



"Praise ye the Lord.
Praise God in his sanctu-
ary; praise him in the fir-
mament of his power."
Psalms 150:1

"Praise him for his
mighty acts: praise him
according to his excellent
greatness."
Psalms 150:2

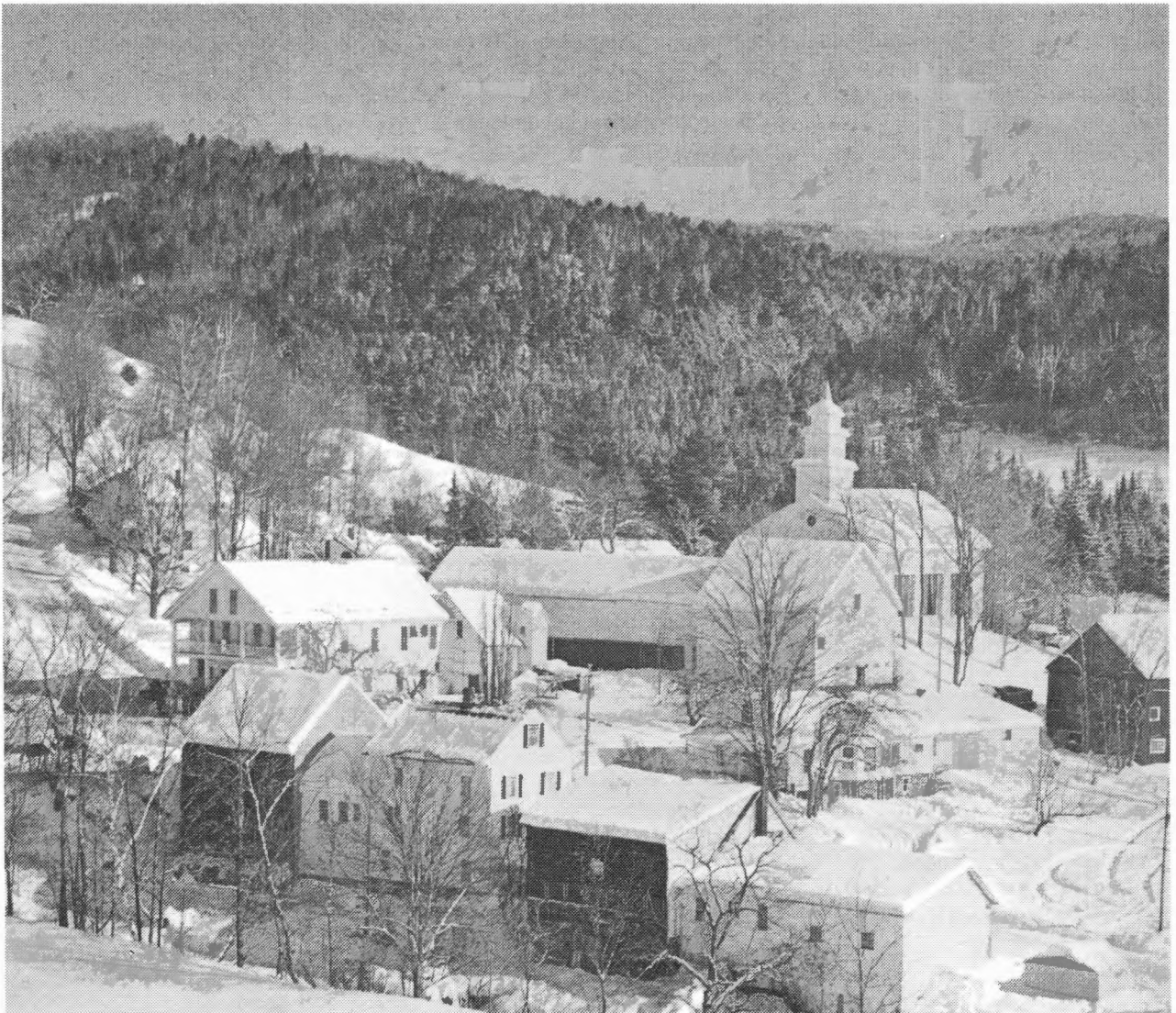
VOLUME 40

JANUARY 1990

NUMBER 1

A WORK OF DIVINE ARTISTRY

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A Beautiful Winter Scene . . .
Created by God

MISSION -- WORLD RELIEF -- WORKS PROJECTS

HOLY SCRIPTURES AND OTHER RELIGIOUS BOOKS TO RUSSIA

Elder Bro. Ben Maibach

We have all been astonished recently at the breaking down of many barriers in Europe that have existed for at least 40 years between many of the communist bloc nations and the so-called free world.

It is our prayer that in these newly gained liberties our heavenly Father, who made it all possible, will not be forgotten, and in recognition of many answered prayers that oppressed souls will lift up voices of praise and thanksgiving to our creator. We must remember, however, that many of these people are still walking in darkness, and it becomes our responsibility as much as reasonable to share with them the glorious hope of the Holy Scriptures.

Many of our brethren have inquired as to what can be done to share the holy truth with those who formerly were prevented from obtaining the Bible, as the borders were closed to the introduction of any religious material including song books.

The Elgin, Illinois, congregation has found a source of approximately 6,000 plus Russian Holy Scripture,

as well as name of people who have requested God's Word. They have sent approximately 200 Bibles and received word that they had actually been delivered. At a Mission Committee meeting in Chicago, IL, December 7, 1989, Bro. Wendell Gudeman, on behalf of the World Relief Committee met with us. He had in hand a Russian language Bible and children's Bible story books in the Russian language with the same pictures as those many of us have used in our own homes as well as in our Sunday schools.

It was agreed that we should contact Elder Bro. Petro Karcsa whom Bro. Wendell and I had met in Hungary in June 1988 and with whom we spend an enjoyable week visiting the various churches there. Bro. Petro is from the Ukraine not far from Kiev. He visited the United States this past summer and we had the blessed privilege of having him minister in our Detroit church as well as spend some time in our home. He related many stories of the growth of the faith in Russia. We were impressed with his sincerity.

In December we sent a package of Bibles and children's Bible story books to Bro. Petro for his examination and to ascertain that the translation of

the new material is correct and that it is sound and edifying to our heavenly Father. We are awaiting his response and recommendation. If we can ascertain that the way is open and would be to the honor of God we will provide opportunities for our brotherhood to personally assume the responsibility for the distribution of this Word of Life,

One of Bro. Petro's missions to the U.S. was to check the translation of the Zion's Harp hymnal in the Ukrainian language. Our brotherhood had assumed the responsibility for the printing and distribution of these song books. This is the first time these songs have been published in book form as they had been hand written on individual sheets.

(Continued on Page 4)

TRANSITIONAL LIVING COORDINATOR

AT GATEWAY WOODS

There is an immediate opening at Gateway Woods (Apostolic Christian Children's Home) for a sister to serve full-time as Coordinator of the Transitional Living Program. This recently developed program attempts to meet the numerous needs of young people who are moving from the Children's Home to independent living.

The Coordinator will live in an off-campus house (in Fort Wayne) with 2 - 4 young women (ages 17 - 19) and provide guidance and training with independent living skills, as well as emotional support. In addition, the Coordinator will work with youth still at the Children's Home main campus, to help prepare them for independent living.

If you have experience working with teens, please pray about applying for this position. It's an exciting and challenging opportunity to work with teens and Christian staff members.

Compensation includes salary and living expenses, plus fringe benefits. For more information, call or write one of the brothers listed below.

Bro. Tim Sauder
P. O. Box 151
Leo, IN 46765
219/627-2159, office
219/627-2606, home

Elder Bro. David Bertsch
11502 Souder Road
Grabill, IN 46741
219/627-2923

THE SILVER LINING

Grabill, Indiana 46741
USPS 496780

EDITORIAL STAFF:

David Bertsch
Uriel Gehring
Lester Stoller

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

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IN MEMORY -- EDITORS:
HENRY SOUDER
EDWARD SOUDER



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).

THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE

Fruit is produced from the inherent substance of a living organism. Therefore fruit is a part of that organism, and its qualities demonstrate the nature of the plant which produced it. Carrying this theme from the physical into the spiritual, fruit is visible evidence of what rests within the heart of man.

The concept of fruit as a result of God's creation comes to light very early in Scripture. After forming sea and land, God then said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind" (Gen. 1:11). This demonstrated the expectation of the Almighty as He formed that which in His divine eyes was "very good" (Gen. 1:31).

Repentance can be defined as a change of mind and spirit which results in sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. John the Baptist preached, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8). The people were exhorted to repent and bring forth appropriate changes in their lives. The Apostle Paul proclaimed the message of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus to mankind, and taught, "...that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Acts 26:20). Condemnation comes through the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), and salvation comes by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8). Good works cannot achieve salvation, but they are an inevitable result of true faith, a testimony of God's work in the heart (Jam. 2:17). "Repentance from dead works and faith toward God" (Heb. 6:1) are principles of the doctrine of Christ.

In the New Testament the subject of repentance nearly always refers to turning away from sin. One outstanding example is the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). This young man wasted himself and his inheritance, finally reaching a desperate state in which he came to himself and returned in deep

remorse to his father. This and other Scriptures confirm that there can be no true fulfillment of repentance unless there is a turning away from sin (Prov. 28:13; John 8:10-11; 2 Cor. 7:9-11; Jam. 4:8-10).

However, even more striking than what the Prodigal Son did is the example of the forgiving father, who welcomed the son in his repentant state with arms of love and compassion. Repentance involves not only what we do, but more importantly what God in His infinite mercy has done for us in sending His Son to pay the price for our transgressions so that we might be forgiven. We respond by faith and fruit bearing (Rom. 6:22).

The act of turning from sin, repenting in earnestness, finding forgiveness and peace with God and man need not take a long time. This varies with each individual and involves development of sufficient faith to grasp the reality of God's forgiveness. God justifies an individual when he sees genuine faith in the shed blood of His Son, the Lord Jesus. Conversion is an experience which takes time and is manifested by a new heart and lifestyle. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24) and "...put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24). The bearing of fruit is a long process. It takes a lifetime of self denial and walking with God to bring forth the finest fruit (Jam. 5:7-8).

Repentance and conversion bring about an entire change in attitude, with fruit of the Spirit becoming manifest in the life of the true believer. Our lives should demonstrate, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." (Gal. 5:22-23). Baptism is the symbolic burial of the old sinful nature into the death of Christ, and the arising to a newness of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:3-6). Fruit bearing begins

when a convert turns to the Lord in repentance and begins to be transformed by the renewing of his mind (Rom. 12:2). The fruits become quite apparent if there is a genuine conversion. Jesus said that we are known by our fruits (Matt. 12:33).

As a result of his change in attitude and the crucifixion of his fleshly nature, the convert loses interest in the things of the flesh which once preoccupied his life. A hymn-writer once wrote, "...and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace." The convert's manner of living changes; no longer serving flesh and sin, he associates himself with things of the Spirit. The companions with whom he revelled in the world notice his disinterest in those things he formerly enjoyed (1 Pet. 4:4). His actions and appearance testify that he has chosen to be separate from the world. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17). "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

Thus our duty is clearly to bring forth the fruits of repentance and then to devote our entire life time to fruit bearing. It is most sobering to realize the tremendous price God paid in sending His Son for the redemption of the sin debt which we owed and could not pay, and then to perceive His great expectations of our enduring fruitfulness (Col. 1:10).

As does the tree, faithfully putting on new leaves each season, bearing fruit with patience, arms uplifted toward God—so may each one of us, rooted in the Word of God, faithfully strive to bear much fruit. Even those fruits which come years after one's conversion still emanate from that foundation of true repentance and faith in Christ, which changed the course of life, and gave us the blessed hope of eternal life.

An editorial committee of elder brothers is preparing articles for this section of the Silver Lining to address some of the special needs of our times. Suggestions for subjects are welcome and can be sent to: Silver Lining Editorials, Grabill, IN 46741.

WORK PROJECTS COMMITTEE

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men . . ."
Galatians 6:10

SPECIAL BULLETIN

Hurricane Hugo Work Team Project - Awendaw, SC

Work teams will be needed through the winter months, due to the destruction of Hurricane Hugo. Many families will not be able to occupy their home this winter because of storm and flood damage caused by Hurricane Hugo.

All building skills are needed to repair and renovate these damaged homes. Due to the distances involved, it is recommended that plans be made to spend 4½ to 5 working days minimum at the job site, if possible.

To maximize the effectiveness of the work teams, they will be scheduled so the number of workers will approximate 10 as a minimum, to 20 as a maximum. Please contact Bro. Arnold Gerst, (217) 223-8424, to obtain time schedule availability when organizing your Work Teams.

