prayerful that she will recover rapidly and join us soon. We miss her smile and the quiet strength she adds to our church family.

If the Lord so wills it, Washington congregation plans to welcome in the New Year with an all-church chili supper and singing immediately following services that evening. What a blessing it is to live in a country that allows us to praise God wherever and whenever we choose.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON**Lucille Isch — Becky Isch**

Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

Psalms 145:2

Thank You, Father, thank You,
For this year fresh and new,
Another chance to know Your love —
To show my love for You . . .

Another chance to make amends
For yesteryear's mistakes,
To ask forgiveness and forgive
Those little hurts and aches . . .

Thank You for this year that brings
New dreams, new plans, new hopes,
Along with all the strength I need
To climb the steepest slopes . . .

Thank You, Father, thank You,
For this year fresh and new,
A chance to grow, a chance to show
My boundless love for You!

Alice Joyce Davidson

Our congratulations and best wishes go to Sis. Angie Gerber (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Ann) and Bro. Marty Neihouser (Bro. Perry and Sis. Sally, Francesville) who announced their engagement November 29.

We rejoice with Sis. Dorothy Kaehr and Bro. Vernon Gerber (Bluffton North) as they joined hands and exchanged wedding vows December 2. May God bless this couple as they blend their lives and families.

On December 6, Bro. Denny Meyer (Bro. Harold and Sis. Violet) and Sis. Kathy Stoller (Bro. Don and Sis. Vyra, Gridley) were united in holy matri-

mony at Gridley. We welcome Sis. Kathy into our fellowship and wish them our Lord's richest blessings.

Also, on December 6, Todd Steffen (Bro. John and Sis. Etta) and Teresa Flowers repeated their wedding vows. We pray that God will bless them as they begin their walk together.

We extend our sincere sympathy to Bro. Henry Isch and Sisters Ida and Lillian Isch in the loss of their brother, Chester Isch.

On December 3, Sis. Lydia Steffen, 88, was called to her heavenly home. She had resided at Swiss Village the past 10 years. Her children are Bros. Elmer, Harry and Ken Steffen, Hilda Robinson, Sisters Velma Fulkerson, Mary Anne Kaehr and Lucille Borrer. We are thankful that she could go to be with her Lord.

We offer prayers of healing for our loved ones, Bros. Dave Reimschisel and Russ Moser and Sisters Frances Dubach and Ruth (Bro. Keith) Baumgartner, who have been hospitalized this month.

In memory of Randy Joe Aschliman, who died in a farm accident one year ago on January 1, 1987:

His big brown eyes and cut cowlick
are forever missed.
We cannot say and will not say
That he is dead;
He is just away,
With a cheery smile and a wave
of the hand, he has wandered into
An unknown land.

Time and space can never divide
you from our heart and side.
We know you are not far away,
but with us in spirit
Every hour of the day.
The Lord doesn't make mistakes
and only He knows why,
so someday, Randy, we'll meet
you in the sky.

Sadly missed by his family

INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH
Lois Drayer — Debbie Aeschliman

The years that come, the years that go,
As volumes written plain,
Are stored upon the shelf of time
Where memories remain.

Each year is like a little book
With leaves and covers bound.
Our deeds and acts are written there,
The Year's events are found.

Bro. Henry Beer

We are thankful for ministering Bros. Lynn Stieglitz (Leo), Ben Manz (Junction, OH) and Steve Gutwein (Francesville) who came to worship and fellowship with our congregation this past month. We appreciate their coming and welcome them back anytime.

Bro. Vernon Gerber and Sis. Dorothy Kaehr (Bluffton) were married December 2. We rejoice with them along with their children and grandchildren. Surely there will be much happiness as the two families come together.

On December 13, Sis. Darlene Gerber (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Pauline) and Bro. Larry Pfladderer (Bro. Robert and Sis. Norma, Francesville) exchanged their wedding vows. May the Lord richly bless them as they start their new life together.

God has again shown us a miracle through the birth of Taye Lynn, born November 28 to first-time parents, Bro. Blake and Sis. Fawn Gerber. Welcoming Taye Lynn home are grandparents, Bro. Carroll and Sis. Louise Gerber and Bro. William Gene and Sis. Edna Moser.

Going to rest and his reward,
Faithful servant of the Lord.
Weary pilgrim of earth's shore,
Now at rest for evermore.

Bro. Henry Beer

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Dan (Sis. Priscilla) Steffen in the loss of his sister, Sis. Elizabeth Spangler (Bro. Oliver, Junction, OH).

Our prayers are with the family of Sis. Lydia Steffen (Bluffton) who lived a full life to the age of 88 and now has gone to her heavenly home. Surviving children in our congregation are Bro. Elmer (Sis. Dee) Steffen, Sis. Velma Fulkerson, Sis. Mary Ann (Bro. Vernon) Kaehr, Sis. Lucille Borrer and Bro. Ken (Sis. Roberta) Steffen.

Our hospital patients this month were Sis. Dorothy (Bro. Jim) Geisel, Bro. Jay (Sis. Mabel) Rauch and Sis. Mary (Bro. John) Moser. May the Lord watch over and care for each one.

This year will come, the grand New
Year;
No bounds shall mark its days.

Eternal life by merits won,
We'll join in endless praise.
Bro. Henry Beer

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE
Jacki Huber

As we consider all God has given to us, may we in return choose to give Him our lives, unconditionally, in this New Year!

We will miss the sweet, gracious ways of our dear Sis. Mary Lena Gutwein (the late Bro. Carl), as she passed from this life December 10 at 78 years of age. Mary was the mother of ten children: Bros. Nate, Edison, Carl L., Phil, Elden and Rod, and Sisters Maxine Novotny, Mary Louise Westfall, Sharon Denton and Juanita Norman (all of the Francesville congregation). One sister, Sis. Emma Furrer (Wolcott, IN); 41 grandchildren and 41 great-grandchildren especially miss Sis. Mary. We extend our sympathy to all of them, yet rejoice to know she is with the Lord.

Beginning their lives together as one, Sis. Darlene Gerber (Bro. Jerry D. and Sis. Pauline, Bluffton North, IN) and Bro. Larry Pfladderer (Bro. Bob and Sis. Norma Pfladderer) were united in marriage December 13 at the Bluffton North, IN, church. We wish them God's guidance in their lives together.

Looking forward to sharing their lives together, Bro. Marty Neihouser (Bro. Perry and Sis. Sally) and Sis. Angela Gerber (Bluffton North), daughter of Bro. Jerry L. and Sis. Ann (Bluffton, IN), recently announced their engagement. We look forward to having new Christian homes established and pray God's love will continue to bless them.

The innocence and dependency of babies is beautiful and two families are experiencing this first-hand. Bro. Dale and Sis. Terri Pelsy welcome a daughter, Erin Leigh, into their home. Erin was born November 24 and has one older sister, Amy. Grandparents are Bro. Ellsworth and Sis. Luella Pelsy and Mr. and Mrs. Gene Polf (Pine Village, IN).

David and Beth Timmons are happy to welcome a little boy, Brian Nathaniel, into their family. Brian has one big sister, Leslie, and was born December 5. Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Timmons (Lafayette, IN) and Bro. Glen and Sis.

Mary Ann Gutwein are his grandparents.

Ministering Bro. Harold Gramm (Morris, MN) shared the Word with our congregation on a recent Sunday. It's always special to have visitors! We extend our thanks to him and his wife, Sis. Ila, for visiting.

On Saturday, November 28, family and friends of Bro. Walter and Sis. Valera Culp gathered at the fellowship center to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married December 25, 1937. May God continue to bless them.

Quite a few of our loved ones have been hospitalized this past month, most of whom are back with us again. They are Sisters Lena Ward, Cami Vogt (Bro. Ron and Sis. Dianne) and Mary Louise Westfall (Bro. Carl), Mike Linback, Benjie Masten (grandson of Bro. Virgil and Sis. Viola Von Tobel), Bros. Walter Culp, Elmer Anliker and Randy Wuethrich (Bro. Rich and Sis. Nola). We pray for continued health for each one.

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS

Kathy Freed — Gail Bradford

Visiting ministers continue to support and encourage us! This month they included Bros. Michael Thomas (Valparaiso), Chris Huber (Francerville), Kevin Knapp and Denny Kaufmann (Bloomington-Normal, IL) and Kenneth Schneider (Remington).

We welcome Sis. Lisa Schneider to Indianapolis where she will study this year. She is the daughter of Bro. Ken and Sis. Loretta Schneider. We also welcome little Shawna Noelle Wuethrich, born November 19 to Bro. Blake and Sis. Kim. She joins her "big" sisters, Tiara and Blair.

During the season, we enjoyed two suppers at church with visitors from several congregations. We sang and distributed gifts at the Broad Ripple Nursing Home. The Sunday school provided food and clothing to a needy family. The classes also presented a Christmas program about giving.

As the year 1988 unfolds before us, we wonder what it will bring? Will it be happy? Will it be sad? What events will occur around us and to us? None of these questions will be answered for us until the year is past. But we can plan to meet whatever the year brings, by

putting on "the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Ephesians 6:11. We can make our way through the year as a victim of the devil, or a victor in Christ. It will be our own choice. No one else can decide for us.

If we ignore the Lord and help He promises, we will be defenseless. But if we let the Lord abide in our hearts, we can claim Christ as our shield and protector, our refuge and our haven of rest! No one but ourselves can separate us from God's love: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Romans 8:35, 37.

A dear sister attached this reminder to her kitchen door as the New Year approached:

"A new year lies before you,
Like a spotless tract of snow;
Be careful how you tread on it
For every mark will show."

INDIANA, LACROSSE

Sandy Heinold

Be present, gracious Father,
To give away this bride,
As Eve thou gav'st to Adam
Out of his own pierced side:
Be present, blessed Jesus
To join their loving hands,
As Thou didst bind two natures
In Thine eternal bands.

"The Voice That Breathed O'er Eden"
Hymns of Zion #196

Two lives were joined as one in the Lord when Sis. Ruth Ann Nuest (Bro. Elvin and Sis. Janet) became the wife of Bro. John Lehman (Harold and June, Wolcott) November 22. May God be the unseen guest as they establish their Christian home.

This past month we enjoyed the visits of the following ministers: Bros. Gene Lehman and Vernon Schwab (Wolcott, IN), Bro. Wayne Lehman (South Bend, IN), Bro. Dan Stoller (Remington, IN) and Bro. Marshall Heinold (Washington, IL). We thank them for their efforts on our behalf.

On December 6, Bro. Art Gudeman preached his last sermon in our La-

Crosse church. We surely received a blessing that day and felt God's guiding hand. As his wife, Sis. Mary, has now recovered sufficiently for them to go to Florida, we truly miss them, along with all of our loved ones who are absent from us during the winter months.

The season is now upon us when we think upon the birth of Christ. As the Sunday school children tell of it in their pieces, and we sing of it in the beautiful Christmas carols, may the love of God fill our hearts and minds with so much peace and joy that we can share it with those around us in the coming year. If we possess that true love of Christ, we can celebrate Christmas all year long.