The local people and those involved at the project level have expressed their appreciation for the Apostolic Christian Work Projects involvement. It has given some a different perspective of life and Christian charity.

California Earthquake Work Team Project - Watsonville, CA

Preliminary planning is being accomplished for Work Team participation in the repair of earthquake damage. Because of the necessity of obtaining necessary rebuilding permits, there will not be any scheduled before January 1, 1990.

A coordinator for this project has not been chosen at this time. Until a coordinator is named, please address your questions to Bro. Arnold Gerst, (217) 223-8424.

May charity overflow your hearts and may the love of God be reflected in your daily lives.

Least in His Vineyard,
Arnold Gerst
Secretary/Treasurer

Approved Projects - 1990

The following work projects have been approved for 1990 by the Work Projects Committee. Any members or friends interested in volunteering for these or future projects should contact the committee secretary and/or submit a volunteer information form available from their local elder. The completed form should be sent to: Apostolic Christian Works Projects, Arnold Gerst, Committee Secretary, 1107 Madonna Dr., Quincy, IL 62301, or phone (217) 223-8424.

FOREIGN WORK PROJECTS Haiti Work Teams (Building Projects)

(To be staffed by volunteers grouped by World Relief Geographical Areas [see map on back cover of World Relief Policy Booklet].)

NOTE: Need a minister to accompany teams -- Call Elder Bro. David Bertsch, (219) 627-2923.

TEAMS	DATES	CHURCH/AREAS	PROJECT LEADER
3	1/5 - 1/13	#4 & #6 Nothern Indiana, Michigan & Western Ohio	Phil Isabel (219) 261-3541 Kurt Bahler (219) 261-2877 (H) (219) 261-2157 (O)
4	1/19 - 1/27	#11 & #12 California, Oregon, Arizona & Colorado	Glen Hackenjos (818) 422-4957
5	2/2 - 2/10	#1, #2 & #3 Connecticut, Eastern Ohio, Alabama, Georgia & Florida	Leonard Dolce (419) 589-6285 Craig Emch (216) 939-4591
6	2/9 - 2/17	Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, Texas & Canada	Richard Schmidgall (612) 392-5241
7	2/16 - 2/24	#7 Eastern Illinois	Jim Walter (815) 635-3158

Apostolic Water Aid Water Wells

This is a waterwell drilling project in Haiti, with equipment owned by Apostolics. Volunteers welcome. Those with rotary drill operating experience would be most appreciated.

Vocational Schools

Work Projects has funded several Vocational Schools to help instruct the Haitian nationals in the building trades. Current plans are to sent two volunteers in the early part of September to help instruct the students the use of hand tools.

(Contact your local elder and/or Bro. Bob Sutter (219) 334-5552.)

Veterinarian Assistance Project Bro. Bob Beebe, the coordinator

for the Veterinarian Assistance Project is scheduling field teams for the 1989-90 season, in Haiti, in cooperation with the Christian Vet Mission, headquartered in Seattle, WA. Any interested party should contact Bro. Bob Beebe, (219) 291-2158.

Juarez Project

In 1987-89, the Christian charitable organization, AMMAR, was the recipient of material and labor assistance from the Work Projects, which provided a building for them. The community center at Granjas do Chapultepec is now completed, with a free medical clinic, space for feeding the children of the area, and room for holding Bible classes and Sunday School.

Phase 1 of the building project,

GATEWAY WOODS

Apostolic Christian Childrens Home

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

1990
CHILDREN'S HOME
AUCTION AND SALE

SATURDAY,
AUGUST 18, 1990

Kilometro #20, the 2nd project has been approved and funds have been allocated. Construction began the 3rd week in August.

Anyone interested should contact Bro. Gerald Fiechter, (219) 565-3487.

DOMESTIC WORK PROJECTS

Church Addition - Junction, OH. The exterior work is nearly completed. Finishing skills are now required for the interior of the structure and remodeling the old sanctuary.

Please contact: Bro. Elias Manz, Route 1, Box 489, Paulding, OH 45879, (419) 399-5848, for details.

Church Addition - Tucson, AZ. The exterior work is complete. The new dining and Sunday school facilities are now being used. Volunteers are needed to help remodel the toilet facilities, baby room area, ministers' room, and sanctuary. Contact Bro. Jay Knapp, 8812 East Palisade Terrace, Tucson, AZ 85749, (602) 749-

8509, home phone: 790-5413, business phone.

Habitat For Humanity - Tucson, AZ - This is an opportunity to work with a Habitat for Humanity Affiliate in Tucson. There are five homes being constructed through March, 1990.

Contact Bro. Curtis Kaufman, 3211 S. Palm Springs Drive, Tucson, AZ 85710, (602) 298-8450.

Respite Care Project - Lexington, KY - A long term project to provide "respite" care for the handicapped, near the church in Lexington, KY. This will give a couple or two sisters the opportunity to serve, and also help the brethren in the Lexington congregation.

Contact Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman, Route 1, Box 4, Francesville, IN 47946, (219) 567-2798.

Gateway Woods, Apostolic Christian Children's Home, Leo, IN

There is a continuing need for

couples for the Houseparents' Staff. If there are any that feel led to consider this opportunity to work in the Lord's vineyard, please contact your local elder and Bro. Tim Sauder, Home Administrator. (219) 627-2159.

Additional volunteers are needed for maintenance projects throughout the year at the home. The following tasks are over and above that which is possible for the children to accomplish.

SPECIAL ON-GOING WORK PROJECTS

European Relief Food Packages, Bluffton Distribution Center

Activated in December, 1985. Ongoing. Individuals or groups. Currently on hold as the Romanian Government will not permit the importation of the food parcels. (Contact Bro. Gerald Fiechter 219/597-7494.

Assisting Smaller Congregations To Grow

To aid and encourage internal, external and migratory growth of smaller Apostolic Christian Congregations. On-going. (Contact your elder for details.)

FUTURE WORK PROJECTS - IN PLANNING STAGES

Fellowship Center Project - Lafayette, IN

Church Building Project -

Silverton, OR

St. Louis, MO

San Diego, CA

Remodeling Project -

Kitchner, Ontario

Mexican Children's Home

Hospital Aide Project - Haiti

Apostolic Christian Habitat

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN WORK PROJECTS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman, Elder Bro. Nathan Steffen (*), Elgin, IL; Vice Chairman, Elder Bro. David Bertsch (#), Leo, IN; Secretary/Treasurer, Bro. Arnold Gerst, Taylor, MO; Members: Elder Bro. John Klotzle (*), Altadena, CA; Elder Bro. Jesse Beer (#), Milford, IN; Elder Bro. Perry Zimmerman (#), Forrest, IL; Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (*), Bluffton, IN; Bro. Leon Graf (*),

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER NEEDED IN JAPAN

Our church in Japan has a kindergarten where Sis. Renee Baurer and Sis. Terri Gramm are now teaching. There will be a need for a sister to teach for two years, through March of 1992. A sister who has the faith and conviction to apply for this position should speak to her elder and if he approves, apply to the missionary committee for consideration.

All expenses involved in the two-year stay in Japan are paid by the church. The sister is asked to give two or more years of her life in Japan at some sacrifice of compensation, although we do pay, in addition to expenses, a small monthly salary.

Bible stories are taught every day in the kindergarten. English is the language of instruction, but incoming teachers are encouraged to begin studying the Japanese language before coming to Japan. This is helpful in communicating with the Japanese people and in singing the hymns in Japanese.

The teachers are presently living in a new, modern apartment about a 10-minute walk from the church.

There may be a former teaching brother or sister who had served in Japan and was acquainted with the language, or a retired teacher who would be willing to give of himself or herself. A brother or sister without a teaching certificate would be considered. Even one year would be appreciated. Anyone touched in heart should most prayerfully commit it to our gracious God, talk to his or her family and then to their local shepherd. May God provide for our need and may His will be done.

Anyone interested should contact his or her local elder, any of the brothers on the mission committee, including myself, or former teachers to Japan, including Bro. Willis Ehnle. Please note my new address and phone number are: 34050 Ramble Hills Drive, Farmington Hills, MI 48331; phone 313/478-3771; or Bro. Willis Ehnle, 692-2 Shioda, Ichinomiya-Cho, Higashi Yatsushiro-Gun, Yamanashi-Ken, Japan.

Your needy servant,
Ben Maibach, Jr.

Akron, OH; Bro. James Hoerr (*),
Peoria, IL; Bro. Robert Meyer,
Bluffton, IN.

(*) = Member of World Relief Com-
mittee

(#) = Member of Mission Committee

Address Changed . . .

Give Your Old and New Address
To Your Reporter

**GATEWAY WOODS
APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
CHILDREN'S HOME**

Jack and Velma Bollier

This is and most certainly has
been a blessed season, especially when
we consider the reason -- Jesus Christ!
It is absolutely amazing how He can
become Lord of Lords and King of
Kings when we relinquish control of
the things in our lives we cannot

control anyway. Just as Christ is the
reason for the season, He is also the
promise of God for eternal life to as
many as believe and submit to His
Spirit's guidance.

These exciting and important days
of Christmas time generate a great
deal of activity here at the home. The
Christmas season had its opening
here at Gateway Woods with Dee
Oliver's party in the basement of the
West House. Gifts were given to ev-
eryone following a delicious dinner
served by the kids. There were even
gifts from a group of Alzheimer's
patients that Dee works with. We
often forget the difficulty involved in
providing gifts for us -- a little like our
forgetfulness in remembering what
it cost God to provide the all impor-
tant gift for our salvation.

As Christmas Day grew nearer,
we had another vivid reminder of
that gift when the Sunday school
shared perspectives on the Christ-
mas Story through song, readings,
and God's Word. Our kids were very
involved, especially in the music. For
some, this was the first Christmas
program they were ever a part of.

Over and over during this season
we have been reminded of the love of
God by many gifts from you who are
praying and supporting this mission,
as well as by each of you who have
shared both time and talent during
the past year. We, here at the Home,
truly thank all of you and trust that
God will continue to bless both you
and us.

We continue to have an opening
for a single or married sister as our
Transitional Living Coordinator.

--NOTICE --

Repair and Distribution of Worn Bibles, Bible Story Books, Hymns of Zion, Tabernacle or Gospel Hymn Books

In 1984 we read in the Guideposts concerning the unfilled need for 10,000
Bibles. We wrote to the organization and started sending some repaired and
some new Bibles. Since that time, we have sent over 500 Bibles, much Sunday
school materials and song books.

During this past year, Sisters Becky Knapp (Dave) and Jane Huette
(Curtis) from Goodfield, IL, have been helping in this work.

If our churches or individual members have Bibles, Bible story books,
Hymns of Zion, Tabernacle or Gospel Hymns that are worn and in need of
repair, please let us know or send them to us. We tape and repair the books
and obtain names and addresses of people in foreign countries who want and
need them, package and mail them in large canvas mailing bags. It costs 55¢
a pound to send books or \$1.10 for printed material of less than 30 pages. On
a recent shipment to Africa, the cost to send a Bible was 72¢.

If you have any questions or wish to send material for repair, please call
or write:

Jerry and Arlene Banwart
Box 132
Congerville, IL 61729
Phone (309) 448-2416

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
Fifth Year -- August 1987 thru July 1988 -- 25,969
Sixth Year -- August 1988 thru July 1989 -- 25,509

Bibles Distributed -- Seventh Year

	MONTH	TO DATE
August 1989 --	2210	2210
September 1989 --	1627	3837
October 1989 --	2102	5939
November 1989 --	2338	8277
December 1989 --	3095	11,372

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

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Pre-School, Athens, AL

Sis. Julie Bauer, who is cur-
rently serving as program coor-
dinator and teacher, is engaged
to be married and will be leav-
ing about March 1, 1990. If you
have a B. A. Degree in Child
Development, Elementary Edu-
cation or related field, and have
an interest in this position, please
call or write to Elder Bro. La-
voyd Moore, Route 5, Box 75A,
Athens, AL 35611, phone 205-
232-2035 or 205-233-0591.

Please see the notice in this issue and pray God will lead one of His children to this important decision.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

By the time your eyes meet the words of this Silver Lining issue, all of this year's Christmas hymns will have been sung. We will have moments and experiences etched in our minds for "Christmas, 1989". And we want to continue on as thankful people here at ACHH, for we are being so blessed. Countless individuals are contributing to make this a special season for our friends living at ACHH, which we see as one of these blessings. Look at some of these activities: area churches Christmas caroling, a Bell Choir performance, a small group viewing the Nutcracker Ballet in Peoria, an area Bible Class providing a meal, presents, a skit, and a monetary contribution to us, Resident Council going out to eat and on a drive through East Peoria to see the Festival of Lights, gifts being given to one another, an all ACHH Christmas dinner and party, area work sites having Christmas meals, parties and dances, small groups going out Christmas shopping, decorating living rooms and rooms, making cookies and ornaments, writing and receiving Christmas cards, seeing Christmas programs and videos, and of course, many folks planning to travel to visit families and friends. Yet with all this receiving, many of our folks got together and remembered that our living Word tells us it is better to give than re-

ceive, and we must live a life concentrating on the needs of others. The Resident Council decided to get a large box of needed items together for the Peoria Rescue Mission, who disseminates these things to the needy area families. The council members have been collecting food and clothing and intend to ask a staff member to drive the goods over to Peoria when it gets closer to Christmas. We rest on the thought that God searches hearts for availability more than he searches for ability. All of us who live or work at ACHH do wish you a blessed New Year. We are waiting for the return of Jesus. When we see Him we know all things will be made new. Please wait in 1990 for Him with us. Let's live expecting to hear the trumpet call!

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL OF ATHENS, AL Julie Bauer

As preschool teachers, we daily face the challenge of making the Bible stories "come alive" to the children so that they understand that the stories we read to them actually happened to real people, unlike the events in the lives of the so-called heroes they see on television. At Christmas time the kids get a chance to see firsthand about life in Bible times as they learn lines and act out the Christmas story for their parents and friends. This presentation is the highlight of our Christmas celebration and the children love doing it. Hopefully this will help to indelibly print on their hearts the real meaning of Christmas.

The holidays bring us a two-week vacation, after which the kids and

teachers alike greet the new year with renewed enthusiasm.

ALABAMA, ATHENS Pamela Moore

November 4 and 5 was the time once again for the annual School Board meeting. We were blessed to have Elder Bros. Bud Klopfenstein (Fort Lauderdale, FL), Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) and Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI). Bro. Bill and Sis. Terry Hart (Goodfield, IL) and Bro. Jim Schlatter (Chicago, IL) were the visiting School Board Committee members present.

On Friday, the 8th of December, we gathered to witness the renewal of marriage vows between J. R. and Louise Hall. They chose to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary in a special and holy way. Afterwards, a reception was held at the fellowship hall, with everyone attending. With the high rate of failure in marriages today, what a time to rejoice when two souls, married for 25 years, are willing to renew and strengthen those vows.

We all got together as a church to have our Christmas dinner December 9 at the fellowship hall. We shared a potluck dinner, with plenty of food and fellowship. The main reason was to remember the true meaning of Christmas.

Our Sunday school program again reminded us of the Christmas story and the true meaning of Christmas. With Christmas becoming so commercialized, what better way to remind our children of the real reason for Christmas, than to let them participate in telling the story of Jesus' birth. A saying that has become popular in recent years "Jesus is the Reason for the Season," is so important to remember.

As November ended and December began, we said goodbye to Sis. Sharon Harris and family, who moved to the Toledo, OH, area. We will miss them in Athens, however, we know they are happy to be with family again in Toledo.

We were happy to hear the engagement announcement of Sis. Julie Bauer to Bro. Doug Walder (Cissna Park, IL), however, we will be sad to have Julie leave the Athens area. We

ON-GOING NEED FOR HOUSEPARENTS AT GATEWAY WOODS

At Gateway Woods - Apostolic Christian Children's Home, we periodically have openings for couples to serve as houseparents for troubled children. Often when these openings occur, we maintain for extended periods understaffed as we wait and pray for couples to respond to the Spirit and to the needs of these kids. It is our hope that a list of qualified couples could be developed in order that these positions could be filled quickly with minimum disruption to children's lives.

Houseparenting is challenging, rewarding, spiritually stimulating, and reasonably compensated with salary and benefits. If you or someone you know is interested in the residential child care field, we encourage you to explore the possibilities further by contacting Bro. Tim Sauder at P. O. Box 151, Leo, IN 46765, (219) 627-2159 or 627-2606, or Elder Bro. David Bertsch (219) 627-2923.

pray that together they can build a strong Christian home.

As we begin the new year, let's make our number one resolution to draw closer in serving and worshipping our heavenly Father and His Son.

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Ron and Ev Hoerr

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 3:36 -- a timely scripture to help a believer to be prepared to take holy communion. The Lord's Supper was served November 19 by our Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach, assisted by ministering Bros. Jon Kokanovich, Bill Dotterer and Clarence Yackley.

Erica Roth gave her testimony of faith, telling how much love she found members had for one another -- all a gift from God. On December 3, Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach baptized Erica, assisted by deacon Bro. Jon Kokanovich. Sis. Erica's parents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Jill Roth. Grandparents, Bro. Earl Roth and Bro. Roger and Sis. V. Isch came from Bluffton to rejoice with their family.

Later in the day, a church dinner and singing was enjoyed.

New officers to oversee church duties are Trustee: Bro. Bob. Lemons; Trustee for exterior care: Bro. Todd Roth; Song Leaders: Bro. Herbie Knochel and Bro. Erik Langhofer; Lunch Fund Treasurer: Bro. Robert Baum; Congregational Room Coordinators: Bro. Joe Greenbank and Bro. Alan Knochel; Usher: Bro. Nathan Knochel.

Visiting ministers who came to proclaim God's Word were Bro. Ken Lawson (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Loren Schrenck (St. Louis, MO), Bro. Niles Bucher (Bluffton, IN), Bro. Jim Leman (Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Loren Knapp (Tucson).

We surely enjoyed our Sunday school Christmas program. What pleasure our dear children give us in word and song about the Christ Child and the Nativity. A big "thank you" to everyone for a fine program.

Because there is power in prayer, we bring your our prayer list: Bros. Harry Roth, Manuel Stetzler, Earl Sanders, Sisters Marjorie Rebbec, Emma Sanders, Esther Harmon, Martha DeMille and Martha DeMills. Bro.

John Gerber was a surgical patient. Art and Helen Steward are thankful his diagnostic studies were benign. We rejoiced to see Shayne Pulfer and Ed (Ella) Harmon in church.

First-time parents, Bro. James and Sis. Gina Emch, welcomed Amy Lynn December 14. Amy's grandparents are Bro. Gene and Sis. Barb Huber (Francesville, IN) and Bro. Jerry and Sis. Cathy Emch. May the Lord guide Amy's parents in her daily care.

Remember, you are always welcome in God's house.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

We are happy to report that we are now using our new facility. The area that has been added on to the existing building consists of a foyer area, 5 Sunday school rooms, dining area and kitchen. We are now starting the work of remodeling the old baby room and bathrooms. We wish to thank everyone who has remembered us financially and prayerfully during this project and we ask for your continued support.

We recently enjoyed the privilege of taking holy communion. Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach was down to conduct the service along with our deacon, Bro. Noah Herman. We wish to thank Bro. Richard for making the effort to be with us and ask that the Lord bless him for his service to the church. As always, each one who participated in communion received a special blessing.

Bro. Bill Dotterer (Phoenix) and his family were with us recently and Bro. Bill opened the Word with us for Sunday services. We appreciate being remembered by our neighboring churches. Many others traveled with Bro. Bill and his family to share the day with us and it was nice to have so many visitors.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Lisa Steiner

On December 9, Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach (Phoenix, AZ) assisted Elder Bro. John Klotzle in the reading of the memorandum.

On the following day, a commemorative service was held at our Maywood Church. Many from the Altadena and San Diego congregations, and others from out of town were present. Sev-

eral letters were read from brothers and sisters who had attended Maywood many years ago, and many fond memories were shared by those present. A meal was provided following the service. Although it is sad to think that our church at Maywood has closed after many years, we can also remember that the church is the body of Christ and has a spiritual and not physical structure.

We rejoice with David Klotzle as he seeks to work out his soul's salvation. May God grant him much grace.

COLORADO, DENVER

Marlene Leman

It is with sadness in our hearts that we report that Bro. Rod and Sis. Cindy Schmidt and daughter, Kristy are moving to the San Diego, CA, area. They shall be greatly missed but believing it is God who directs all things, we accept it and pray for His continued blessings for them. We know they will be a blessing to the San Diego congregation.

Bro. Tom and Sis. Joan Schrenk spent Thanksgiving weekend with us. We thank Bro. Tom for being willing to speak God's Word to us. May he feel God's blessings!

It's such a blessing to hear our children and young people tell the blessed story of Christ's birth. We trust that the seeds planted early in life will grow and bring forth fruit as the children grow to the age of accountability.

Bro. Verne Lehman has been chosen to replace Bro. Rod Schmidt in Sunday school and Bro. Eric Huber has been chosen to replace Bro. Joe Hohulin as trustee. These are important responsibilities in the church and we ask God's guidance and inspiration as these brothers seek to fulfill these duties. May God bless the outgoing brothers for their faithfulness and service.

CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE

Martha Hany

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Matthew 6:33

The engagement of Sis. Maxine

Bahler and Bro. Wayne Schneider was made known to us December 10. We rejoice with them as they undertake, with the Lord's blessings, the second most important step in their lives. Parents are Bro. Corbin and Sis. Ginny Bahler, Walt Schneider and Minnie Wisniewski.

Sis. Anna Tschudin has been hospitalized for several weeks with pneumonia. Our prayers and love go out to her as well as to Bro. Alvin Lanz, Madeline Hany and Bro. Joe Skipper who experienced a sudden heart attack December 12.

Sunday, December 17 is the birthday of little "Nathan David" born to Sis. Ellen and Bro. David Galat. Our very best wishes to the new, first-time parents and may they continue to acknowledge God in all their ways as He will direct and guide them according to His promise. Grandparents are Bro. Art and Emily Foote and Bro. Dave and Sis. Marlene Galat.

Our Sunday school presented a program of Christmas hymns December 17. Various hymns were sung by the different age groups and it is amazing how even the very young children, in all their youthfulness and innocence, could memorize and sing several verses. Surely, this required much patience and effort on the part of teachers and parents. It brings to mind Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

At the beginning of another new year, 1990, our thoughts and prayers are for those who linger in nursing homes. May the Lord grant them a double measure of grace and patience to wait just a little longer for His call to come home! They are Sisters Elizabeth Erissman, Rose and Emma Luginbuhl, Marie Kloter, Frieda Reutter, Huldah Luginbuhl, Lena Ludwig, Liz Hoffman and Hazel Ludwig. Also, our love goes out to Frieda Hany who is homebound due to a physical disability and Sis. Fannie Lanz who is confined receiving rehabilitation for a shoulder injury.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
WASHINGTON**

Catherine Klopfenstein

Visiting ministers during December were Bro. Chris Huber (Franc-

esville, IN), Bro. Bob Pflederer (Morton, IL) and Bro. Todd Feller (LaCrosse, IN). Bros. Chris and Todd were accompanied by their wives, Sis. Sharon and Sis. Karen and were in Washington as part of the rotating assignments, while Bro. Bob was here on business and favored us with a visit to our assembly. We were richly blest by their visits and their meditations on the Word of God.

We also had visitors from Peoria and Gridley, IL, Rittman, OH and Iowa City, IA.

Our friends, Virginia (Ginny) Knobloch and Ed Stoll have announced their engagement and are planning an April wedding in Lester, IA. Ginny is the daughter of Gilbert and Sis. Vickie Knobloch (Lester, IA) and Ed is the son of Ed and Linda Stoll (Corpus Christi, TX). Ed and Ginny have been faithful attenders and wonderful supporters of our small congregation and we extend our congratulations, prayers and best wishes to them.

On December 3, we bade farewell to Bro. Jeff Fischer, who will be going "home" to Fort Scott, KS, at least for a while. Bro. Jeff was employed here in the Washington, D.C. area for about a year. He will be sorely missed here as he was always available and willing to help in any way. Our prayers and best wishes go with Bro. Jeff in whatever the future may hold for him.

Sis. Lydia Meyer (Peoria, IL) is spending several weeks here with her daughter, Henrietta, including the Christmas and New Year holidays. Ralph and Catherine Klopfenstein traveled to Gridley, IL, for both the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Ken and Roberta Belsley recently spent some time in Monterrey, CA, where their daughter, Mrs. Cheryl Anzalone, presented them with a new granddaughter, Lauren Michelle.

As this is written, we are approaching the end of a year and the end of a decade, causing us to first look backward, and then ahead. During the past year services were held here twice each month with average attendance just over 21 persons. There were a total of 30 visiting ministers. For the past 2 years this assembly has been self-supporting through the simple collection box and by occa-

sional gifts from other churches and from special friends. May God richly bless and reward each one who has remembered this assembly and supported it, whether by gift, prayer or attendance.