INDIANA, LAFAYETTE PURDUE UNIVERSITY

Gina Huber

We were blessed to have Bro. Ken Wuethrich (Indianapolis) come and share God's Word with us. It's so good to be reminded of where our priorities in life should be.

We had many visitors with us for our Christmas program this year. Several groups sang several different songs for us, but yet they all had the same meaning . . . to remind us of the real meaning of Christmas and of the love of God to send His only Son as a tiny Babe who would later die on the cross for us. Although God already gave the greatest Gift, the best gift we could ever give to Him is to give Him our whole heart as this simple poem says:

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wiseman, I would do my part;
Yet what can I give Him?
I'll give Him my heart.

INDIANA, LEO Thelma Schlatter

The New Year lies before you
Like a spotless tract of snow;
Be careful how you tread upon it
For every mark will show.

"Lord, prepare me for what you are preparing for me." It's an attitude we

need as we step into a new year, unknown to us, but known to Him.

A little boy was having difficulty lifting a heavy stone. His father came along just then. Noting the boy's failure, he asked, "Are you using all your strength?"

"Yes, I am," the boy answered impatiently.

"No, you're not," the father answered. "I'm right here waiting and you haven't asked me to help you."

When we are faced with a problem that seems unsolvable or a burden that is too heavy, we might ask ourselves, "Are we using all our strength?" Our Father, too, is waiting to help.

Edifying messages were brought by visiting ministers Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI) and Bros. Paul Gasser (Akron, OH) and Carl Wyss (Washington, IL).

Congratulations are expressed to Bro. William and Sis. Nancy Klopfenstein on their new granddaughter, Corrie Lynn, presented to them by their daughter, Lynn, and son-in-law, Denny Winslow (Indianapolis).

Bits of This and That:

Do unto others as though you were the others.

If you wouldn't write it and sign it, don't say it.

Deal with the faults of others but look over your own carefully.

All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.

This writer wishes you a Christ-centered New Year.

INDIANA, MILFORD

Marguerite Hoerr — Sue Schieler

Amid the hurry and scurry, and the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, we have to keep reminding ourselves that "Jesus is the reason for the season." One of the highlights of the season is going caroling and what a joy to sing those beautiful old carols we love so dearly to those we dearly love.

Kent and Chris Doty are happy parents of a sweet little daughter, Erin Diane, born November 13. Big brother, Brent, is thrilled to have a sister. Grandparents are Bro. Phil and Sis. Millie Beer and Harry and Kate Doty of Milford.

Sis. Helen Baumgartner has been

hospitalized and we miss her in our congregation. She was recently transferred to the Lakeland Loving Care Nursing Home, located behind our church and would welcome any cards or letters.

INDIANA, REMINGTON Susan Getz — Beth Virkler

Our congregation was small on Thanksgiving Day as many brethren have families from out of town whom they gathered with to remember our Lord with grateful hearts. Bro. Will Schieler (Milford, IN) brought several penetrating questions to our hearts as he brought forth the Word. The majority of the men who founded our country possessed Biblically-led hearts and deemed it most appropriate to print on our coinage "In God We Trust". Yet two hundred years later we find ourselves challenged when the question is asked, "Is it in "God" that we trust or is it in "Goods" that we trust? I faced myself with that question and came up short and wanting. Too often I knew that the excitement I feel when I get something new . . . something different was a precise indicator of the trust that I have in the "goods" of this life. Oh to be nothing, lying at Jesus' feet waiting to be filled with His grace with all other affections laid beneath the cross.

On the Saturday evening of Thanksgiving weekend, Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA) traveled to be with us and share the conference letter with our brethren. He was also with us on Sunday along with Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler, our local elder from Wolcott.

On December 18, Bro. Calvin and Sis. Jeannie Schneider experienced the beginning of parenthood with the arrival of Lindsey Nicole. Grandparents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Loretta Schneider and Bro. Gene and Sis. Norma Nuest (LaCrosse, IN).

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND Sue Beebe

"Sing praise to God, all ye who love the Saviour,
Extol His actions; praise His faithfulness!

Sing praise to Him, who first showed us His favor,
His loving kindness in your song express!"

"Now and Then,"
Zion's Harp #191

On November 22 many from our church family sang for Sis. Rosena Hueni at the Bremen Health Care Facility where she is a resident. We hope that she could feel God's faithfulness and loving kindness through our expression of song.

A precious baby boy, Thomas Kurt, was welcomed into the family circle of Bro. Marty and Sis. Lavilla Langhofer November 27. Bill, Craig, Bradley, Keyna and Ila are lovingly helping to care for him. Grandparents are Bro. Al and Sis. Judy Langhofer (Wichita, KS) and Bro. Oscar and Sis. Francis Zaugg (West Bend, IA).

"Serve the Lord with gladness."

Psalms 100:2

Our annual business meeting was held December 9. The following brethren were chosen to serve in various capacities: Trustee, Bro. Scott Schafer; Treasurer, Bro. Pat Meyer; Secretary, Bro. Don Lehman; Food Committee Assistant Chairman, Sis. Gigi Schafer; Vacation Bible School Assistant Director, Sis. Renee Mangold; Head Song Leader, Bro. Steve Stoller; Ushers, Bros. John Schuch, Scott Schafer and Don Lehman; World Relief Representative, Bro. Marty Langhofer; Personal Property Aid, Bro. Pat Meyer; Leo Children's Home Representative and Sound System Chairman, Bro. Don Lehman; Silver Lining Reporter, Sis. Sue Beebe.

On December 13 our Sunday school children presented us with some Christmas songs and thoughts. Following their program we all enjoyed a time of caroling for our shut-ins, and then a chili supper.

A thought for the new year —
Every morning lean thine arms awhile
Upon the windowsill of heaven
And gaze upon thy Lord.
Then, with the vision in your heart,
Turn strong to meet your day!

Author Unknown

Give Your Address Changes
To Your Reporter

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:20. Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on all the ways God has blessed us. May we always strive to appreciate these blessings and not take them for granted.

Bro. Andy and Sis. Diane Moser were commissioned by the Lord to care for another of His precious treasures, little Brandon, who has now gone back to his family. May God keep him in His tender care.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. John Reinhard (Bluffton) and Elder Bros. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton) and Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL). We thank them for serving us His Word.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT**Elaine Bahler — Lorene Furrer**

November 22 was a blessed day when Bro. John Lehman (Harold and June) and Sis. Ruth Ann Nuest (Bro. Elvin and Sis. Janet, LaCrosse) were united in marriage. We welcome Sis. Ruth Ann to Wolcott.

As a new couple is brought together in this earthly life, another is separated. Bro. LeRoy Kyburz, 73, passed from this life November 23 to that eternal goal, leaving his wife, Sis. Edna, and four sons, Bro. Lloyd, Roger, Bro. Jerry and Ron. We wish Sis. Edna and all the family God's comforting nearness.

Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA) was with us November 29 to help our Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler read the conference report.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Emma Furrer on the death of her sister, Sis. Mary Gutwein (Francesville).

Sis. Marilyn Scheiler has been in the hospital recently and is back home recovering. We pray that God's strengthening and loving hand will be with her.

Our children told us in songs and poems the wonderful story of Christ's birth — our reason for celebrating Christmas. It was a nice evening and pretty with a bit of snow, when many of us went caroling. A delicious lunch and fellowship afterwards topped off the evening. May the New Year be a blessed one for everyone.

IOWA, BURLINGTON**Dixie Messner — Karen Schulz**

On November 23, we laid to rest our dear Sis. Minnie Siegle. We extend our sympathy to her two daughters, Marie Ann Fisher (West Bend) and Sis. Evelyn Massner, and four sisters, Sis. Ruth Reiman (Burlington), Sis. Marie Zaugg, Elizabeth Hartman and Rose Crane (all of Fort Scott, KS).

We were thankful to have several ministering brothers, Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL), Bro. Dale Frank (Oakville) and Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski) with us this past month. May the Lord bless them for their efforts.

We were pleased to hear the engagement of Sis. Carolyn Massner (Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Edith) and Bro. Leroy Wulf (Bro. Bill and Sis. Leona, Morris, MN). We wish them God's richest blessings as they establish a Godly home.

Kara Lynn, born December 14, is the new daughter of Bro. Fred and Sis. Kathy Eberhardt. She is welcomed home by a brother and sister, Jonathan and Kayla, as well as grandparents, Bro. Joe and Sis. Ruby Eberhardt (Oakville) and Paul and Sis. Evelyn Pulfer (Elgin, IA). May they seek the Lord's guidance as they seek to rear her in His ways.

A reminder: February is collection month for Burlington.

IOWA, ELGIN**Gloria Frieden**

One night, not long ago, while driving to work in heavy fog, I can remember being so thankful for the yellow line in the middle of the road. As long as I could keep my eyes on it, I felt a certain degree of safety. I had to compare it to our spiritual walk of life and the importance of keeping our eyes focused on our Lord and His example and teachings lest we stray too far to the right or left and meet with great danger. As we enter again into a new year, not knowing what the future holds, may we commit each day unto the Lord with faith, believing that He will be with us no matter how dark and foggy the way may seem.

I don't know about tomorrow,

It may bring me poverty.

But the One who feeds the sparrow,

Is the One who stands by me.

And the path that be my portion

May be through the flame or flood
But His presence goes before me,
And I'm covered with His blood.

Ira Stanphill

Our ministering Bro. Bert Butikofer was a recent hospital patient (surgical). We are thankful that he is back home and worshipping with us.

God has given much knowledge and skill to surgeons today so that the sick and damaged heart can be repaired. But his knowledge and skill would be of no avail without faith to submit to it. God has also provided healing for the sinsick heart through the death of His Son, but He died in vain for those who do not surrender to His healing power.

Jesus take this heart of mine

Make it pure and wholly Thine
Thou hast bled and died for me,
I will henceforth live for Thee.

Our annual election meeting was held with Bro. Lon Butikofer being elected Bible class teacher; Bro. Jim Knoblock - Jr. Bible class teacher; Bro. Floyd Frieden - trustee; Bro. Charles Schneider - charge of speaker and Bro. John Schupbach - head song leader.

Note of thanks — Beulah and I would like to express our appreciation to the brotherhood of faith for the prayers and cards we received during my recent illness. May the Lord richly bless you. Thank you.

Bro. Bert and Sis. Beulah Butikofer

IOWA, IOWA CITY**Bonita Frank**

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
Through good and evil weather,
Two better speed than one alone,
So let us go together.

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
You know I'll never fail you,
And doubts and fears of the unknown
Shall never more assail you.

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
I'll share your joys and sorrows.
And hand in hand we'll seek the throne
And God's great glad tomorrows.

Come, share the road with Me, My own,
And where the black clouds gather,

I'll share thy load with thee, My son,
And we'll press on together.

And as we go we'll share also
With all who travel on it.
For all who share the road with Me
Must share with all upon it.

So make we — all one company,
Love's golden cord our tether,
And, come what may, we'll climb the
way
Together — aye, together!

“Roadmates”
by John Oxenham

We welcome a newcomer to our congregation. Dwight Mogler (son of Bro. Howard and Sis. Lollie Mogler, Lester) is temporarily in the area because of his employment. We are glad God has sent him our way for awhile.