While we do not know God's plans for the future, we feel that a church is needed in this area and that with the continued prayers and support of the brotherhood, the next decade could bring a permanently established church. There is here, a good nucleus of faithful friends, but we need more members. Employment opportunities are abundant here and it is our prayer that in the coming year, 1990, one or more couples may be led to re-located to this area. During the past year we've had the blessed experience of seeing two young men turn to the Lord in repentance, so we definitely feel the Lord's hand is upon our assembly.

Services are held the first and third Sunday of each month, beginning at 10:30 a.m. eastern time at the Westpark Hotel (Best Western) located on U.S. Route 7, 1 mile west of I-495. Services are at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. with lunch served between. For more information or assistance, please call Ralph Klopfenstein, 703-979-3476. Visitors are always welcome and encouraged to come and worship with us.

**FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE
Terri K. Huber**

It is so precious to see the children earnestly perform their pieces and enthusiastically sing songs at the annual Sunday school Christmas program. The theme this year was that we shouldn't concentrate on gift giving and receiving, but rather on the gift God gave us -- His Son.

Christmas carolling is a joyous way to observe the season. Many of the carols we sing commemorate Jesus' birth, while others speak of holiday traditions. I'm glad that we have a tradition of carolling!

We are thankful for our visiting ministers. Bro. Dave Eisenmann (North Fort Myers) and Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL) were moved to preach God's Word to us.

We, in South Florida, have had a deficit in our annual rainfall for the past two years and are now facing

some mandatory, though currently minor, water use restrictions. Isn't it wonderful that there will never be a shortage of the Living Water!

FLORIDA, NORTH FT. MYERS

Kay Eisenmann

Visiting ministers were Bro. Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL) and Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL).

Another new year is here. What are we going to do with our time to make life better for others? For that is really what would make the whole world a better place to live, till our heavenly Father takes us home!

We just had the 23rd Psalm read to us, and the thought came to me, "Do we know Who our Shepherd is?" We all know God could compel us to come to Him, but He gave us a free mind to reason with. We, as parents, had to use our authority to make a point with our child, were not happy when they finally minded us. It was much better when they would offer to do what had to be done. So it is with our heavenly Father, as we would heed to call to repent.

When the thought comes into the heart to "repent" and turn our troubled hearts to God, the devil comes with "Yes, repent, but tomorrow." As we all know tomorrow never comes and God gives us the promise "Grace for the day" and that's how we live our live, a day at a time. And there is so much joy in serving the Lord. He never changes with every whim as the world does. Easy is not always right. And when we need to make a big decision in life, the only place to find it is in the Word of God. Many of us have many Bibles, but how many are just collecting dust? What kind of an answer are we going to be able to give our heavenly Father when "He offers us this promise, "Those who are His, will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever!"

How many of us have offered a gift to someone and they said they didn't want it? How soon would we offer another one? Some are so bold as to say, "Not now Lord, leave me alone." What happens when the death angel comes to take us to eternity? Some go very fast, no time to repent, so at the beginning of a new year, let us all let God take control of our lives.

Sis. Goldie Kipfer is still at home

recovering from her surgery. Dathan is no long in school. This is a time for much needed prayer for him and the family. God alone sees the future and we trust in Him in all things.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA

Suellen Ott - Kristine Price

Our congregation has missed the assembly of several of our dear brothers and sisters in the past days due to surgery and illness. At the time of this writing, Bro. Ben Aberle is hospitalized and recovering from open heart surgery. He and Sis. Anna Lou have been in our prayers. Sis. Gerry Laukhuf has also been in the hospital and not able to assemble with us. We wish to remember all those of our dear faith that may be ill and unable to gather together.

If none were sick and none were sad
What service could we render?
I think if we were always glad
We scarcely could be tender.
Did our beloved never need
Our patient ministrations
Earth would grow cold, and miss
indeed

Its sweetest consolation.
If sorrow never claimed our heart,
And every wish were granted,
Patience would die and hope
depart --
Life would be disenchanting.

As the weather turns brisk in the north, we have welcomed our winter residents here. It warms our hearts to greet those we have not seen for a season.

We are grateful to our shepherd, Elder Bro. Ben Maibach, that was here for several weeks and shared the gospel message. May God richly bless Bro. Ben for his service in the Lord's vineyard.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA

Peggy Camp

As we begin a new year, may we always strive to live a life that is pleasing and acceptable to our heavenly Father.

Bro. Wallace Ramsier (Mansfield, OH) and Bro. Fred Knapp (Congerville, IL) visited our Atlanta church in December. We appreciate these

ministers for coming and sharing the Word with us.

On Sunday afternoon, December 17, we went Christmas caroling at the Christian City Home. It was a blessing to share the beautiful Christmas songs with the elderly.

Services are held every Sunday at the Ramada Renaissance Hotel. It is located by the Atlanta Airport off I-85 on Riverdale Road. For more information, call Bro. Linn Stoller (404-631-4554), Bro. Don Sellers (404-923-0721) or Bro. John Brewer (404-254-9692).

ILLINOIS,

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

Marcia Bauer - De Anderson

We were so thankful when on Thanksgiving Day our Bloomington church was so full that chairs were put in the hall. We have so much to praise God for. We have had many come to the Lord in repentance. We are so thankful that Aaron Steffen (Bro. Herb and Sis. Georgia) has given his heart to the Lord. Our prayers are with him as he starts this new walk of life.

On Sunday, December 26, Elder Bro. Robert Beyer (Croghan/Naumburg, NY) worshipped with us. We thank him for his loving message.

Our Bloomington church hosted the World Relief meetings December 1 and 2. Many came from far and near to meet and discuss the many projects our church is involved in. We have all been so abundantly blessed and need to be reminded of the many needs of people in this world.

Our adopt-a-student Christmas supper was held December 8 at Bro. Chuck and Sis. Marie Kieser's home.

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our

beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Robert Louis Stevenson

With the spirit of Christmas in mind, Saturday, December 16, many of us gathered at our local nursing homes to walk the halls singing Christmas carols to the elderly. Some would smile, some would reach their hand out to us in greeting, others would be lying in their beds not showing response, but we know that we all felt blessed, saddened, and hopeful that we brought a little happiness to their lives.

Our children so innocently and eagerly told us the Christmas story Sunday, December 17. Our church was full of grandparents. We appreciated so many visitors.

Bro. Mike and Sis. Sandy Zimmerman, Heidi and Andrew welcomed a new little one to their home. Brandon Roy was born December 14. Happy grandparents are Bro. Roy and Sis. Helen Zimmerman (Gridley) and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy Anliker (Forrest).

Chris Huette (Sis. Hazel) still needs our prayers as he continues therapy and hospitalization.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD

Karen Ringger

The Christmas season has come once again reminding us how humbly our dear Lord Jesus came to this earth. On December 17, our Sunday school children recited their pieces and sang songs of praise, telling of the birth of our Saviour.

During the past month two souls have turned their hearts to Jesus and have asked God to help them live for Him. Our new converts are Daryl and Debbie Knobloch (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Diane and Bro. Ralph and Sis. Carolyn Gudeman, Congerville). May God richly bless them as they begin to walk in His ways.

On December 3, Lisa Kieser (Bro. Loris and Sis. Mart) became our sister-in-faith. We certainly wish her God's blessings as she lives for Him. Elder Bros. Joe Stoller (Princeville) and Lavoyd Moore (Athens, AL) were with us to complete this important step for Sis. Lisa. Also visiting us this past month were Bros. Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA), Bill Gerst (Alto, MI), Don

Manz (Junction, OH) and Wayne Lehman (South Bend, IN). We thank all these brothers for bringing us God's Word.

Bro. Mike and Sis. Sheila Rumbold are the happy parents of a baby boy, born December 11. Erick was welcomed home by J.R. and Brooke. May God bless their family.

Our prayers have been with our hospital patients, Sis. Lucille Endress (Bro. John) and Sis. Margaret Tanner (Bro. John). We wish them renewed health and our Father's healing touch.

ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN

LaRae Dill

Saturday, December 2 was a day much appreciated by many parents in our congregation. The U. of I. and Parkland College students held their yearly babysitting service to allow parents an afternoon to shop, relax, etc. The children certainly enjoyed the games, cookie baking, and attention!

"It is a wonder, that God came to the earth.

It is a wonder, He chose to come by a birth.

It is a wonder, such a lowly stall.

It is a wonder, the wonder of it all."

So began our Sunday school Christmas program presented by our students December 17. This year's program theme, "The Wonder of God's Plan" told us of the wonder of God's love -- "Isn't He Wonderful?"; the wonder felt by the shepherds and wise men as they viewed the newborn king - "What Child Is This?"; and lastly of the wonder in our lives -- "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:10, 11.

Following the program, we enjoyed an afternoon of Christmas carolling at area nursing homes, and then a chili supper at the church. A small housewarming was held for Bro. Roger and Sis. Marty Belsley. We're thankful God has blessed them and their children, Nicole and Marcus, with a new home.

Everyone in our congregation has come to know and love Steve and Mary Hohulin and their children, Lindsey and Dustin. The Hohulins will be moving to the Detroit, MI, area where Steve will be employed as a landscape architect. We will miss Steve and Mary's fellowship and Lindsey's participation in Sunday school. We pray God will bless and continue to work in their lives.

Our thanks to these ministers for visiting our congregation: Bros. Walt Herrmann (Princeville, IL), Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL), Ed Aeschleman (Philadelphia, PA), Kevin Knapp (Bloomington, IL), Fred Knapp (Congerville, IL), Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL) and our Elder Bro. Bob Grimm (Goodfield, IL). We also appreciate the opportunity to hear the conference tapes on recent Wednesday evenings.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Kathy Schlatter

The most striking words in the Christmas cards and letters we received were in a note from my cousin who, in speaking of her work with an organization to help needy families, wrote, "It's sometimes rewarding, most often depressing, and always time-consuming." Her honest, apt portrayal of our works provoked me to thought. We, as Christian, are to reach out and be useful in the Lord's vineyard. But nowhere are we promised we will be received with gratitude, praise and accolades -- here on earth. Our reward is a heavenly one. Our Savior had some rewarding experiences here on earth although, ultimately, He was rejected by all. Thus, only through His salvation, as we repent and become converted, can we "rejoice in the Lord alway; (Philippians 4:4)" despite our feelings, our treatment, our situation.

Though I have no visiting ministers to mention, I would share a thought. A couple lived in a community which had recently voted in a new minister. They were quite supportive. On Wednesday evening one stayed home with the children while the other went to church and heard the young ministering brother's first words from the pulpit, added comments at the end of the service. The one at home naturally asked, as we would, "How did he do?" More quickly

than the first could explain, their 10-year-old piped up and said, "Of course he did fine. God picked him!" Let us never forget that about our ministers. The Lord has chosen them through us, for our benefit. His choices are right. We will get the best nourishment possible if we are prayerful and supportive to those brothers who bear the name "minister." May we also not forget, however, that they should not have to bear the burden alone. Each in our own way, we are ALL called upon to minister.

Our Christmas program is always a thrill. Parents and grandparents, church family and friends, eagerly watch the children file in, listen for the content (and delivery) of their carefully-memorized verses and songs, and in heart reach up in thanksgiving to our precious Lord Christ for the wonder of the familiar story and its special retellers. We thank all of the children, their families, and their teachers for our December 9 Sunday school program.

Christmas carolling, too, is a special occasion. This year Jim and I were with the adults and younger children (below 4th grade) while others were with the Sunday school children. Saturday, December 16, our group went mostly to hospitals and rest homes with never a familiar face. Nevertheless, the magic of Christmas is Christ, often transmitted in the traditional carols He gave us to sing. The smiles and waving hands, thank yous and even applause were symbols, we hope, of hearts uplifted and moved with the truth of Christmas -- as our hearts were.

Four have been added to our church family -- in a variety of ways. We are so blessed to have them all.

Terisa Meyer, daughter of Bro. Lenard and Sis. Charlotte, and Roze Bozzay, daughter of Bro. Miklos and Sis. Aranka, have stopped struggling against the Lord's gentle knocking at their hearts. They have taken their first steps in faith, on the path of repentance, leading to a solid foundation in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We are thankful and joyful, praising the Lord, praying for them and thinking of others, too. May we sheep be careful to be helpful to these beloved lambs.

Whitney Lauren Butikofer was an early Christmas present for Bro.

Mark and Sis. Kaylene. Born December 16, she is a delight and responsibility also to grandparents, Bro. Glen and Sis. Laura Knapp (Forrest) and Bro. Bill and Sis. Norma Butikofer (Gridley, IL). As a church we feel privileged to make room for her in our church building and in our hearts.

Bro. Luis Gomez from our church married Sis. Cindy Witzig in her home church of Morton December 17. They will be living in Oak Park. Not only are we happy for the Lord's work in bringing them together, but we also look forward to Sis. Cindy as part of our church. We wish them all the rich blessings of the Lord in their blended path and especially welcome Sis. Cindy to our Chicago area with much love.

Visiting home over the holidays I made a disconcerting discovery. The landmarks by the turn off the hard road to my parents' home were gone! Instead of the familiar houses and trees at the intersection, there was only the crossroads. In fact, to check if it were the right road, I had to check for grain elevators much farther away, close to Mom and Dad's. There it is, a physical road situation that is changing. But look out across the landscape of our time. Satan is attempting to cut down all traditional landmarks of value: abstinence from all but maritally-sanctioned sex, responsibility for one's own actions, living to work productively and help others, belief in the true and living God and His Word. We cannot depend on society's "new, improved" suggestions. We must look beyond the media and our neighbors to the Living Word of God. Where it is proclaimed we need to gather; where it is lived needs to be our lives. Only then can we find our way Home despite the changes in "road" conditions.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK Karol Stock - Mary Knapp

We were privileged to have visiting ministers this past month. They were Bros. Bob Beebe (South Bend, IN), Clarence Kachelmuss (Forrest), Virgil Metzger (Chicago) and Elder Bros. Art Bahler (Fairbury) and Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA). We do appreciate their coming to share of themselves with us.

The annual all-church caroling was held Tuesday evening, December 5. After caroling at several area nursing

homes and for local shut-ins, the carolers returned to the fellowship hall for refreshments and fellowship.

We are thankful the sick list is small this month. Bob Kellerhals is recovering from surgery at his home. We extend our wishes to Bob for a good recovery.

Sis. Lydia Rocke (Bro. Harry, Eureka) passed away November 30 at the Methodist Medical Center in Peoria after a serious illness. Our sympathy goes out to Bro. Harry, their three children and families. She leaves also several brothers and sisters, Cal, Arch, Albert Jr., Bros. Don and Bob, Sisters Sal Markwalder, Emily Eisenmann and Laverne Kaufmann, who are local family members.

Eleven area men represented our church when they went to South Carolina the last week in November to assist in helping the victims of Hurricane Hugo. Seeing first hand what devastation such storms can produce makes an impact as to how quickly our material possessions -- and even lives -- can be taken.

We wish God's special guidance for three young couples on their recent marriages as they begin their new journeys through life together.

October 28 Julie Yergler and Mark Gasick were married and are residing in the Naperville-Wheaton area. Bro. Max and Sis. Donna are Julie's parents.

Jill Clauss and Scott Newcomer were married October 21 and are now living in Elkhart, IN. Her parents are Vernon and Joanne Clauss.

Nancy Kaufmann and Russell Schwartz were married December 16 and will reside in Bloomington, IL. Bro. Don and Sis. Gladys are the parents of Nancy.

Bro. Ed (Jun) and Sis. Betty Feller have moved recently to the Bloomington-Normal area. We will surely miss them and wish them well in their new church, home and surroundings.

A new little baby girl has arrived at the home of Mark and Sis. Dinah Wilkening. Marissa Lynn was born December 9. Also welcoming her home are big brothers, Brandon and Jarod. Grandparents are Bro. Alvin and Sis. Loretta Baumgartner and Vernes and Wilma Wilkening.

The Sunday school and Bible

classes are preparing for the Christmas program for this week. Their eagerness and anticipation are so easy to see as they present the story of the Christ Child.

A Reminder -- Cissna Park dues for the Silver Lining are due in February. Those who plan to be gone over the next few weeks, please contact your correspondents so we can get our dues into the Silver Lining office on time. Your help in being punctual is greatly appreciated.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE
Sandy Knapp - Susan Funk

"Take time to be holy,
Let Him be the guide,
And run not before Him,
Whatever betide;
In joy or in sorrow,
Still follow thy Lord,
And, looking to Jesus,
Still trust in His Word."

W. D. Longstaff

As the New Year approaches, may we always remember to trust God and follow His will with an obedient and joyful heart.

We are thankful for faithful servants who, in humble obedience, preach God's Word to us. Our visiting ministers were Bro. Paul Gasser (Akron, OH) and Bro. John Steiner (Oakville, IA).

Michael Edward was joyfully welcomed into the family of Bro. Mark and Sis. Tammy Roth. His excited sisters are Kristin, and Shari, and his thankful grandparents are Bro. Keith and Sis. Pauline Roth (Congerville) and Bro. Ralph and Sis. Linda Knapp (Taylor, MO).

Hospitalized this month was Ida Eglund. We wish her God's nearness and strength.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN
Elizabeth Schambach
Betty Bachtold

"We are going to tell you a story
Of a night in the long ago,
And I know you will want to hear
it . . .
The most wonderful one we
know . . ."

Such was our blessed privilege to hear the beautiful Christmas story in song and verse as told by our dear Sunday school children.

Christmas joys were also multiplied in the home of Bro. Fred and Sis. Libby Wahl as they welcomed their new baby, Janessa Ann, born December 7. Luke and Serena are also happy about this special gift, as well as grandparents, Bro. Edwin and Sis. Lois Bahler (Remington, IN).

God has been merciful to our hospital patients and we trust His healing and blessings will follow. Walter Schambach, Sis. Ella Banwart and Bros. Bill Reber and Tom Schambach required hospital care.

We offer special thanks to Bro. Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL) who visited our congregation and willingly taught us through word and spirit.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA
Kathy Leman

God has blessed three families this past month with precious little babies. November 15, Bro. Ron and Sis. Janet Hartter welcomed Phillip Daniel. Michael and Kayla are thankful for their new brother. Grandparents are Bro. Sam and Sis. Gladys Schmidgall and Bro. Dan and Sis. Dorothy Hartter (all of Eureka).

First-time parents are Bro. Brian and Sis. Tina Wiegand as God blessed them with Keith Daniel November 27. Keith's grandparents are Bro. Lewis and Sis. Arletta Martin and Bro. Elton and Sis. Loretta Wiegand (all of Eureka).

Bro. Stan and Sis. Lola Stoller, Leann, Cheryl, Cindy, Merle, Gary and Marsha welcomed their little sister, Connie Sue, December 13. Connie's grandparents are Bro. Vernon and Sis. Kathryn Blunier, and Bro. Leroy and Sis. Clara Huber. May God's blessings rest upon each dear home as they have been given these little souls to raise in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

As some are born into this world, God also calls His children to come home to Him. We are thankful our dear Sis. Lydia Rocke could be relieved of her bodily afflictions and be with the Lord where there will be no pain, no suffering, no tears, no Satan to tempt and torment, but we also know that parting from our loved

ones brings grief and sorrow. Our sympathy goes out to her dear husband, Bro. Harry; son, Mark (Goodfield); and daughters, Sis. Debra Joos (Bro. Harvey, Morris, MN), and Sis. Luann (Eureka). She is also survived by many brothers and sisters. How privileged we are that we can take comfort in God's Word and we pray He will comfort as only He can.

We are thankful for brothers who are willing to come and break the Bread of Life with us. May God bless Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO), Bro. Lenard Meyer (Chicago) and Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN) for being willing servants in our behalf.

Those who have spent time in the hospital this past month were Bros. Bob Wettstein (Sis. Verna), David Leman (Sis. Ann), Don Gudeman (Sis. Evelyn) and Sis. Edna Fehr and Sis. Caroline Leman (Bro. Milton). May God be the Great Physician unto them.

Thank You: We want to thank our family and many friends for your prayers, visits, gifts and get well wishes during David's stay at the hospital. We could feel your love and concern during a difficult time. May God richly bless every kind deed.

Bro. David and Sis. Ann Leman

Reminder: January is collection for Silver Lining (\$7.00).

Important: If you have had an address change, please submit both your old and new address to your reporter.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY
Jean Bachtold - Crystal Fehr

I WONDER

What does the future hold for me
In the mystical long eternity?
Shall I hear the Master say, "Well done"

When the sands of time have
finished the run?

Will I use my talents as I should
By shunning evil and seeking good?
Will some life be better because of
me?

Will I a worthy example be?

Have I eased the burden of
someone's worry
In a world of never-ending hurry?

Have I taken time for the kindly
deed
Or a word of courage in time of
need?

What will my portion be at end of
strife
When the Angels opens the Book of
Life?
What does the future hold for me
In the mystical long eternity?
Elizabeth Orth

As so we being another year. There isn't a more wonderful reason to thank our God for the year that now ends. It is another chance to do better than last year, to serve God more fully and to trust Him to lead us on paths of obedience and righteousness.

To further remind us of Christ's suffering for each of us, we partook of holy communion November 18. Elder Bros. Edwin Ringger (Gridley) and Perry Zimmerman (Forrest) assisted our Elder Bro. Art Bahler in this most sacred work.

"I tell you Nay, but except ye repent,
Ye shall all likewise perish."
St. Luke 13:5

A dear soul, Cory Steffen (Albert and Karen) has answered the call. May God grant him much grace.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;
"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

"For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."
Ephesians 6:18-20

As Paul was asking believers in Ephesus to pray for him that He would be able to preach the Gospel with sincerity and boldness, we believe that each one of our ministers have this same fervent desire. Our sincere prayers are offered for Bro. Dennis Rassi and his wife, Sis. Diane, as he was put in the ministry in Fairbury. May God bless them and walk closely with them and give them courage in their new duties.

Bros. Ralph Garber (Morton),

Wayne Anliker and Gary Brown (Forrest), Neil Widmer (Wolcott, IN), Elder Bros. Edwin Ringger (Gridley) and Perry Zimmerman (Forrest) visited our congregation this month. God certainly provides through His inspiration.

On November 18, Sis. Emily Miller was called home. We pray that God will comfort and console her family in the days ahead.

Our annual Sunday school Christmas program was held December 17. We received a blessing and we wish to thank our children and young people who told us about the birth of Christ in verse and song.

Hospitalized this month were Sisters Louise Bach, Colleen Walter and Dorothy Steffen. May God's hand of love be a comfort to them and their families during these difficult times.

For the year of 1989 we report 9 births, 6 baptisms, 6 weddings and 7 deaths.

ILLINOIS, FORREST

Sherri Kelson
Sandra Schneider

The beauty of the house is order.

The blessing of the house is contentment.

The glory of the house is hospitality.

The crown of the house is godliness.
Author Unknown

To have a home with these virtues is something we all can strive for in the coming year.

We have several that had to spend time in the hospital. We are glad that Sis. Virginia Hilti (Henry), Bro. Wilbur Wiegand (Sis. Ruth), Sis. Deb Roth (Bro. Ken), Anna Metz (Andy) and Bro. Ben Traub (Sis. Irene) are all doing good again. What a blessing good health is! Let's always appreciate it when we have it.

We want to thank the visiting ministers, Bros. Al Schneider (Rockville, CT), Ted Witzig (Morton) and Hartzell Kaisner (Detroit, MI) who lent themselves in God's service on our behalf. May they feel God's blessing.

There is joy in three families as little ones have been born to them. Lindsey Renee is the daughter of Bro. Duane and Sis. Mary Ifft. She joins

her sisters, Theresa and Sarah. Her grandparents are Willis and Joyce Alford (Fairbury) and Bro. Elmer and Sis. Emma Ifft.

Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean, Carrie, Jared, Kyle and Leah Knapp all welcome Waylon Dean into their family circle. Grandparents are John and Adeline Kaeb (Arrowsmith) and Norval and Wilma Knapp (Fairbury).

Loren Allen joins the family of Bro. Bob and Sis. Linda, Martin and Corbin Anliker. Bro. Ivan and Sis. Kathryn Steidinger and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy Anliker are his grandparents. We ask God's grace on each of these parents in raising their families to love and serve Him.

We want to say a special thanks to Sis. Mattie Kaeb (Bro. Nick) for having served as a Sunday school teacher for the beginners for the last ten years. Sis. Sherri Schlatter was chosen to teach this class. We wish Sis. Sherri much grace and patience to carry out her new job.

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Trish Gerber

Our congregation has had many reasons to rejoice this month. We were so happy to share in the joy of Bro. Larry and Sis. Betty Bauman and Bro. Bruce and Sis. Charlene Hohulin as they witnessed the marriage vows of their children, Bro. Dan and Sis. Holly. May Dan and Holly have a blessed marriage in the Lord.

We enjoyed listening to our children share the story of Jesus' birth as they presented their Christmas program to us. The hard work of all the teachers is so greatly appreciated by all of us who have children who benefit from their dedication and love.