Our visiting ministers this past month have been: Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Oakville), Bro. Clifford Grimm (West Bend), Bro. Dale Frank (Oakville) and Bro. John Rowell (Burlington). We appreciate these ministers and their families making the effort to come and be with us to bring us God's Word.

IOWA, LESTER

Kathy Metzger — Mary Knobloch

As we reflect over the past year, our hearts are filled with gratitude for the many blessings God has shared so abundantly. Our prayer is that each individual will in turn glorify God's name with the fruit of the Spirit — love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. If our soul is fed with this fruit it shall never go hungry and will indeed be filled to overflowing!

It is humbling to realize God will never leave nor forsake His children. During times of illness, many dear ones lean heavily upon this precious promise. Surgical patients the past month were Sis. Elaine Kellenberger, Neil Knobloch (Bro. Ezra and Sis. Marie) and Bro. Gene Nester. Ladell Kellenberger (Sis. Elaine) was a medical patient. We are thankful to report that each one is home and recuperating nicely. May God continue to manifest His healing powers among the afflicted and help them to accept His will in their lives.

LET US SEEK GOD'S GUIDANCE THROUGH THE YEAR

As the threatening “Clouds of Chaos”
Gather in man's muddled mind
While he searches for answer
He alone can never find,
May God turn our vision skyward
So that we can see above
The gathering clouds of darkness,
And behold God's brightening love —
For today we're facing problems
Man alone can never solve,
For it takes much more than genius
To determine and resolve
The conditions that confront us
All around on every side,
Daily mounting in intensity
Like the restless, rising tide —
But we'll find new strength and wisdom
If instead of proud resistance
We humbly call upon the Lord
And seek DIVINE ASSISTANCE,
For the spirit can unravel
Many tangled, knotted threads
That defy the skill and power
Of the world's best hands and heads
For the plans of growth and progress
Of which we all have dreamed
Cannot survive materially
Unless the SPIRIT is redeemed —
So as another year dawns
Let us seek the Lord in prayer
And place our future hopes and plans
Securely in God's care.

Helen Steiner Rice

IOWA, OAKVILLE Debbie Wagenbach

We know that the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repents. It is with much joy and thankfulness, we welcome Diane Massner (Bro. Ben and Sis. Phyllis Knobloch) and Joni Lanz (Elder Bro. Ed and Sis. Joan) as sisters-in-faith. We wish God's blessings and guidance to our dear sisters as they pick up their crosses and follow our Lord. Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) was in our congregation and assisted Bro. Ed with the testimonies and baptisms.

We are so happy to have yet another precious little blossom added to our congregation. Curt and Karen Grimm's home has been blessed with another little boy, Brenton Jay. Bradley, along with Brenton's grandparents, Bro. Mark and Sis. Margaret Grimm and Ray and Phyllis McCulley (Wapello,

IA) are thankful for a new little playmate and grandson.

Bros. Uriel Gehring (Leo, IN), Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA), Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO), Howard Plattner (Wichita, KS) and Lynn Stieglitz (Leo, IN) have all recently brought forth the precious Word of Life in our Oakville congregation. May God reward them for their diligent efforts to carry out the duties that are laid upon them.

IOWA, WEST BEND

Polly Zaugg — Phyllis Banwart

Again, we received a blessing from the teachings left us the past month by our visiting ministers, Bro. Joe Gerst (Iowa City), Elder Bro. Sam Anliker (Lamont, KS), Bro. Dale Moore (Elgin, IA), Bro. Wes Moser (Lester) and Bro. Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN).

The engagement of Sis. Carolyn Gerber (Bro. Noah and Sis. Emma) to Bro. Alfred Banwart (Sis. Caroline, Lamar, MO) was made known November 15. We wish for them the Lord's blessings as they take this step together.

We are happy to report the arrival of Amanda Rose Gerber (Dave and Diane) November 27. On hand to love her are Carl and Annette, as well as grandparents, Bro. Noah and Sis. Emma and Mark and Laura Montag.

Many thoughts and sincere prayers have been with the loved ones that have been hospitalized this month. They are Trina Haverman (Don and Mona), Mike Tapavica, Louisa Anliker (Reuben), Sis. Elizabeth Metzger (Bro. Duane) and Sis. Sara Metzger (Bro. Duane and Sis. Elizabeth).

We want to extend our sympathy to Warren and Moira Kellenberger, Bryan and John in the loss of their father and grandfather, John J. Doyle. Sympathy is also extended to Harold and Marie Fisher, Anita and Carrie as their mother and grandmother, Sis. Minnie Siegle (Oakville) passed away. We extend our sympathy to Sis. Katherine Fisher in the loss of her brother, Ben Zaugg (Rockford, IL) formerly of the West Bend area.

Reuben and Louisa Anliker are now residing at the West Bend Care Center.

Our annual business meeting was held December 2. Brothers and sisters were elected to various duties: Trustee, Bro. Harley Bruellman; Usher, Bro.

John Schmidt; Public Address, Bro. Mark Skoglund and Bro. Bill Zaugg; World Relief, Sis. Marilyn Banwart and Fellowship Center Trustee, Bro. Verner Wirtz. We thank all those who have completed their terms in these duties. Several brothers and sisters have also been chosen to fill positions on several committees and we thank those who have completed those duties, too.

JAPAN, SHIODA
Kathy Kieser

"Be glad! Be glad! The Lord Jesus is born!" resounds in chorus throughout our kindergarten as the children once again tell the story of Jesus' birth through a Christmas play.

In addition to our kindergarten Christmas program, we also have a Sunday school program. The kindergarten children who attend Sunday school are busy practicing for two programs.

We are now planning for our annual Christmas eve service and dinner at the church.

Our annual church business meeting was held at the end of November.

JAPAN, TOKYO
Frank and Kathy Sauder

As the city of Tokyo awakened the first Sunday in December, everyone was surprised to discover the earth covered with snow. It is reported that this is the first time in 25 years that it snowed in December. To Christians, snow is a symbol of purity, and one is reminded of the words of the prophet Isaiah (1:18): "... though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ...". How sad it is that so few people understand these words.

In December, we concluded our first year of monthly Bible classes for interested neighbors. We had been studying the character of Christ, first looking at how He is our Friend, then as our Teacher, Lord, and finally, Savior. In our last class, we talked about Christ's resurrection. At first the students thought it was unusual to be studying this at Christmas time, but through the class we came to a deeper understanding of Christmas, realizing that without

His resurrection, there would be no Christmas.

We look forward to the third Sunday in December when the Sunday school children will tell us the Christmas story through song and verse, and then again on Christmas Eve when we will gather for a worship service.

We welcome Sis. Kathy Inoue's parents, Bro. Wayne and Sis. Carol Huber to Japan. We rejoice that this year the Hubers will be able to celebrate Christmas with their family living in Japan.

On January 7, Lord willing, Elder Bro. Nathan and Sis. Marilyn Steffen, Bro. Jim and Sis. Virginia Hoerr, and Elder Bro. John and Sis. Lois Klotzle will stop off in Japan for four days before proceeding to India to carry out our churches' work with the Rural Gospel Medical Mission. We look forward to their visit and wish them God's blessings as they continue to India.

KANSAS, BERN
Shirley Strahm
Lori Baumgartner

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light, that I may tread safely into the unknown,' and he replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'"

penned by British author,

M. Louise Haskins
spoken by King George III
of England (Christmas 1939)

As we begin this new year of 1988, may we rely on our Lord above, for it is only through faith in Him that we can go safely on.

Our visiting ministers this past month were Bro. Leland Plattner (Zapata, TX) and Bro. Edwin Bahler (Remington, IN). We thank them for ministering the Word unto us.

Hospitalized this past month were Bethany Strahm (Bro. Wilfred and Sis. Verona Strahm) and Sis. Lou Menold (Bro. James). We are thankful that they are back and in good health.

We gladly welcome to our congregation a new little one, who was born November 28. We rejoice with his parents, Bro. Paul and Sis. Joan Kaeb and their family.

Bro. Emil and Sis. Grace Strahm of our congregation observed their 50th wedding anniversary this past month. We rejoice with them that God has given them these fifty years together.

KANSAS, GRIDLEY
Vola Young — Judy Kraft

As we approach a new year we often reflect back to events that occurred over the past year, the changes, the impact that these experiences brought to our lives. We then look to the new year wondering the course and direction our lives will take. No doubt there will be changes in each of our lives. Some changes will be welcome and maybe wonderful. We might have to deal with the other end of the spectrum of changes which bring hard times, possibly sorrow and grief. In our ever changing world, comfort can be drawn by God's unchangeableness. The scripture verse, Hebrews 13:8, comes to mind — Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

Truly it is a calm to look to our Lord, no matter the circumstances of our lives, and by faith find Him unchangeable, His power evident, His presence always available, His peace that can sustain, His grace sufficient and His love everlasting.

Sympathy is extended to Bro. Rudy Bahr and family after the death of his brother, Lester Bahr.

Samuel and Sandy Somerhalder are the happy parents of their first daughter, Synthia Rae. She has two brothers, Christopher and Sammie, to welcome her home. Bro. Joseph and Sis. Edna Somerhalder and Jean Schwindt are the grandparents.

The engagement announcement of Bro. Richard Kraft and Sis. Marianne Kuenzi was made known to us. We rejoice that these two loved ones have been drawn together by God's direction and will. They are both from the Silverton, OR, congregation. Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Nadine are Richard's parents.

KANSAS, KIOWA
Darcy Kisling — Janice Bahr

Beginning a new year of service for our Lord is always refreshing. May we

not waste a precious moment that we could use ministering to others and lifting them heavenward on His wings of love. This year, as we increase in the fruit of the Spirit, may we ever praise His name and give Him the glory and honor He deserves.

Beautiful fluffy flakes of snow drifted softly around our horses and wagon as our group sang carols to members of our community in celebration of our Saviour's birth. Our Sunday school children and their leaders served refreshments and handed out gifts at the rest home as they sang carols.

Our Christmas program is always inspiring as we behold the re-enactment of Jesus' birth. The miracle of God's plan to bring our Saviour to earth as a babe never fails to touch our hearts. May this be a reminder of the life and suffering of our risen Lord as we look forward with eagerness to His second coming.

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Isaiah 40:31

KANSAS, SABBETHA

Charleen Hartter — Nita Grimm

"The Lord will come, and He is near to meet His own with gladness. O that His vision would appear; Great joy would banish sadness. If now today in majesty, we'd see Him come, then surely we would weep for joy and gladness!"

"The Coming of Christ",
Zion's Harp #56

What a beautiful reminder of the "Coming of Christ" was given to us the weekend of December 12 - 13 when three precious souls were added to the flock of Jesus, our Shepherd. Selena (Bailey) Brownlee, Lisa Steiner and Larry Bailey became our sisters and brother-in-the-Lord upon their testimony of faith. We were exhorted to be alert in these evil, latter days and warned of many "signs of the times" that are rapidly fulfilling themselves in this generation, pointing to the coming of Christ. The Saviour questioned whether there would be faith in the

earth when He comes again; and may it be so that all who believe and are committed will be found faithful unto death!

Little Heidi Anne Hartter came to join the family circle of Bro. Tim and Sis. Charleen November 27. She has two happy brothers, Seth and John, for playmates! Grandparents are Bro. Edwin and Sis. Lois Bahler (Remington, IN) and Bro. Virgil and Sis. Marie Hartter.

We've been blest this past month with a host of visiting ministers. Included were Bro. Wayne Miller (Fort Scott), Elder Bros. Gene Marti (Lamar, MO) and Lester Hartter (Bern), Bros. Alpha Strahm and John Leman (Bern), Wes Moser (Lester, IA), Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR), Leland Plattner (Zapata, TX), Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI), Edwin Bahler (Remington, IN) and Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Morris, MN). May we hold up their spiritual arms in faith and love that God's Spirit will be manifested among us!

Hospital patients this month have been Sis. Marjorie Edelman, Bros. Velmer Meyer and Joe Steiner.

Wishing all a blessed year in 1988!

KANSAS, WICHITA

Emma Miller

Our congregation has been gathering on Wednesday nights to hear the taped messages from the August conference. Ecclesiastes 3:1 states, "To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven." We appreciate the fact that there was a time for the messages to be spoken and that there is a time for us to hear them.

Three of our brothers have been seriously ill this past month. Bro. Ernest Lambert was hospitalized and is recuperating at home. Bro. Milton Bowers likewise was hospitalized and is now home for extended care. Bro. Art Wullchleger remains hospitalized at this writing and is critically ill. We invite you to join us in prayer for these brothers and their families during this time of stress.

Our precious friend, Earl Carter, has accepted a position in Holland, IN, beginning in January. His wife, Sis. Carol, will remain here with the family until the end of the school year. Earl has been such a willing worker as our choir director and we all feel a personal

loss that this family will be uprooted from our congregation. We trust the Lord's timing in their lives as we know that they trust in Him.

Sis. Judy and Bro. Al Langhofer have been on extended leaves from our assembly. We welcomed them back in December and rejoice to have them with us.

Our Sunday school students will present a Christmas program the Sunday before Christmas. They are so willing to share their enthusiasm and talent for the Lord.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON Glenda Neukomm

"His name shall be called Emmanuel . . . God with us." (Matthew 1:23) "The Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

"There's a song in the air!

There's a star in the sky!

There's a mother's deep prayer,

And a baby's low cry!

And the star rains its fire

While the beautiful sing.

For the manger of Bethlehem cradles
a King."

Karl P. Harrington

Let us be glad and rejoice today that our Lord came that day so long ago. May His Spirit be alive in us that we could experience in reality Christ's birth in our hearts this Christmas.

We are very grateful for the visiting ministers who so faithfully come and share with us and also the fellowship of other visitors, relatives and friends who come. May God bless each for sharing with us; it truly is a blessing to the Lexington church.

Our visitors for the past month were: Bro. Virgil and Sis. Ruth Heinold (LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Dennis and Sis. Bonnie Kaufman and family (Bloomington, IL, visiting minister), Bro. Ken and Sis. Dvonne Rinkenberger and family (Bloomington, IL), Bro. Rick and Sis. Marla Ringger and family (Morton, IL), Bro. Marv and Sis. Joan Stieglitz (Leo, IN, visiting minister), Bro. Jerry and Sis. Marge Fischer (Roanoke, IL), Bro. Paul and Sis. Joyce Gasser (Akron, OH, visiting minister), Bro. Nelson and Sis. Aldine (Akron, OH) and Steve, Pam, Paul and Sarah Huber (Suffolk, VA).

We welcome Bro. Eugene and Sis. Millie Huber (Francesville, IN) here with us for several months. May the Lord bless them for coming to support and share in the ministry here.

We always enjoy having Matt Knobloch (originally from Lester, IA, congregation) with us, who is stationed at Richmond, KY. We certainly wish him God's blessings in his career. Because of his extended training and duties, it doesn't always work out for him to be with us.

The Huber family enjoyed all being home together Thanksgiving Day and having Steve and his family here for a few days from Virginia.

MICHIGAN, ALTO Juanita Gerst

As another new year dawns, it is our prayer for each other that God's rich blessings will be upon us in the days until Christ's return.

We welcome into the fold two new brothers-in-Christ. We rejoice with our new Bros. Matt Steffen (Bro. Aaron and Sis. Loretta) and Mark Steffen (Carl and Sis. Myrna).

Special thanks are expressed to Elder Bro. Nate Steffen (Elgin, IL) for assisting our Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen in this work.

Our prayers are with Bro. Elmer Schrenk (Sis. Delila) and Sis. Pat Schlatter (Bro. Otto) as they recover from surgery this month.

A baby is one of God's special blessings to parents here on earth. Martin and Michele Blough, along with Gina and Heather, welcome Melissa Rose into their hearts and home. It is always special to receive such a little package to take care of.

With the coming of snow some of our loved ones move to a warmer climate. We will miss Bro. Dave and Sis. Bertha Wingeler and Bro. Elmer and Sis. Delila Schrenk as they make their homes in different areas for the winter months.

We wish God's blessings to each one in the coming New Year.

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY Pam Schlatter

Jeremiah wrote of the Lord's mercies and compassions as "new every morning". Lamentations 3:23. As we begin a new year, let's remember that a

new year not only affords us an opportunity for a fresh start, but indeed every day we have opportunity to become more what God intends us to be.

We are thankful that Nathan Wieland (Bro. Roger and Sis. Sandy) has recognized his need of a Saviour. We wish him grace during his conversion process and an awareness that he must build upon the Solid Rock.

Another soul has tasted of the peace of God! John Jackson (Bro. Richard and Sis. Yolanda) was announced as having peace with God and man. Peace truly is a gift the world didn't give to us, but rather it is a gift given to us by God to share with the world.

At this Christmas season we particularly remember our sick who are unable to attend some of the special events the holiday season brings. Surgery patients this month include Sis. Marie Waibel (Bro. George) and Sis. Edith Wieland (Bro. Daryle). Bro. Daryle Wieland also was hospitalized during the last month but is again able to attend with us.

Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) visited our congregation in the past month. We thank him for his service to our congregation in having broken the Bread of Life to us. In a natural sense, we know food is more readily digested when chewed in small pieces. That, too, can be the case when a chapter is "broken apart" and analyzed bit by bit. We thank our ministering brethren for sometimes assisting us in being able to better digest the scriptures.

The following is a thank you note submitted by Bro. Curt Heimer: We wish to thank everyone for the prayers and words of encouragement offered during my illness. God bless each of you.

Bro. Curt, Sis. Sue and Seth Heimer

MICHIGAN, DETROIT Donna Hartzler

"We are going down the valley one by one,
With our faces tow'rd the setting of the sun;
Down the valley where the mournful cypress grows,
Where the stream of death in silence onward flows.
We are going down the valley, going down the valley,

Going tow'rd the setting of the sun;
We are going down the valley, going down the valley,
Going down the valley one by one.

J. H. Fillmore

Sympathy is extended to those of our congregation who have lost loved ones and relatives during the past few weeks. May all find comfort in the words, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psalms 46:1.

Sis. Helen (Ilona) Nagy, 81, passed away December 13. Sis. Helen was born in Bacs Foldvar, Hungary, and immigrated to Canada several years ago. She is survived by a sister, Maria Lorincz, and many nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held in Windsor, Ontario.

Andrew Pentek, 91, passed away Monday, December 21. Surviving are his wife, Sis. Mary Pentek; daughter, Goldie; and son, John. Sis. Mary needs our prayers as she fell and had to be hospitalized.

Bro. Joe Szilagyi remains in the hospital. He continues to experience complications and his progress is slow since surgery. Let us remember him and his wife, Sis. Martha, in our prayers.

We appreciate visitors and especially visiting ministers. Our thanks are extended to Bro. Vernon Schwab for ministering to us Sunday, December 20. May the Lord bless his labors and the labors of all who are called to minister God's Word.

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS Carol Strassheim

WINTER

How cold the snow must be.
Yet still the earth it warms,
To shelter now the seeds of Spring
'Gainst later, colder storms.

How hard our trials seem
When in the grip of pain.
Yet God in grace allows it all
For future, greater gain.

Let minds then be renewed,
Let hearts with courage sing.
For seeds by winter's trials ahead
Will blossom in the Spring.

Then Summer harvest comes

Whose bounty bids us warn
That faith amid the snows will bring
A hundred-fold return.

Dave Breese

A very happy welcome came to Dave and Diane (Olson) Stewart. On December 10 a beautiful baby girl was born and they named her Laura Diane. We are thankful for them for this wonderful healthy blessing.

We were happy to hear of the engagement of Bro. Larry Schmidgall (Bro. Ray and Sis. Millie) to Sis. Marcy Schmidt (Gene and Sis. Ella Mae, Winthrop). We are so excited for them and pray that they will have a joyous future together in the Lord. Elder Bro. Harold Messner was here for the announcement.

Our combined prayers go to Bro. Richard Willer as he is spending time in the hospital. He and Beatrice both need prayer at this time.

On December 6 the church went Christmas caroling at the Gillette Children's Hospital. A week later, on December 13, we had our annual Christmas program with the children. We then went caroling at the Nicolette Nursing Home. After the refreshing walk back for most of us, we had a dinner together at the church. Ministering Bro. Alphai Moser (Morris) spent the day with us.

Renee Messner (Todd), at peace with God and man, is awaiting baptism. It is a real blessing for our little church.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Ruth Nohl — Hildegard Koehl

Here we are at the beginning of another year. Time has slipped by so fast and 1987 is gone from us. What awaits us in 1988, none of us know, but prayerfully we enter this new year. Let's be ready to lend a helping hand, an encouraging word and brighten the path for those we live with and labor beside.

A little son, Aaron, has been welcomed into the home of Dan and Dawn Jepma. Aaron has an older sister for a playmate. Bro. LeRoy and Sis. Judy Fehr are the grandparents.

Twin sons, Justin Charles and Jared Fredric, were born December 3 to Fred and Tammy Moser. Bro. Bill and Sis. Joyce Moser are the excited grandparents.

Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL) shared a weekend with us and brought to us renewed vigor to serve our Lord. We thank Bro. Earl for his inspiring messages and pray the Lord will bestow upon him and his family many blessings.

Over the Thanksgiving holiday many ministering brothers were here visiting family. Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA), Bro. Kent Mogler and Bro. Ken Lawson (Minneapolis, MN) and Bro. Greg Gramm (Phoenix, AZ) labored in the Saviour's name. Elder Bro. Sam Huber also spent a Sunday with us this month.

Bro. Alphai Moser, Bro. Ort Nohl, Bro. Carl and Sis. Helen Joos and four-year-old Lucas Koehl have all spent time in the hospital. May we all continue to pray for each other to help one another through the trials in this life.

December 9 quite a large crowd gathered at the church to join in caroling to many loved ones who have not been able to assemble with us all the time. We delighted in the warmer temperatures this year as we caroled and also in the presence of many children who helped us lift our voices in song to share the wondrous story of Christ's birth.

Christmas is such a special time of year for young and old alike — a time of giving not only of gifts, but of ourselves, too. We watch our children practice for the Christmas program — their way of bringing Christ's birth to us — the young and old alike.