The testimonies and baptisms of our new brother and sisters-in-the-Lord were so encouraging and uplifting. It was a pleasant reminder of how wonderfully God works for anyone who surrenders their life to Him totally. We welcome Sis. Stacie Gerber (Bro. Roger and Sis. Trish) and Bro. Dave and Sis. Pat Kuntz into the blessed family of God. May He grant them much grace as they continue their lives with Him as their Guide.

Bro. Arnold Gerst (Taylor, MO), Elder Bro. Ed Ringger (Gridley, IL) and Bro. Jim Rinkenberger (Bluffton, IN) shared God's Word with us this

month as we thank them and their wives for giving of their time.

Bro. Eli Hohulin wishes to thank everyone for the prayers, cards and visits during his recent stay at the hospital and recovery at home.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY
Perry Klopfenstein

One of the highlights of our Sunday school term occurred Saturday, December 16, when 19 of our high school Bible class students met with 11 residents of Sunrise Manor, our congregate living facility.

After the students introduced themselves and gave the names of their parents, the residents told of their favorite Christmas memories. It was interesting to note the frugal Christmases of 60 to 70 years ago compared to today. Children then received an orange, some candy and perhaps one present -- much less than today. Yet, children then enjoyed Christmas no less than today.

It was a wonderful thing to see young and old visiting, singing Christmas carols and playing games during the holiday season.

Also, on December 16, our entire Sunday school gathered in the fellowship hall for pizza and ice cream followed by a gift exchange.

On Sunday, December 17, the Sunday school presented their annual Christmas program entitled, "A Time To Rejoice."

Wednesday evening, December 13, was a special evening for our Gridley congregation. Vi Hany became our new sister-in-faith following her testimony and baptism. We truly appreciate her presence among us, and we all benefit by her kindly disposition.

Bro. Curtis and Sis. Norma Witzig became the parents of Trent Curtis November 21. Grandparents are Bro. Elmer and Sis. Marjorie Witzig and Bro. Roy and Sis. Helen Zimmerman. Trent has three sisters, Erin, 7; Bethany, 3; and Marissa, 1.

Sis. Julia Schieler was hospitalized in early December.

We wish to thank all our dear brothers, sisters and friends for their love, prayers, cards and support during the illness of our dear son and brother, Jeff, during the last year and a half and his recent passing.

According to God's promises, Jeff

no longer has a painful body but a glorified body, which allows him to stand in the presence of the Lord. He has come into the fullness of his redemption.

Jeff was born in 1959 and raised in Gridley. He repented and was baptized in 1979. He married Louanne Hoerr (Taylor, MO) in 1983. He cherished Gridley and loved the body of believers here, but when the Lord directed him and Louanne to Taylor, MO, he felt at home and loved the brethren there also.

We shall miss his greatly but God has promised to carry us in our darkest hours.

May God bless you all for your love and kindness.

Bob & Nola Gramm, Gridley
Barbara & Mike Prevo, Gridley
Brad & LuAnn Gramm, Kansas
Jackie & Jeff Leman, Chicago

Through the sorrow
Through the pain
We look to Him
Who rose again
Now in glory
On His throne
With outstretched arms
To receive His own.

ILLINOIS,
ILLINOIS STATE UNIV.
Pamela Gramm

We thank God for the ministering brothers who have faithfully served us by teaching the Word on Thursday nights. December 7 was our annual Christmas program. December 8 was the date of our Adopt-A-Student Christmas gathering. As the semester has come to a close, we anticipate next year with our God's continued guidance.

ILLINOIS, MORTON
Phyllis Farney
Cheryl Wuthrich

During December we again remembered Christ's birth with traditional Christmas activities. Our Sunday school Christmas program was December 3. Young people from 3 to 18 years old participated. On December 10, the entire church was invited to go caroling. It was hard to tell who derived the greatest joy, the carolers or the persons caroled to.

We are rejoicing that the Lord has drawn two hearts together. The engagement of Bro. Rob Baum (Bro. Ken and Sis. Jody) and Sis. Angie Heinold (Bro. Vic and Sis. Cheryl, Valparaiso, IN) was announced. Our prayers for God's continued blessings are with them and their families during their engagement period.

The family of Bro. George Rein wishes to thank everyone for their love and deeds of kindness which were shown them during his passing. May God richly bless all those who were so kind.

Sis. Rachel Bauman wishes to thank all for the prayers, cards, visits and gifts of love while in the hospital and since returning home. May God bless all who were so kind.

Sis. Grace Welk was called into all eternity. Her funeral was December 12. May God comfort and bless her husband, Bro. Alpha; her son, Wilbur; her daughter, Alice Hohulin; her sister, Ruth Stodd; and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We wish to thank our visiting ministers this month and let them know that their labors of love are truly appreciated. They were Elder Bros. Walt Anliker (Eureka, IL), John Klotzle (Altadena, CA) and Bro. Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL).

Father bend thy ear to hear us
As we feebly plead our cause.
Though our spirit would be willing
Our weak flesh does sabotage.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA
Joe and Jackie Herman

Bells ring out so loud and clear heralding the arrival of another New Year. Resolutions are made over again on "this to do, from that to abstain." But do you know, you who would do well, it's best to go on bended knee, and make your plea of, "Help me, Lord." Man's weak strength is all in vain, but help from above is our sure gain.

Author Unknown

Through God's love you share love with one another. On December 10, Bro. Tim Feucht (Bro. Walter) and Sis. Robyn Wieland (Bro. Wayne and

Sis. Erma) were united in marriage. May they be blessed by God.

Several brothers from afar visited us and ministered the Word to us this past month. They were Bro. Noah Herman (Tucson, AZ), Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN), Bro. Don Wagenbach (Washington), Bro. Floyd Schmidgall (Morris, MN) and Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Morton).

Hospitalized were Bro. Al Dominick, Bro. Mike and Sis. Carol Rieker, Bro. John Honegger and Sis. Naomi Haefli.

May God heal all their infirmities according to His will.

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE
Marjean Lehman

PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

Lord, let me live this new year of my life
In victory over all this world of strife.
Help me to see Thy way is always best,
And having seen, to let my burden rest
In those blest Hands that carry even yet
The scar of nails, symbolic of my debt.
When tired, let me always find my rest
In leaning hard, by faith, upon Thy breast.
When anxious, help me cast my care on Thee,
Knowing full well Thou carest, Lord, for me.
When tempted, show the escape which Thou has made
That all buy Thy sweet will might truly fade.
To rise above the trifling things of earth,
To measure things by their eternal worth,
To count as gain all that will honor Thee
And see my losses as Thou, Lord, dost see,
To walk with Thee each moment of this day,
This is the blessing Lord for which I pray.

Sandberg

May God's blessings be upon our

visiting ministers. They were Bro. Doug Grimm (Sabetha, KS), Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer (Peoria), Elder Bro. Dan Koch (Tremont), Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA), Elder Bro. Lavoyd Moore (Athens, AL), Bro. Rick Plattner (Peoria) and Bro. Glen Riggenschmidt (Rittman, OH).

On December 17, our Sunday school Christmas program was held. The program reflected on the Old Testament prophecies and then on the New Testament fulfillments. May God bless each student for their willingness to tell the wonderful story of love.

Four converts gave their testimony-of-faith November 18 and were able to erect a covenant with God (promising to be true and faithful to Him) before being baptized into His death. We welcomed God's new children into the fold of our Lord. They are Sis. Jill Baurer (Bro. Ed and Sis. Carol), Sis. Linda Martin (Bro. Nate and Sis. Esther), Bro. Mike Martin (the late Bro. Elmer and Sis. Janet) and Sis. Kara Menold (Bro. Mike and Sis. Sharon). May they look to God the author and finisher of their faith, asking Him to show the way, one step at a time.

On November 19, we heard the engagement announcement of Bro. John Grimm and Sis. Julie Sauder (Mansfield, OH). Parents are Bro. Earl and Sis. Anna Lou Grimm and Elder Bro. Ken and Sis. Sue Sauder (Mansfield, OH). May God bless them in their plans to walk life's pathway together.

On December 2, Beth Streitmatter and Curt Feucht (Lester, IA) were united in holy matrimony. Parents are Bro. Alf and Sis. Ginny Streitmatter and Bro. Raymond and Sis. Marge Feucht (Lester, IA). May they look to God for their blessings in their life together.

Little Ashley Marie Herrmann was born to Sis. Angie and Bro. Doug Herrmann November 15. Ashley is welcomed home by big sister, Amanda. Thankful grandparents are Sis. Diane and Bro. Marvin Knobloch (Bradford) and Sis. Betty Lou and Bro. Walt Herrmann. May God bless their family circle.

Give Your Address Changes
To Your Reporter

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

Sandy Leman - Patsy Kaeb

As one decade comes to a close and another begins, we have seen the fulfillment of the times with many changes taking place in the world. We are thankful God's Word never changes and we have His hope and His promise to carry us through another year if the Lord should tarry till He comes again.

We were thankful to have many visiting ministers this month: Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO), Bro. Don Braker (Kansas City, MO), Bro. John Schmidgall (Oakville, IA), Bro. Robert Miller (Portland, OR) and Bro. Marvin Leman (Bradford). We appreciate their willingness to preach the true Word of God.

Lorna Robison (Bro. Merlyn and Sis. Jan Getz) and Jim Ott (Bro. Don and Sis. Caroline, Congerville) were united in marriage Friday, November 24. We wish them God's blessings in their life together.

Gary and Pam Martin have answered their Savior's call and have begun to walk with Him. May the Lord bless them each step of the way.

On December 10, we welcomed Bro. Harvey Pfister into the family of God. Our entire congregation rejoices with Bro. Harvey.

Hospital patients this month include Bro. Louis Zimmerman (Sis. Fannie), Jeanette Wagner, Bruce Kupferschmidt (Bro. Charlie and Sis. Jean), Sis. Jean Hoffman (Bro. Tim), Sis. Carol Feucht (Bro. Randy) and Brad Sauder (Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan). We hope they can feel our love and prayers as well as God's nearness as they endure their afflictions.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

Carolyn Bolliger
Marsha Koch

We always enjoy listening to our Sunday school children and this was our recent privilege as they presented their annual Christmas program. We know it takes no small effort on the part of both teachers and children, and we thank them.

Our sympathy is extended to Roberta and Cliff Schweigert and their family in the recent loss of Roberta's stepmother, Sis. Emma Steiglitz (Morton).

We offer congratulations to Bro.

Chris and Sis. Wilmina Woerner. They became new grandparents to a baby girl, Kelsey Ann, born December 7 to their son and wife, Richard and Deirdre Woerner (Boston).

Bro. Dean and Sis. Judy Martin also added a new grandchild on the same day. A little daughter, Stephanie Lynn, was born to their son and wife, Gregg and Cheley Martin (East Peoria).

We have two more little girls sharing the same birth date. Little Lori Marie Koch made happy new parents of Bro. Chuck and Sis. Cathy Koch December 13. First-time grandparents are Bro. Elmon and Sis. Janice Koch. Bro. Robert and Sis. Doris Baer are maternal grandparents.

Also born December 13 was a little daughter, Kaylie Nicole, to Tom and Diane Endress. Little Kaylie has a big brother, Kyle, and a sister, Kristen. Fred and Ruth Endress are her Tremont grandparents.

As especially exciting event for Ray and Clea Rinkenberger was the birth of twin granddaughters. Little Jennifer Lynn and Amber Dawn were born December 16 to their daughter and husband, Bro. Gary and Sis. Debbie Rassi (Morton).

A special thank you to Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) who spent a Sunday with us. We appreciate the efforts of our visiting ministers.

It hardly seems possible that another year is closing and a new one beginning. It is a good time for all of us to pause and take stock and perhaps make a new beginning.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

Carol Schick

As this newsletter is being prepared, we are in the middle of the Christmas season. It is always a busy time of the year, yet such a special one.

Our Sunday school students gave praise to our Newborn King with a Christmas program December 13. It is always a lot of work to put together a program with a large number of children, but when the big night comes and everyone slows down to listen to the message being brought forth, it is always such a blessing.

We have several ministers to whom our gratitude is extended this past month. Elder Bros. Don Sauder

(Roanoke), Joe Braker (Morton), Ed Ringger (Gridley) and Bro. Russell Wuthrich (Pulaski, IA). May our Almighty God bless each of these brothers and their families for all that they sacrifice for the sake of our spiritual welfare.

A healthy new son was born to Bro. Bill and Sis. Joan Schick. Little John Christopher is welcomed home by his brothers, Bill Jr., Ryan and Tyler. His grandparents are Bro. John and Sis. Dorothy Hoerr (Peoria) and Sis. Dolly Schick (Washington).

We want to thank the Mortonaires for sharing the talent God has given them when they sang for us at our monthly singing. What a blessing it is to make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

We want to ask God's blessings upon Bro. Louis Gomez (Bro. Marshall and Sis. Jan Heinold) and Sis. Cindy Witzig (Bro. Harold and Sis. Dorothy) as they began their life together as man and wife December 17.

Our annual Christmas caroling was Sunday, December 10. There was a great turn-out and of course plenty to be thankful for, whatever our lot, and seeing the many shut-ins at this time of year always reminds us of that.

Our hospital patients this past month were Bro. Max Pfaffmann (Sis. Mary) and Sis. Sue Ruppert. May God heal where healing is willed and grant Christ-like endurance where it is needed.

We, here in Washington, wish everyone a Christ centered New Year.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON

Jean Moser - Shari Fiechter

"Now it is accomplished! I'm no longer mine; Lord I will forever and always be Thine, For THou hast created and purchased me too; Baptized with Thy spirit, Thou makest me new."

Zion's Harp #209

During the month of December, seven precious souls brought their testimonies before the church and were baptized December 10. Those now enjoying this new walk of life are Sis. Lori Shady (Bud and Gwen), Sis. Mary Isch (Bro. Hubert and Sis. Judy), Sis. Jenny Schlatter (Bro. Dick and Sis. Vi), Sis. Dawn Sutter (Bro. Bob

and Sis. Jan), Sis. Laurie Hackenjos (Bro. Carl and Sis. Evelyn), Sis. Shelly Tonner (Bro. Gary and Sis. Diann), Sis. Jill Ringger (Bro. Kent and Sis. Jan). Our faith was once again strengthened by the testimonies and vows made by the seven cherished converts.

We were privileged to have as visiting ministers this month Bro. Al Langhofer (Wichita, KS), Bro. Uriel Gehring (Leo), Bro. Rod Huber (Valparaiso), Elder Bro. Phil Stettner and Bro. Bob Meyer (Bluffton North).

Bro. Dave and Sis. Kim Bertsch are thankful for their second daughter, Rebekah Lucile, born November 21. Rebekah's sister, Steffanie, and grandparents, Bro. Walt and Sis. Imogene Aeschliman and Sis. Fran Bertsch welcome her.

Bro. Rocky and Sis. Melinda Giltner were blessed with a son, Clarke Allen. Clarke was born December 1 and joins a sister, Brooke. His grandparents are Bro. Al and Sis. Judy Langhofer (Wichita, KS) and Bro. Herman and Sis. Marie Drayer.

Melissa Rose was born December 11 to Bro. Mark and Sis. Shelly Fiechter. She has two big brothers, Joel and Caleb, to welcome her. Grandparents are Bro. Wayne and Sis. Dorothy Fiechter and Jerry and Pat Kaufman.

Our congratulations to Bro. Bob and Sis. Louise Reimschisel as they welcome their first grandchild, Colton Joseph Robert Herman, born to Bro. Joe and Sis. Jackie Herman (Peoria, IL).

Children are a special blessing from the Lord. We are thankful that these children will be raised and taught in Christian homes.

Loved ones hospitalized this month were Bro. Dale (Sis. Glenda) Meyer, Sis. Wanda (Bro. Mark) Moser, Sis. Sarah (Bro. Don) Reinhard, Matthew Yergler (Bro. Kim and Sis. Sue), Bro. Jeff Neuenschwander, Trent Earney (Bro. Todd and Sis. Teresa) and Sis. Ida (Bro. Charles) Meyer. May God grant healing as He sees best.

Levi Ginzel, 87, passed away December 19. We extend our prayers and sympathy to his wife, Elizabeth; his daughter, Mrs. Franklin (Phyllis) Ashinger; and two sons, Byron and John and their families.

Several from our congregation have gone Christmas caroling this season.

It warms our hearts to see the joy it brings to the elderly and shut-ins.

On December 17, our Sunday school students presented their Christmas program. We were reminded through their beautiful singing of the wonder and beauty of our precious Savior, Jesus Christ.

Are we celebrating Christmas to worship our Lord and King? This story was shared with us recently.

MARY'S DREAM

I had a dream, Joseph.

I don't understand it, not really, but I think it was about a birthday celebration for our Son. I think that was what it was all about. The people had been preparing for it for about six weeks. They had decorated the house and bought new clothes. They'd gone shopping many times and bought elaborate gifts. It was peculiar, though, because the presents weren't for our Son. They wrapped them in beautiful paper and tied them with lovely bows and stacked them under a tree. Yes, a tree, Joseph, right in their house. They'd decorated the tree also. The branches were full of glowing balls and sparkling ornaments. There was a figure on the top of the tree. It looked like an angel might look. Oh, it was beautiful. Everyone was laughing and happy. They were all excited about the gifts. They gave the gifts to each other, Joseph, not to our Son. I don't think they even knew Him. They never mentioned His name. Doesn't it seem odd for people to go to all that trouble to celebrate someone's birthday if they don't know Him. I had the strangest feeling that if our Son had gone to this celebration He would have been intruding. Everything was so beautiful, Joseph, and everyone so full of cheer, but it made me want to cry. How sad for Jesus -- not to be wanted at His own birthday celebration. I'm glad it was only a dream. How terrible, Joseph, it if had been real.

As we face the new year of 1990, let us worship the King and teach our children of His great love. Remember His promise to Joshua, "I will be with thee: I will not fail thee . . . Be strong and of a good courage." His promises are still sure today, if we have faith to believe.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH

Lois Drayer
Deb Aeschliman

THE NEW YEAR

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.

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

Four more dear souls are seeking God's guidance of their lives in repentance. Our new converts are Jason and Amanda Troxel, Vince Aeschliman (Bro. Steve and Karen) and Dana Metzger. As the angels in heaven rejoice over them, so do we. We wish them much grace and God's blessings.

We thank Bro. Ben Manz (Junction, OH) for spending Thanksgiving Day with us. We welcome him and his family to worship with us again.

We would like to extend congratulations to maternal grandparents, Bro. Walter and Sis. Imogene Aeschliman and paternal grandmother, Sis. Fran Bertsch (Bluffton) on the birth of Rebekah Lucile, born to Bro. Dave and Sis. Kim Bertsch (Bluffton) November 21. We also wish to congratulate Bro. Vernon and Sis. Carol Meyer in the birth of their grandson, Addison Richard, born December 11 to Richard and Sonja Yeates (Desoto, TX).

Our thoughts and prayers are with three who were hospitalized this past month, Bro. James Geisel (Sis. Dorothy), Kenny Weaver (foster son of Bro. Steve and Sis. Joyce Fischer) and Bro. Alvin Honegger (Sis. Alice). May the Lord watch over them in their times of illness.

Our Sunday school Christmas program was held December 17. It was very moving to listen to our chil-

dren sing of Jesus' birth. We realize that there are so many children who do not know of Christ and the true meaning of Christmas. As we watched the children sing, our hearts were touched and uplifted. We thank the song leaders, superintendents, teachers, and all the Sunday school students for the time it took in preparing for the program.

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE

Jacki Huber

On Sunday, December 17, the Sunday school classes shared with the church the miracle of Christ's birth in songs and verses. "Christmas Is A Time For Love" was one of the songs the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th graders sang. Some of the words were: "Maybe things don't sound right or look the way they should, and maybe they're not perfectly in tune; It really doesn't matter, let's keep our eyes above, 'cause Christmas is a time to love."

Although Christmas is a time for love, and a time to overlook trivial annoyances, so should every day be. May we all strive to fill our lives with God's Word and spirit so 1990 can flow a little more smoothly, first within the household of faith, and then without to every person we come in contact with, so our Lord Jesus can truly be glorified on earth before His coming.

It was a special blessing to have the following ministering brothers share God's Word with us this past month. Bros. Nelson Beer (Milford, IN), Rod Huber (Valparaiso, IN), Walter Rager (Toledo, OH) and Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN).

A special "thank you" to Elder Bro. Perry Zimmerman (Forrest, IL) who shared God's Word with us Sunday, November 26, and assisted in serving holy communion that evening.

A group of brothers from several churches, including Francesville, recently took a bus to South Carolina to assist some of the hurricane victims. Among them was our Bro. Sid Leman (Sis. Fern). While there he fell and injured his back, resulting in extensive surgery. Our prayers have been with him, and we're happy to say he is recovering as well as expected. "And we know that all things

work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28.

Sisters Jane Nuest (Bro. Larry) and Joan Gutwein (Bro. Harold and Sis. Maxine) have also been hospitalized. We pray that Sis. Pearl Getz can feel God's special nearness as she suffered from a fractured arm and is currently residing at Tioga Pines Living Center in Monticello, IN.

INDIANA, LACROSSE
Mary Lynn Massner

Another year is dawning,
Dear Master, let it be,
On earth, or else in heaven
Another year for Thee.

Hymns of Zion #150

This January first we not only rang in a new year, but also a new decade. What will the 1990's hold for us as a Christian people? Only God knows, but we can be assured that He will always be with us if we have His peace in our hearts. It's a new beginning. If we've been dissatisfied with the way we've been serving our Lord, let's make a commitment to do better this year with God's help. "... but this one thing I do, 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.

This past month we enjoyed our Sunday school Christmas program. It's truly a joy to hear our children singing and reciting poems about the true meaning of Christmas in a world where all too much emphasis is placed on Santa Claus and gifts. Ministering Bro. Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN) shared the day with us and we want to thank him for his service. We always appreciate the brethren who come to minister God's Word to us.

Our dear brother, Ernest Pfeifer, has recently undergone gall bladder surgery and is very ill. We continue to pray for his recovery. May the Lord be with him and Sis. Emma as they go through this difficult trial.

Our elder Bro. Ed Frank and Bro. Virgil Heinold also face surgery this week. We pray the Lord will guide the surgeons' hands and that they

both will soon be fully recovered. May God be with them and their families.

INDIANA, LEO
Doug Kellenberger

A recent acquaintance exasperated, "This year has been a failure. At the beginning I had a slogan -- '89 is mine'. But it didn't happen that way."

New Year's resolutions are our intentions. Their success depends upon our strength.

God's resolutions are His. They will come true, and in His strength. In fact, they will come true in us if we give in to Him. It's all a matter of surrender and trust. In fact, the secret seems to lie not in how tight we can hang on, but in how much we can give up to Him.

That's the hard part -- giving up control to someone else. Psalms 106 says, "He saved, He empowered, He rebuked, He led, and He redeemed. . ." (vs. 8-10). His children couldn't do it. They could only accept and be willing to follow. Their downfall did come later. But it wasn't from what they did. It was from what they rebelled against. (vs. 33).

In 1990 let us not limit our limitless God. Let us show we trust Him. Abraham was asked to do something that had never been done before. He simply surrendered to God and trusted Him for the outcome. That was the kind of faith that was counted to him for righteousness (Romans 4).

We extend our get well wish to Sis. Nancy Klopfenstein who fell and broke her hip. She underwent surgery.

We express sympathy to the family for the passing of Bess Steiner, the wife of the late Menno Steiner, and sister-in-law to the Steiner sisters.

We also hope our Sis. Mattie Clauss is enjoying her new home in South Bend. We miss her in Leo and do wish her well.

We're excited about more newcomers to Leo. Bro. Rick Ringger and his wife, Marla, are moving here with their daughters, Amy 12, Allison 10, Erica 8, and Lindsey 4.

We thank Bros. Carl Wyss and Earl Gerber for their efforts to come and minister the Word of God to us. Bro. Carl had a special topic on sharing and communication. Some of his thoughts invoked stimulating com-

ments from the audience. Many of the congregation expressed their appreciation for what took place that evening.

Our Christmas program was like that also. The fellowship hall was packed. The theme was worship. A number of people expressed their thanks to God for what He had done for them. We thank God for producing the worship to Himself!

INDIANA, MILFORD
Marguerite Hoerr
Sue Schieler

We thank Bro. Tim Sauder (Leo) who so willingly came and so ably informed us about Gateway Woods - Apostolic Christian Children's Home.

Our congratulations and best wishes for God's richest blessings go to Bro. Chip Topp and Sis. Angie Yergler (Bluffton) who will be married April 8. Their parents are Dale Topp and Louise Topp, and Bro. Claire and Sis. Mary Jane Yergler. We welcome Sis. Angie to our congregation and trust she will feel our love.

Everett and Sis. Leona (Rassi) Price celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December, and we wish to convey our congratulations to them.

Bro. Glenn Price Sr. had surgery recently and is recuperating in the home of their daughter, Sis. Kathy (Fort Wayne).