A "thank you" seems pretty insignificant to express the feelings we have for all of you who sent cards, gifts and said a prayer for us and our son, Timothy. Our hearts are overwhelmed by your kindness. Thanks also to those who took time to call and give encouragement to us during those long hours in the hospital. We thought we understood what a wonderful faith we have, but how much more we realize it now.

Bro. Steve and Sis. Pam Schaefer and family

Bro. Ernest Koehl would like to thank his family, friends and relatives for their cards, gifts, telephone calls and concerns while he was in the hospital and upon returning home.

Address Changed . . .

Give Old and New Address
to Your Reporter

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

Wanda Messner

Ella Mae Schmidt

We were thankful that ministering Bro. Fredrich Knapp and wife (Congerville, IL) came the extra miles to assemble with us this past month. We thank Bro. Fredrich for the message he brought forth.

"Yea Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning. Jesus to thee be all glory giv'n . . ."

F. Oakeley

It was a blessing to share the words of the beautiful Christmas carols with those in the local nursing homes and with our older brothers and sisters.

As we listened to the Sunday school children tell the beautiful Christmas story in song and verse, we were reminded once again of the miracle of God's love! We thank the children and their teachers for the efforts they put into the program.

A baby boy was born to Kim and Joe Messner. Lincoln Joe was welcomed by a sister, Kylee, and brother, Cody. Grandparents are Bro. Marly and Sis. Lois and Dick and Leah Doorneweerd (Lester, IA).

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."

Ephesians 5:31

Believing it is the Lord's will, Bro. Larry Schmidgall (Bro. Ray and Sis. Millie, Minneapolis, MN) and Sis. Marcy Schmidt (Gene and Sis. Ella Mae) announced their engagement.

The engagement of Sara Messner (Duane and Mona) and Keith Kuhn (Clarissa, MN) was announced.

May God bless and guide each couple as they plan their lives together.

Hospitalized this past month was Sis. Carrie Messner. We pray that God will strengthen and encourage her during her illness.

January is Silver Lining collection for Winthrop.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

Linda Ziegenhorn

"My brethren, count it all joy when

ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of our faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

James 1:2-4

“Count it all joy.” We are to view all things with joy. That includes trial, temptation, sadness and despair. Is this possible? God is telling us the hard things in this life lead to a better and more complete relationship with Him if we can surrender all to Him and find joy in trusting that he is in control.

I apologize to Bro. Edwin and Sis. Romona Strahm for not mentioning the birth of their daughter sooner. Little Monica Jean Strahm was born September 24. She is their first child. Her maternal grandparents are Bro. Harlan and Sis. Florence Meyer (Sabetha, KS) and her paternal grandparents are Bro. Alphai and Sis. Mamie Strahm (Bern, KS).

On December 5, the entire congregation went Christmas caroling at several nursing homes. Retelling the story of Christ's birth in song was such a blessing. Afterwards we had a chili supper at church. We thank the brothers and sisters from Sabetha who came to help us sing.

MISSOURI, LAMAR

Janice Stoller — Carol Braker

What beauty is ours to enjoy as we look out to the sparkling winter scene around us. God's creation is so beautiful.

Sis. Olive Marti was laid to rest after 95 years here on earth. We extend our sympathy to all of her family.

Several ministering brothers were with us over the past month. We enjoyed having Bro. Noah Gerber and Bro. Earl Banwart (both of West Bend, IA), Elder Bros. Bob Walder (Congerville, IL) and Raymond Banwart (Fort Scott, KS).

Once again we plan to hear the children tell the Christmas story during the program planned. May we all remember the real meaning of Christmas and may the giving and sharing of this season be carried on throughout the new year.

Give Your New Address
To Your Reporter

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Loren and Betsy Schrenk

Bro. Ralph Garber (Morton, IL) and Elder Bro. Dan Koch (Tremont, IL) served recently as ministers here. With the uncertainties of winter weather, we especially appreciate their efforts made to worship with us.

One Sunday the scheduled minister found that illness prevented him from traveling to St. Louis, so we gathered together anyway, and praying for a blessing, listened to a taped service. God did bless our gathering and we thank Him for the technology that allowed us to be ministered to in this way.

We recently experienced charity, Christian love in action, so beautifully when our family made the sad journey to Phoenix, AZ, for Loren's father's funeral. The love and kind deeds of the brethren lifted us up and enabled us to carry out the physical duties left to the survivors. At a time like this we can more fully appreciate our fellowship.

In our first Sunday school Christmas program, the children again told the story of God's great gift, reminding us that the gift of peace was given to all mankind. This peace is more than the absence of conflict, but gives us hope and refuge even in times of loss.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Loida Hodel — Lori Marquart

“O, give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good.”

Psalms 106:1

Special blessings were received through the visits and ministry of Bros. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR) November 22, Arthur Baurer (Princeville, IL) November 26 and Ben Wysong (Sabetha, KS) November 29. “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.” I Corinthians 9:19.

Two of our couples celebrated 25th wedding anniversaries: Bro. Paul and Kathy (Grimm) Haab October 7 and Bro. Don and Sis. Elaine (Hodel) Hoerr November 24. “Each happiness of yesterday is a memory for tomorrow.” G. D.

CHRISTMASTIME IS FRIENDSHIP TIME

At Christmastime our hearts reach out
To friends we think of dearly
And checking through our Friendship
lists,

As all of us do yearly,
We stop a while to reminisce
And to pleasantly review
Happy little happenings
And things we used to do —
And though we've been too busy
To keep in touch all year,
We send a Christmas greeting
At this season of GOOD CHEER —
So Christmas is a “lovely link”
Between old years and new
That keeps the “Bond of Friendship”
Forever unbroken and true.

Helen Steiner Rice

“... a little child shall lead them.”
Isaiah 11:6

It would be sad if we weren't reminded of the real meaning of this happy season, as was portrayed by our Sunday school December 12. “And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10-11. Then the very important conclusion of the whole matter, recorded 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.” Thank you one and all for time and talent given on our behalf.

“Katey Ann” has moved on to adoptive parents and seven year old “Dena” is enjoying TLC as a temporary part of Bro. Kent and Sis. Jan Heimer's family.

“Forgetting the past — I press onward.”

Philippians 3:13-14

One of God's glorious gifts to us is the dawn of a New Year. It gives new opportunities and challenges, a chance to try again, to accomplish the ambitions which were set aside with discouragement in the past year. Life is full of beginnings. It is a beautiful year because it is another year of our Lord.

“Through many dangers, toils and snares
We have already come,

'Twas grace that brought us safe thus far

And grace will lead us Home."

"Amazing Grace" vs. 3

NEW JERSEY, UNION CITY

Heidi Haerr

We recently had communion in our little church and we wish to thank everyone who traveled to share it with us. Elder Bro. Corbin Bahler (Rockville, CT) and Bro. Ed Aeschleman (Philadelphia, PA) were the visiting ministers for our special service.

In addition, we are grateful to all of our visitors and ministers and their families who took time to be with us during the busy holiday season. Bro. Art Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Walt Steffen (Milford, IN), Bro. Paul Gasser (Akron, OH), Elder Bros. Norbert Steiner (Croghan, NY) and Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) and Bros. Everett Gerber, Kevin Ryan and Al Schneider (Rockville, CT) were recent visiting ministers.

NEW YORK, CROGHAN

Alice Virkler

Bro. Andy and Sis. Becky Virkler welcomed little Philip Jacob who was born December 10. Joseph is happy for a new little playmate. Their grandparents are Sis. Charlotte Virkler and Bro. Albert and Sis. Betty Banwart (West Bend, IA). It was nice to have Grandma and Grandpa here to welcome little Philip and fellowship with us for a short time. May God richly bless this little family.

Our sympathy again is extended to loved ones this month. Betty Widrick (Gilbert) and her family were saddened by the death of her father, Merritt Reed (Lowville).

As we have begun the new year of 1988, may each of us strive to follow God's example set forth for us in His Word. May we live for Him each day of our lives.

NEW YORK, NAUMBURG

Rachel Snyder

We have a few loved ones who have been in and out of hospitals and those

who are still in. Sis. Rosella Schulz has been in Lowville hospital for a few days and Sis. Minnie Taube has been able to return home since having surgery in the Carthage hospital. Sis. Corine Virkler is in Utica hospital (St. Elizabeth's) while Sis. Iva Poling has had surgery in Lowville hospital and is still there.

We expect to have our Sunday school Christmas program December 27.

Bro. Andy and Sis. Becky have a sweet little baby boy, Philip Jacob, weighing nine pounds. Little Joseph welcomes him home.

Elder Bro. Robert and Sis. Lucille Beyer took a trip for a few weeks to visit Sis. Lucille's folks in Illinois. On the way home they stopped for services the weekend of November 28 - 29 at Kitchener, Ontario.

Our dear Sis. Rachel Rohr had her 100th birthday November 24. She resides at the Lowville Nursing Home.

OHIO, AKRON

Joyce Gasser

A woman touched Jesus, and Jesus said: "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." In the Old Testament, if they touched the Ark, it was a testimony to death, but in the New Testament, touching the Ark is a testimony to life. The Ark of the Old Testament, which we described last month symbolized Jesus. It contained manna, Aaron's rod, and tables of law, and the law without shedding of blood is judgment and death. Then Jesus came and He is our Ark. He is our Manna, our Bread of Life; He is our Priest and King with the rod, and He fulfilled the law. He shed His blood. Jesus changed it, and now every one of us can do as even a woman did in touching the Ark, Jesus, and be rewarded with His Words of Peace.

Lisa Spangler (daughter of Bro. and Sis. Ned Spangler) had an emergency appendectomy Thanksgiving Day, but recovered rapidly and was soon back to church and college. Lisa is transferring from Akron University to Ohio State University and studying in social work.

Tibor and Sis. Esther Zsoldos were blessed with a baby boy and they named him Jonathan. Grandparents are Bro. and Sis. Sandor Bako.

Elmer Kaufman is home recuperat-

ing from surgery and we wish for him renewed strength. Sis. Elizabeth Heib is still in the hospital.

We were blessed to hear the reading of the memorandum with Elder Bro. Joe Ramsier and Bro. Henry Dotterer assisting Elder Bro. Gene Pamer.

This past year in our congregation, we had three weddings, one baptism, one birth and two deaths.

OHIO, COLUMBUS

John Grimm

We are grateful to God for ministering brothers who have shared God's Word with us this past month. They were Bro. Ronald Steiner (Rittman, OH), Bro. William Brake (Sardis, OH) and Bro. Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH). May God bless them and their families. Also, we appreciate all the visitors who made the effort to visit us and share our precious faith.

OHIO, JUNCTION

Les Manz

Elder Bro. Orville Ringger (Bluffton, IN) assisted Bro. Loren Stoller in reading the conference conclusions to us this month. Bro. Orville related to us an experience he had as a farmer when he went out into the pasture in a storm and tracked down a lost sheep. When he found him his eyes were covered with burrs in his wool so he could not see. When he was able to remove the burrs from his eyes, the sheep gladly went back to the fold. Should our eyes ever become blinded as that poor sheep, our prayer is that God will send a brother to restore our sight so we, too, can come gladly back to the fold.

Sis. Elizabeth Spangler (Bro. Oliver) does not need to worry about her eyes being blinded any longer. Having finished her course here on earth, we believe she is bound for that heavenly mansion where the glory of God is the light. Sis. Elizabeth will be missed by many of us and especially by Bro. Oliver; her one surviving brother, Bro. Dan Steffen (Bluffton, IN), the family of her first husband, the late Bro. Jesse Kupfersmith (Latty); and many nieces and nephews.

Mitchell Alan is the new baby boy in our home. His brothers and sisters are

Chad, Kari, Kevin and Tami. Grandparents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Mary Klopfenstein (Latty) and Bro. Eli and Sis. Evelyn Manz. Please join Sis. Karen and I in our prayers that God will extend His blessings that each of these children will be with Him in heaven one day.

Our prayers for a speedy recovery went out this month to Sis. Louise (Bro. Emmanuel) Manz who was hospitalized.

January is collection month for Junction.

OHIO, LATTY
Rhonda Stoller
Marlene Reinhard

Once again our congregation here at Latty is rejoicing. The Lord has touched two souls and brought them on bended knee before Him. We wish Tammy Stoller (Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy) and Jason Laukhuf (Bro. Rodney and Sis. Ede) much grace to overcome the world and be victorious in the Lord.

We were encouraged to strive harder to live a life much more pleasing to God and to be a blessing to those around us as the memorandum was exorted to us by our Elder Bros. Loren Stoller and Steve Rinkenberger (Cissna Park, IL). Other visiting ministers this month were Bros. Ernie Graf (Akron) and Glen Riggerbach (Smithville). We thank all who labor in the Lord and may each one receive a three-fold blessing.

Those hospitalized this month were Shelli Grant (Bro. Phil and Sis. Gloria) and Bro. Rodney Laukhuf (Sis. Ede). May God's healing hand be felt and their bodies be healed.

Our sincere sympathy goes out to Bro. Roy Stoller (Sis. Beulah) and Sis. Sadie Riggerbach at the passing away of their sister, Sis. Nettie Ringger. May the Holy Spirit comfort their hearts at this time of sorrow.

We extend congratulations to Bro. Curt and Sis. Denise Rager on the arrival of Daniel William. David and Alisha excitedly welcome him home.

The Christmas season is upon us once again, and we were reminded of the holy birth and the real meaning of Christmas as we listened to the Sunday school children and young adults recite verses and sing songs in honor to the 'King'.

As the year is coming to a close and

we are getting ready to start a new year, may we enter the year with a clean heart and a pure soul prepared for service in the Lord's vineyard.

OHIO, MANSFIELD
Linda Morrison

"And the apostles and the elders came together for to consider of this matter." Acts 15:6. The conference memorandum was read Saturday, December 5 by Elder Bro. Eugene Pamer (Akron) and Elder Bro. Ken Sauder.

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me: . . ." John 17:8. Those sharing God's Word unto us have been Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton, IN), Elder Bro. Charles Hemmer (Peoria, IL), Bro. Max Reimschisel (Wichita, KS) and Bro. Ron Palitto (Akron). May God bless them and their families.

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth." Psalms 127:3, 4. First-time parents were Scott and Lori Gabor, as Ashley Elaine was born November 18. Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna Gabor are the prayerful grandparents. Brittany Nolle, born November 29, was a welcomed addition to Brent and Penny Moser's family. Adam and Logan are happy for a new sister to love. Grandparents are Tom and Sis. Jan Moser (Bluffton, IN) and Rolland and Judy Myers (Indiana). Bro. Dan and Sis. Pam Sauder welcomed Lanae Kristine December 10. Lauren is happy for a new sister to love. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Ken and Sis. Sue Sauder and Everett and Dorothy Martin (Texas).

Hospital patients have been Sis. Lena (Dave) Beer for surgery and Brian Enderle (Richard and Hilda) for tests and observation. May God bless them with renewed health and courage to accept their infirmities.

Our Sunday school held a fall outing the last Sunday in October. The beauty of God's creation was enjoyed, as well as fellowship and singing. "You remember songs of heaven which you sang with childish voice, Do you love the hymns they taught you, Or are songs of earth your choice?" More recently we held our annual Christmas program. We trust God was honored as

the young voices were raised to Him in praise through verse and song. An outstanding part of the program was the high school class that read original compositions. Each child wrote their own ideas and thoughts of what Christmas would be like if Christ has not been born. Each student recognized that they would not have a hope of salvation without the birth of Jesus. If you look at the way many are celebrating Christmas, they are truly doing it without Christ as the focal point; therefore, there is NO point to their celebration.

I teach first grade and one of our favorite Christmas stories is "Little Tree and His Wish". It's a story about a scrawny little tree that wishes he was big and beautiful so the woodsmen will choose him when they come into the forest to cut trees. The little tree so wishes he could be used for a house or table, a boat or even a palace! But the little tree is never chosen, so he makes the best of his lot and makes friends with the animals. Later, an old man comes into the forest and chooses the little tree. He makes a manger to hold the hay for the cows out of the little tree; "I'd rather be a manger than lonely; but how I dreamed of palaces and kings!" I'm sure you've guessed it; Little Tree is now the manger for Baby Jesus. "And Little Tree thanked God that he could be a throne for such a very great King. "Thank you, Dear God, for making me a scrawny, little tree," he said. "Why, had I been a big and beautiful tree, I would never be the manger now!" My first grade students always seem to identify with that little tree and there always seems to be some tears when we read the story together. As we start a new year, may we make the best of where we are and what we are, knowing that God has given us our talents and position to be used to honor Him in His own way and at His own time and in the place of His choosing.

OHIO, RITTMAN
Stephanie Baltic — Diane Gasser

Father, through Thy word awaken
Us to faith and true devotion!
Zeal to serve Thee do Thou give;
Show us that Thy Son still lives.

Zion's Harp #126

We are thankful to the visiting ministers who have brought us the Word of Life this past month. They are Bros. Pete Baltic and Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH) and Ron Palitto (Akron, OH). May God bless them for allowing themselves to be used in His service for our benefit.

The engagement of Christine Shane (Bill and Kathleen) and Brad Clark (Gerald and Ruth) has been made known.

Believing it is God's will, Bro. Ed Marty (Dale and Sally, Smithville, OH) and Sis. Elaine Rufener (Bro. Elton and Sis. Velma) have been announced to be married. May God's blessings rest upon these two couples as they make plans to be joined in holy matrimony.

Bro. Ron Pertee (Mr. and Mrs. Everett Pertee) and Sis. Shelly Steiner (Bro. Ron and Sis. Ruth) joined hand and heart as husband and wife November 29. May our heavenly Father bestow His blessings upon this union.

Our hearts go out to the many who have suffered pain and required hospital care this past month. They are Elder Bro. Joe Ramsier (Sis. Elizabeth), Bro. Steve Miracle (Bill and Loretta Clark), Carol Christian (Bro. Ron and Sis. Joann), Sis. Anita Rigenbach (Bro. Ed), Bro. Dave Emch (Sis. Eileen), Sis. Marguerite Gasser (Bro. Harry), Danelle Pope (Dan and Sis. Anita) and both Bro. Carl and Sis. Frieda Gasser. Bro. Carl and Sis. Frieda have recently moved from the Girard area into our Apostolic Christian Home here in Rittman. May God bless them here in their new home. We need to pray for those who are ill. We are especially mindful of our Elder Bro. Joe Ramsier who has been hospitalized since Thanksgiving Day with heart problems. He underwent triple bypass surgery. May he, as well as the others, feel the support and love of the multitudes who are praying for them. We feel compassion for the families whose loved ones are suffering as we know it's a burden for them to carry, too. We know God is "The Best Ref-uge".

In sorrow and pain
Thy trust do retain
In Jesus the merciful Saviour.

When burdened with care,
When thou wouldst despair,
Then call on thy loving Redeemer.

He'll lighten the load,
And level the road
And bear thee on hands of compassion.
Zion's Harp #46

Sis. Esther Bachman left this life of toils and cares to be with her Redeemer in those heavenly mansions above. Her funeral service was held November 28. She is survived by one sister, Sis. Elizabeth Ramsier, and many nieces and nephews. We extend our sympathy to her loved ones.

On December 17, we were saddened to hear of the sudden death of both Bro. Alvin and Sis. Estella Winkler as a result of a car accident. Bro. Alvin and Sis. Estella were almost always seen together and now we feel they have gone on together to their heavenly reward. They are survived by Glenn, Kenneth, Virgil, Ben, Bro. Stan, Bro. Andrew, Sis. Elizabeth Landis, Sis. Janet Indermuhle (Smithville, OH), Sis. Marilyn Uhler (Smithville, OH), Marjorie Rhoads (Smithville, OH) and Sis. Brenda Bauman (Smithville, OH). Bro. Alvin is also survived by a brother, Harold, and sisters, Sis. Velma Hartzler, Sis. Caroline Emch and Inez Steiner (Vancouver, WA). Sis. Estella is also survived by a brother, Bro. Raymond Marty and a sister, Sis. Irene Emch (Phoenix, AZ). We pray the Lord will be near and comfort the family in their sorrow.

As the New Year approaches, may we ever "strive aright" to live a life pleasing and acceptable to our Father in heaven.

OHIO, SARDIS Linda Indermuhle

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

Our young children brought us the story of the birth of our Saviour in verse and song the evening of December 13. Their sincerity and nice singing warmed our hearts.

Various groups spent time caroling and visiting at rest homes and at homes of loved ones. It's always a blessing to

spend time with older brethren and others who are not as able to get around as they once did.

We are thankful that Sis. Doris Miller (Denny) has recovered from surgery.

January is the month for our Silver Lining collection.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE Verla Stoller — Ann Maibach

Another year is dawning,
Dear Master, let it be,
In working or in waiting,
Another year with Thee.

Frances R. Havergal

A new year has begun. Many people make "resolutions" of how they are going to be different this year. Our most important resolution should be to strive to be a better servant for Christ. Let's look over the past year, see where we've made mistakes, and strive to bring forth more fruit for Him this year.

Seeking God's will for their lives, Bro. Ed Marty (Dale and Sally) and Sis. Elaine Rufener (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Velma, Rittman) have announced their engagement. May God richly bless them as they begin their walk of life together.

Bro. Roger Bauman was hospitalized this past month for surgery on a broken elbow. We are thankful he can assemble with us again. May God strengthen and heal according to His will.

Our visiting ministers this past month were Bro. Ernest Graf (Akron) and Bro. Bill Brake (Sardis). May God richly bless them for their willingness to serve us.

OREGON, SILVERTON Rosa Lee Kuenzi

Recently, Bro. Jack Kuenzi (Sis. Janet) was elected to fill the remaining two-year term as church trustee vacated last summer when Bro. Gus Dietrich moved to the Junction, OH, area. We appreciated Bro. Gus' service and pray God's direction on Bro. Jack's duties newly undertaken.

Our World Relief Sewing Group wishes to thank everyone who participated in the December Craft and Bake

Sale. We were very pleased with its success and plan to forward the monies raised to our church's food parcel project to loved ones in Eastern Europe.

It was Oregon's special privilege again this past Thanksgiving to have a goodly number of young member visitors. Our own Young Group planned, sent invitations, shared the responsibilities and coordinated the activities of over thirty visiting brothers and sisters. It is an encouragement to us to see the future of the church so faithfully and humbly represented. There was a little pamphlet given to each visitor explaining the planned activities; the last page contained these very fitting words from the Zion's Harp #195, vs. 8:

"Praised be the Lord who gives us strength,
Who leads and gives direction.
My brethren, when you kneel in pray'r,
For me make intercession.
'Twill not be in vain; Pray'r as a chain
Binds us in God together,
And when we part, Unites each heart
In Jesus' name forever."

This blessed time of year affords us the opportunity to hear the true meaning of Christ's birth through the words and songs of the Sunday school program and the opportunity to share it with others through Christmas caroling. We thank the many whose labors of love made both these activities possible.

**PENNSYLVANIA,
PHILADELPHIA**
Jerry Isch

Our Sunday school program was held December 13. A special thank you is extended to all who helped make it a success.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Bro. Alfred Kupferschmidt. Bro. Alfred, 82, passed away December 9. Services were held at the Stephenson-Brown Funeral Home in Merchantville, NJ, and at the Apostolic Church in Rockville, CT. He is survived by his dear wife, Gertrude; a son, Robert; one brother and two sisters.

We give thanks to our Elder Bro. Corbin Bahler and Bro. Kevin Ryan (Rockville, CT) for bringing us God's Word.

SILVER THREADS

THANK YOU LORD

Since Christ has saved me from my sin,
I am living in Him anew.
If paradise I'm to enter in,
I must unto Him be true.

Satan comes oft and tempts me sore.
I in my weakness feel so faint
And that I can't take anymore
And nearly fail of my goal, a saint.

I fall upon my knees in prayer
And lift to God my humble cry
"O Lord, Thou art everywhere
Save me now lest I die."

These trials and temptations I feel I
can't take,
But I know Your promises are sure.
Why for me such inconvenience make
When Thou promised grace to endure.

I turn within Thy Holy Book
I read to keep myself in tune.
On John 15 my eyes do look,
So Thou my heart dost prune.

Ted Schick

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST IS NICE BUT FAITH ALONE WILL NOT SUFFICE

For faith is dead without works,
Thus, Satan in your heart still lurks.
If you in sin continue and remain,
Christ's pure blood was shed in vain.
If you stay on your sinful path,
You'll experience God's fierce wrath.
One man I know started out good at
first,
But, turned again to sin and was the
worst.

Christ could no longer make his heart
His Abode,
For he grew slack and his heart grew
cold.

So he continued in sin until the day he
died,
And as they laid him in the grave, many
cried.

Then Satan took that soul to Hell,
The miseries of such, tongue cannot
tell.

As a tongue of fire hit his eye,
He gazed upward and asked why,

Why didn't I take advantage of God's
grace,
So God wouldn't my name from the
Lamb's book erase,
But now I'm here forevermore,
And now I vainly to God implore.
Now I must with this death cope,
For I have lost life's marvelous hope.
Christ no more can relieve and comfort
me,
For Heaven only can I look and see.
No longer did Christ for me grace
provide,
For while on earth, I was filled with
pride.
A million years from now, I'll still be
here,
For the end of such will never be near.
Ted Schick

THIRTEEN REASONS WHY I DO NOT GOSSIP

1. I want to keep my self-respect. Since I hate gossiping in others, how could I have any respect for myself if I did it?

2. It is strictly forbidden in both the Old and New Testaments; and I do not care to be a law breaker (Leviticus 19:16; I Timothy 5:13)

3. I want to go to heaven when I die, and Psalms 15:3 makes it clear that those who gossip cannot enter the heavenly city. Did you know that if a gossip could get inside the holy city, he or she would feel slighted and would not want to stay, because no one there would want to listen to the gossip?

4. Gossip is a very ruinous thing. It breeds hatred, separates friends, destroys homes and divides the church of the living God.

5. It is one of the seven sins that God hates (Proverbs 6:19) and to sow discord, one must gossip.

6. All gossipers are thieves — they rob others of their good name. Personally, I would rather rob a man of his money than of his good name. I could restore the money with interest, but if I rob a man of his good name I can never fully restore it.

7. Paul, the apostle, classes "whisperers" and "backbiters" with God-haters and fornicators and I prefer not to be classed with such vicious sinners (Romans 1:29, 30)

8. I have an intense desire to be deeply in union with Christ. I have yet

to meet a person who was spiritual who tattled and gossiped.

9. It would be an unwholesome example to set before others. It may be that somebody would follow my example and lose his soul.

10. Then, too, I profess to be filled with the love of God. If I should gossip, I would make my profession a lie; for you know that if one loves another, he will not malign him.

11. Every center of gossip is a workshop of scandal. I do not care to run that kind of shop.

12. Satan is the instigator of all gossip, and I refuse to peddle his wares.

13. I never knew gossip to help anyone. But it always harms. It not only hurts, but it damns. It is possible that some people are in hell who would have been in heaven but for gossiping tongues.

TAKE TIME TO PRAY

I got up early one morning,
And rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish that
I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me,
And heavier came each task;
"Why doesn't God help me?"
I wondered, He answered, "You
didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty,
But the day toiled on gray and bleak.
I wondered why God didn't show me;
But, He said, "You didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence,
I tried all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided,
"My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning,
And paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish!
That I had to take time to pray.

"PRAY FOR ANOTHER"

I cannot tell why there should come to
me
A thought of someone miles and
miles away,

In swift insistence on the memory,
Unless a need there be that I should
pray.

Too hurried oft are we to spare the
thought
For days together, of some friends
away;
Perhaps God does it for us, and we
ought
To read His signal as a call to pray.

Perhaps, just then, my friend has
fiercer fight,
And more appalling weakness and
decay
Of, courage, darkness, some lost sense
of right
And so, in case he needs my prayer, I
pray.

Friend, do the same for me. If I intrude
Unmasked upon you, on some
crowded day,
Give me a moment's prayer as
interlude;
Be very sure I need it, therefore pray.

WHEN FATHER PRAYS

When Father prays he doesn't use
The words the preacher does;
There's different things for different
days,
But mostly it's for us.

When Father prays the house is still,
His voice is slow and deep;
We shut our eyes, the clock ticks loud
So quiet we must keep.

He prays that we may be good boys,
And later on, good men;
And then we squirm and think we won't
Have any quarrels again.

You'd never think, to look at Pa,
He once had tempers, too,
I guess if Father needs to pray,
We youngsters surely do.

Sometimes the prayer gets very long
And hard to understand,
And then I wiggle up quite close,
And let him hold my hand.

I can't remember all of it —
I'm little yet, you see;
But one thing I cannot forget —
My Father prays for me.
Author Unknown

I SAID A PRAYER FOR YOU TODAY

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

GUIDE ME

By Walter Lloyd Cordill

Guide me Savior lest I stumble
On rocks of vice and sin
They are couched in subtle places
And my sight is very dim.

Let me feel Your presence hourly
As I walk o'er hill and dale
May Your guidance and directions
Illuminate the narrow trail.

Should I fall and be sorely wounded
Bear me up in arms of love
Then my song shall ever be
Praise unto God in Heaven above.

Help me lean upon the promise
Of Your love and mercy mild
Let me be Your humble servant
Though I've been an errant child.

When the flowers of life are faded
And the vanities of life are past
Guide me safely to Thy haven
Where peace and joy forever last.
Amen

OUT OF THIS LIFE

Out of this life I shall never take
Things of silver and gold I make
All that I cherish and hoard away
After I leave this earth must stay
Tho' I have toiled for a painting rare
To hang on the wall, I must leave it
there.
Tho' I call it mine and boast its worth
I must give it up when I leave this earth.

All that I gather and all that I keep
I must leave behind when I fall asleep.
And I often wonder what I shall own
In that other life, when I pass alone,
What shall they find and what shall
they see
In the soul that answers the call for me?
Shall the Great Judge learn when my
task is through
That my spirit has gained some riches,
too;
Or shall at last it be mine to find
That all I'd worked for I'd left behind?

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Lord, it is not the dirt and clutter in
plain sight that nag at me.
It's that hidden dirt . . . you know,
behind the refrigerator, in the
closets, under the beds.
Dirt that no one sees or knows about
but me.
It's the same way with my life, God.
It's those hidden sins that I can't keep
up with . . . those petty little
grievances, the grudges, the
resentments, the unspoken harsh
feelings, the superior attitudes.
Thoughts and feelings that no one
knows about but me, and You, God.
Help me Father, to clean my heart as I
would my home.
Take away all dust and cobwebs of
pride, ill feeling and prejudice.
The dirt behind my refrigerator will
never hurt anyone.
The dirt in my heart will.

Debby Hinton
Charleston, WV

BE HUMBLE

What did you see in the mirror
as you rose from your morning
prayer?
Was it a face filled with joy and hope,
or was it filled with dark despair?
What did you ask of your Lord today
as you knelt beside your bed?
Was it for wisdom and strength to
serve Him more,
or was it for earthly gain instead?
If you feel that your prayer was
unanswered,
perhaps you asked amiss.
Next time you petition your Lord for
help,
just try a prayer like this.

"Please", Dear God, forgive me,
roll back the pages of time.
Make me just as a child again,
They will be done, not mine.

W. L. Cordill
November 11, 1986

Sermon . . .

(Continued from Page 32)
is nothing wrong with that. It is called
humility. Brethren, if we do that, brotherly
love is going to continue.

Do you know what we need to do?
We need to tell each other that we love
them. I had a brother come to me the
other day after a service, greeted me
and said, "I love you." That is all he had
to say. "I love you."

He would not have had to say that.
He could have said, "Greet you, brother,"
and gone on. But he said, "Greetings,
dear brother. I want you to know
that I love you." That does a lot for
somebody.

Tell someone. We may tell our wives,
mothers and our fathers that we love
them. There is nothing wrong with that.
We should tell them and our children
that we love them. But do we tell our
brothers and sisters that we love them?
Don't we, in Christian love?

Beyond telling them that, do we
show them that we love them? When
somebody is going through a tough and
difficult time, do we go up to them and
express that brotherly love? Maybe we
should write a note as a word of encour-
agement. Sometimes we need to come
up, put our arm around them and let
them know that we are there. It doesn't
have to be much, but that is what
brotherly love is.

That love, first of all, has to have its
root in Jesus Christ, Who loved us.
"Jesus loves me! this I know, For the
Bible tells me so."

That is where it all begins. We have
to have that original love. That, of course,
comes from Jesus into our hearts. Then,
beloved, it should spread out from
member to member to member and
radiate from there out into the world.
The world many times does not under-
stand Christian love. But, nonetheless,
we should not hold back. Let brotherly
love continue. Let it grow.

"Be not forgetful," It says, "to enter-
tain strangers..." Hebrews 13:2. Here
again, is an outreach...to entertain stran-
gers. Sometimes we are asked to meet
someone, to entertain them and talk

with them. It doesn't necessarily mean
that we have to feed them or keep them
overnight. Sometimes this particular
term 'entertain' may mean to talk with
someone, and to give them encourage-
ment. They might be a stranger, not of
the Apostolic Christian fellowship.

Beloved, it says, "Be not forgetful to
entertain strangers: for thereby some
have entertained angels unawares." He-
brews 13:2. Wouldn't that be something
if you or I helped someone and then
later on met that soul in heaven with
Jesus, and heard that person say,
"Thank you. You fed me, you clothed
me, you helped me or you did this or
that?" Imagine discovering they were
an angel! This is what God looks for.

"Remember them that are in bonds,
as bound with them..." Hebrews 13:3.
We are to remember those who are in
prison, those who are bound, perhaps
even behind the Iron Curtain. We know
this is going on, and we can remember
them in prayer. We know for example,
in our own Bible distribution, that
many of the Bibles we have are going
into prison and being given to prisoners.
That is a wonderful, wonderful ministry
in itself.

Certainly there are many of those
unfortunate souls who are in prison
and now have time to think. Maybe that
particular soul, as he is given a Bible
(maybe they never had a Bible in their
entire life) will open the Word up and
read. We can always pray that the
Word will strike their hearts. Some-
times that is all it takes.

It doesn't have to be the words of a
minister. All it has to be is God's Word
coming right out of the Scripture. They
can read it and it can convict them.
They can see that they have sinned and
see that they are wrong. Then the Word
gives them direction what to do next.

It is a powerful, powerful thing, the
way the Word works, how the Holy
Spirit works and how He can change
people.

I think of an atheist named Whit-
taker Chambers. He wrote a book called,
"The Witness". He was an atheist, did
not believe in God, had nothing to do
with God, and didn't want anything to
do with Him. One day he was sitting
with his little child, who was in a high
chair. As he was sitting there he was
watching his little child feed itself. He
loved this little child very much.

He was looking and smiling at his
little child, when he noticed the child's
ear. As he looked at it, he noticed the
convolutions of the ear and how intri-

cately the ear was formed. He said the sunlight was coming through the window, shining through the skin of the ear and he could see those tiny blood vessels coursing through the ear. He thought of how small and delicate they were, and yet even blood flows through that.

Beloved, that particular time was the turning point in his life. At that time, he began to realize there was a higher power greater than himself or even greater than this nation. He said, "What could it be? It must be a higher power who had the ability to create such a delicate individual to bring such joy into my life."

Beloved, just looking at that little creation, that little child, is what it took to cause him to believe that there was a God. He sought God from then on. It was a changing point because of God's creation and His Word.

The Word says, "Remember them... which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." Hebrews 13:3. We are in the body of Christ, aren't we? We all belong to the body of Christ. There are different parts in the body of Christ just as there are different parts in your own body. We have ears, eyes, and hands, and all of them have different parts. All can do different things.

Beloved, each part of your body is an important part. Each of you is an important part of the body of Christ. Never think that your particular job in the church is so small that it is not important. Perhaps you think you don't have a part in the church, or that you are not important at all. Don't believe that. Satan could come to you and say, "You are not important. Your particular part in this church is of no effect. You might as well quit what you are doing. No one cares."

Beloved, God cares what you do. Your part, I don't care how small it is, is important to the body of Christ. It is important to the church.

In our home town of Morton, we have a brother, who for many years turned on the lights and turned on the heat. You might think that is a small, small job compared to that of a minister. But, beloved, I like to come into a church that is either air conditioned or warm, the lights are on and the sound system is all taken care of. He has an important job! There are many other beautiful people in our church and in your church here, that do the small things. They may not be big things, but they are all important.

It says here, "Remember them... which suffer adversity..." Hebrews 13:3. Since we are all in the same body, when they suffer, you suffer. When they rejoice, you rejoice with them. That is what it means. This love and this brotherhood bind us. We are so close. We call ourselves brothers and sisters because we are in a family. We are in a body. When our brother and our sister suffer, we suffer. When they rejoice, we rejoice. It should be that way, because it binds and there is a closeness.

It says, "Marriage is honourable in all...but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." Hebrews 13:4. There is a statement that is very clear. Marriage is honourable in all. There should be marriage. It is meant to be that way. God ordained it. There should not be people living together if they are not married, although we see it around us and probably even know people who do. That is wrong, because it says here, "Marriage is honourable in all." Hebrews 13:4.

Again, this Word cuts at the heart of people who don't want to hear that. But then I am not saying it. The Bible says, "Marriage is honourable in all." Hebrews 13:4. I didn't write this Book... God did.

I heard of a man just the other day who was not married, but he went so far as to say that God was blessing him in his present relationship. He had divorced his first wife and was going to marry someone else. He said, "I feel God is in it and God is moving me to do this. I am looking forward to many blessings that I am going to receive from this." Beloved, that is deception. It is just outright deception! It can't be! God is not going to cause us to sin, and then bless that sin. He is not going to do that. If we have sinned, and are repentant, of course, God will forgive. But if we ask for and expect God's blessings while we continue a course of sin, I don't believe God is going to bless.

It says, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5. Beloved, I love that verse. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." That means God is with you and with me any time, at all times, and any hour of the day. We never have to feel that we are alone. God is with us.

I might relate an incident that this promise reminds me of.

My daughter was hurt in an accident where she was hit in the face with a ball. She was struck very hard in the face and I had to take her to the emergency room. I was alone at the time, and she was bleeding very much from the mouth and nose. I thought maybe she had even broken her nose.

The doctors and nurses were very kind while working on her as she lay on a table. My daughter was in the fifth grade at that time, and it was a scary thing. It was not only scary for her, because she was hurting at the time with a lot of pain, but also for me because I was her parent and I loved her.

When it is your own child, it means a lot. That's all there is to it. When it is your own, it means a lot. It hurts you, when you see them suffer. I was a little scared myself.

The doctors were working over her and she could not see because they had put something across her eyes. I was standing at the foot of this examination table where they were working, and she said, with her voice quivering, "Daddy, don't leave me. Don't leave me."

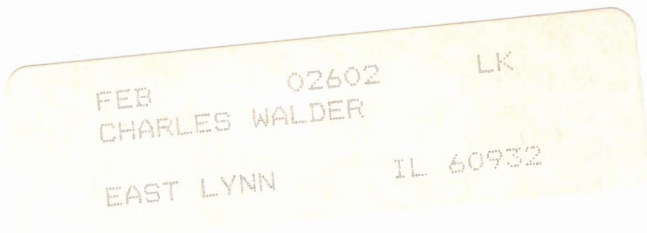
All I could do, was put my hand on her leg, and say, "I'm here. Don't worry. I'm here." That calmed her down. Then they took her to another room and took x-rays of her. In that room, she couldn't see me because they had to turn her a certain way. She asked, "Daddy, are you there?" I said, "Yes, I'm here." I touched her again, and it calmed her down.

I had to think, beloved, we can be in situations in our life, terrible situations, where we look and say, "God, where are you? Are you there? Do you care?"

Beloved, by faith let's remember a verse such as this, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5. If we listen and look, we are going to feel the hand of God on our shoulder. That hand will be there, and it is going to calm us and calm our heart. It is going to give you and me a tremendous strength, because God's grace never falls short.

His grace is sufficient for the time, the hour, the moment, and the situation. I don't care what it is. Even on our death bed, we can remember the twenty-third Psalm. You are never alone. I will walk with you even through the valley of the shadow of death. Even through the valley of the shadow of death!

We are never alone, beloved. We are never alone. He will be there.



SERMON BY BRO. TED WITZIG, MORTON, IL

Abounding Love Is Beautiful Hebrews 13

The question might come, why should we even read from this Book? What is special about the Holy Bible?

It is God's Word. We see a verse here that says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Hebrews 13:8.

All we have to do is to look into the gospels. Gospel means "Good News". It may be the Good News according to Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, Saint Luke or Saint John, but it is the Good News.

The Good News is that Jesus Christ came to this earth. He, the Son of God came to this earth,...went to the cross... and on the cross, He shed His blood. It was His blood that has the power and ability to wipe a slate clean, a slate in our own lives that is full of sin. He is the only One who can do that.

Now that makes Him special, and of course, it makes this Word special. If we open the Book, we read about the life of Christ. He is not just an important figure; He is the central figure in all history.

Many times in our schools we teach history and important facts about history. The most important fact in all of history was that Jesus Christ came and died for me and you. Because of that death, we can surrender, repent, and ask Jesus to come into our heart and become the Lord of our life. If we ask that, and really go after that, it can be ours. Knock on that door! When He knocks and we open that door, He will come in.

A lot of people look at Scripture and say, "Well, that is a good history...a fine history." But beloved, we read here today, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Hebrews 13:8. That means that the Word was good back then, it was good fifty years ago, it is good today, and it will be good if this world stands another hundred thousand years.

If the world continues on for years,

the blood that was shed on Calvary will still be the atoning blood. God is still going to expect repentance out of souls. We may not live on in the future, but repentance is still going to be expected.

There is a feeling among a lot of people in the world that as we move along in this age of computers and the age of medicine, we can do many things and save many lives. Repentance is becoming an ancient word. Some churches don't even preach it. If people are not hearing the word 'repentance' across the pulpit, they are being deceived and not actually hearing the true Word.

I heard of a girl who was raised her entire life in one assembly. She was invited to come to our church, and for the first time, she heard the word 'repentance' across the pulpit.

She attended a few times and became convicted, repented, and was baptized. She could not believe she had never heard the word 'repentance', so she went back to her minister in her old church and said, "How is it that I attended this church from my youth, and in all those years, I never once heard the word 'repentance'? Tell me why?"

He looked down and said, "Well, I just didn't want to step on anyone's toes." Now, beloved, it is not the ministers, if we preach repentance, who are stepping on toes. The Word of God may step on your toes. Yes, if you read this Bible, it may step on your toes.

But, think about it a minute. When your toes are stepped on, don't you wake up? Don't you take notice? You can be standing in a crowd of people, not paying much attention to anything. Have somebody step on your toes and right away you'll say, "Ouch!" and you'll move. You will wonder what is going on. Yes, the Word of God does step on our toes. The Word of God does wake us up.

Yes, that word "repent" should wake us up and make us take notice. Then we should look at our own lives. As we look at our own lives, we should ask ourselves, "Where do I stand and where do I sit before Almighty God? What am I in the sight of God?"

If we find ourselves in need, then we need to make changes. That should stir us up. We should then look further into God's Word and then make those changes.

We have the wonderful Word before us today. Aren't we thankful that we live in a country where we can come and do this? There are many countries in the world where one can't open a Bible like this. You couldn't even sing out as we did this morning. A police car going by could have heard it. We weren't trying to muffle that. We live in a wonderful country and we have this wonderful Word. We should be thankful for it!

"Let brotherly love continue." Hebrews 13:1. That was the first verse we read. "Let brotherly love continue." Now why would he say that? Why would that be here? "Let brotherly love continue." Do you mean to tell me that brotherly love may not continue? I think this is here because sometimes brotherly love doesn't continue. Sometimes it is stifled.

Now why does that happen? Because of the old fleshly nature. We let self get ahead, don't we? Any time we put self before our brothers and sisters, then it is going to stifle what we call brotherly love.

Love is the mortar of any church. The strength of your church is not in the bricks. It is in the love you have for your brethren here and for the brothers and sisters outside this faith. As that brotherly love continues, it can be nurtured. Many times we have to step back and put our brother ahead of us. There

(Continued on Page 30)