Esther Welty is now residing at Miller's Merry Manor (Syracuse) after having been released from Goshen Hospital.

Little Simon Beer (Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie) spent Thanksgiving week at Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis, but is now at home recuperating. Our prayers go out for Simon, his parents and brothers, Shane and Seth, as these reoccurring health problems are hard on all of them, and we trust they can feel our love, concern and support.

INDIANA, REMINGTON
Beth Virkler

On December 6, we laid Sis. Anna Waibel (late Bro. Herman - deceased 1970) to rest. She was the mother of three sons and one daughter, Bro. Ralph, Bro. Clyde and Mabel Buschman (all of Remington) and Lloyd

(Hesperia, CA). Twelve grandchildren also survive.

I have not always found attending a funeral to be a natural desire. But as I sat among the pews at a recent funeral, I noticed something. For the first time I became distinctly aware of how my life just seems to come to a sudden halt whenever I sit in front of a casket and stare at the bouquet of flowers. No matter how many pressing projects or issues I may have on my heart that week, there is always a soberness that fills the room causing my heart to stop and "be still . . . and know that I am God." Perhaps this is why I overheard my mother say once, "A funeral is really more for the living than for the dead." Shouldn't we count it a blessing in whatever way we are reminded that we are all going down the valley one by one?

THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Next to the might of the Spirit of God, the silent beauty of a holy life is the most powerful influence in the world.

A house is not a home unless it contains food for the soul as well as the body.

If we want to form a true opinion of ourself, consider the thoughts of our own heart when we are alone.

God holds us responsible . . . not for what we have but could have -- not for what we are, but might be.

Learn from the mistakes of others -- you can never live long enough to make them all yourself.

What man is depends largely on what he does when he has nothing to do . . . what he does in the quiet moments of life when he isn't before the spotlights.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND Sue Beebe

Our Sunday school students and several adults from our congregation presented us with a very meaningful Christmas program December 10. They sang and read of God's great love toward us in sending His Son, and that the best gift we could give Him in return is to give Him ourselves. After the program we sang Christmas carols for our shut-ins, followed by a chili supper at church.

Our annual business meeting was held December 13 with the following brethren chosen for the various positions: Trustee - Bro. Marty Langhofer; Sunday School Superintendent - Bro. Steve Stoller; Ushers - Bros. Scott Schafer, Don Lehman and Richard Gramm; Sound System Operation - Mike Mangold; Assistant Food Committee Chairman - Sis. Gigi Schafer; Assistant Vacation Bible School Director - Sis. Jill Lehman; and Silver Lining Reporter - Sis. Anna Marie Stoller. We thank all those whose terms have expired for their labors on our behalf.

Our sympathy is extended to Sis. Helen Martin upon the death of her brother, Noah Englehart.

We are grateful for our visiting ministers during the past month. Bro. Al Langhofer (Wichita, KS) and Bro. Walt Steffen (Milford, IN) graciously brought the Word to us.

During 1989 our congregation had 2 births, no deaths, 1 baptism, 1 new family and 2 single brethren move to our area.

A sister recently shared a verse with me which is comforting as we face a new year. It said, "God never leads us through a valley to prove our faith. Rather, He gives us the faith to walk through the valley." Many of us will no doubt have some valleys to walk through during 1990, but may we never forget who walks with us.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO Angie Heinold - Beth Heinold

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

Isaiah 9:6

Our congregation once again enjoyed our annual Christmas dinner. As we partake of life's blessings we need to remember those who are less fortunate. We know, however, that God will provide, as He has provided salvation for all mankind. May we all be thankful for this wonderful gift of God's Son.

We rejoice with Sis. Angie Heinold (Bro. Vic and Sis. Sheryl Hei-

nold) in her engagement to Bro. Rob Baum (Bro. Kenny and Sis. Jodi Baum, Morton, IL). It was a blessing to be brought together through God. May He bless them abundantly in the future.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT Lynell Blume - Lorna Knapp

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgiven not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

St. Matthew 6:14 - 15

Bro. John Hartman (Fairbury, IL) provided us much food for thought at our Bible study November 29, entitled "Forgiveness." We were so kindly reminded to not hold grudges or have ill-feelings as this only destroys our inner self and can cause harm to someone else. If we practice forgiveness it promotes reconciliation.

We also appreciated the willingness of Bro. Dwight Stoller (Latty, OH) to minister to us Thanksgiving Day. May the Lord bless both of these brothers for sharing the Word with us.

Many of us spent an interesting and informative evening November 17 as Bro. Gene and Sis. Verna Lehman showed slides of their recent visit to East and West Germany. It truly makes us thankful for the religious freedoms we enjoy.

A group from our congregation braved the bitter cold weather to carol to the elderly and shut-ins. However, our hearts were warmed to bring joy and happiness to others.

We are thankful Sis. Edna Kyburz and Bob Radcliffe are home again following a brief hospital stay.

As another year draws to a close, let us ask God for His guidance and grace so that we may face each new challenge in the New Year.

Thank You: "I would like to sincerely thank each and every one who remembered me during the Christmas season. A thank you to the Cheer Circle for the delicious fruit plate and to the Potluck Group for the beautiful fruit basket and Christmas carols. Your love and deeds of kindness were deeply appreciated. May God richly

bless and reward each one as only He can do.

Sis. Edna Kyburz

IOWA, ELGIN
Gloria Frieden

Each year brings its toll of joys and sorrows. As 1989 comes to a close, we have experienced both here in our little flock.

On November 28, little Benjamin Eli arrived to bless the home of Bro. Floyd and Sis. Jan Frieden. Also happy for his arrival are Ben's siblings, Bruce, Bob, Brian and Beth, and grandparents, Bro. Eli and Helen Fisher (Eureka, IL) and Edwin and Sis. Joy Frieden.

On December 13, Sis. Sarah Moore was suddenly called from this life into eternity. Our sympathy is extended to her husband, Bro. Orville, and her surviving brothers, Eli, Noah and John Metzger, and her sister, Sis. Kati Grimm (Bro. Paul, Sabetha, KS), along with many nieces and nephews.

Our thanks to Elder Bros. Art Nohl (Morris, MN), Leo Moser (Lester) and Ed Lantz (Oakville) for sharing the reading of the memorandum unto us. May we take these kindly exhortations to heart and grow by them.

As we are entering a new year, 12 months of new opportunities lie before us. May we resolve to make as few mistakes as possible but more than that, when we do make a mistake, of whatever nature or magnitude, to claim it as our own, blame no one else and seek God's guidance and grace in correcting it. With God touching our days, we can overcome even our mistakes.

A mistake made and corrected is a lesson learned.

The Upper Room

IOWA, IOWA CITY
Janette Schulz

Greetings to all! We extend our thanks to all of our visitors this month, including ministering Bro. Myron Knobloch (Lester, IA). It is always uplifting to come to church Sunday morning and meet those who have included a stop in Iowa City in their travel plans.

We bid a fond farewell to our dear

friend, Marilyn Anderson, who has moved to Burlington, IA. While we are sure her mother, Sis. Tillie Frank, appreciates having her there, we will miss her greatly.

Adults and children alike enjoyed carolling this week, despite the bitter cold weather, and are looking forward to the Christmas program. Both activities help us keep our focus on the real meaning of Christmas.

As we approach a new year, may we go forward in faith, trusting one day at a time that the Lord will provide for us as He sees fit.

There are two golden days in the week, upon which, and about which, I never worry -- two carefree days, kept sacredly free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is Yesterday; yesterday, with its cares and frets, all its pains and aches, all its faults, mistakes and blunders, has passed forever beyond my recall. I cannot undo an act that I wrought; nor unsay a word that I said. All that it holds of my life, of wrong, regret and sorrow, is in the hands of the Mighty Love that can bring honey out of the rock and sweetest waters out of the bitterest desert. Save for the beautiful memories -- sweet and tender -- that linger like the perfume of roses in the heart of the day that is gone, I have nothing to do with Yesterday. It was mine! It is God's!

And the other day that I do not worry about is Tomorrow; tomorrow with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its perils, its large promise and poor performance, its failures and mistakes, is as far beyond my mastery as its dead sister, Yesterday. It is a day of God's. Its sun will rise in roseate splendor, or behind a mask of weeping clouds -- but it will rise.

Until then, the same love and patience that held Yesterday holds Tomorrow. Save for the star of hope that gleams forever on the brow of Tomorrow, shining with tender promise into the heart

Today, I have no possession in that unborn day of grace. All else is in the safe keeping of the Infinite Love that is higher than the stars, wider than the skies, deeper than the seas. Tomorrow is God's day! It will be mine!

There is left for myself, then, but

one day in the week -- Today. Any man can fight the battles of Today! Any woman can carry the burdens of just one day! Any man can resist the temptations of Today! O, friends, it is when we willfully add the burdens of those two awful eternities -- Yesterday and Tomorrow -- such burdens as only the Mighty God can sustain -- that we break down. It isn't the experience of Today that drives men mad. It is the remorse for something that happened Yesterday; the dread of what Tomorrow may disclose.

These are God's days! Leave them with Him!

Therefore, I think and do, and I journey but one day at a time! That is the easy way. That is Man's Day. Dutifully I run my course and work my appointed task on that Day of ours. God -- the All-Mighty and All-Loving takes care of Yesterday and Tomorrow.

Bob Burdette,
 Springs in the Valley, Jan. 3

IOWA, IOWA STATE UNIV.

Angela Metzger

The second half of our fall semester was served by the following ministers, Bro. Russell Wuthrich (Pulaski), Bro. Leo Moser (Lester) and Bro. Wayne Grimm (West Bend).

We wish all of our students a joyous holiday season and hope that they will enjoy their semester break. Classes resume at Iowa State January 22, 1990, with the next service being held January 28.

IOWA, LESTER

Kathy Metzger - Mary Knobloch

God's Holy Word has been shared with us again by visiting ministers. Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend) and Bro. Jim Knobloch (Elgin) reminded us of the many blessings God so freely gives to each one.

Surgical patients this past month were Bro. Alvin Leuthold, Bro. Ernst Metzger, John Giesel, Bro. Frank Moser and Joel Te Slaa (Gary and Sis. Ronda). What comfort it is to know that God never forsakes His children but grants them sufficient grace for each day. May God's healing powers be with each soul.

Bro. Tom and Sis. Debra Metzger were blessed with a new baby daugh-

ter. Tasha Rose was born November 22. Paternal grandparents are Bro. Fred and Sis. Esty Metzger. Tim and Becky Ver Beek welcome a son, Derek John, born December 12. Maternal grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Rosella Metzger. A "special" bundle from heaven has arrived in the home of Bob and Carol Moliter. Laura Elizabeth was born October 17 and was adopted by Bob and Carol December 4. Maternal grandparents are Bro. Art and Sis. Emily Leuthold. May the Lord richly bless these dear families!

As a year ends and a new year dawns, our thoughts reflect over the past year and our hearts are filled with thankfulness. We've experienced sorrows intermingled with joys reminding us that God's ways are perfect. We have reaped the rewards of so many blessings but have we grown the fruits necessary to repay God for all He has blessed us with!

**GOD GRANT US HOPE
AND FAITH AND LOVE**

Hope for a world grown cynically
cold,
Hungry for power and greedy for
gold . . .
Faith to believe when within and
without
There's a nameless fear in a world
of doubt . . .
Love that is bigger than race or
creed,
To cover the world and fulfill every
need . . .
God, grant these gifts to all trou-
bled hearts
As the old years ends and a new
year starts.

Helen Steiner Rice

**IOWA, OAKVILLE
Debbie Wagenbach**

Les and Jane Reiman are the happy parents of a little girl, Edith Marie. Bro. Bernie and Sis. Leah Schaar (Pulaski, IA) are Edith's grandparents.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psalms 133:1. What a blessed unity we felt as we assembled together December 10 to listen to the precious children recite their verses and sing their songs. As we heard the message of the Saviour's humble birth,

we often feel chastened. To think how good and comfortable we have it compared to Jesus' birth and walk of life on earth is quite hard to fathom. Let's not allow the prosperity we have and live under destroy our blessed hope!

Bro. Arnie Gerst (Taylor, MO) has recently spent a weekend with his family in Oakville and thus has lent himself in the Lord's service.

With fond memories and tearful farewells we bid Bro. Rod and Sis. Naomi Moser God's richest blessings in their move to Taylor, MO. We know they will be received with love in the Taylor congregation even though we will miss them in Oakville.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

I Corinthians 13:13

Thought: Let your hope keep you joyful!

(Anonymous)

IOWA, WEST BEND

Phyllis Banwart - Mary Gerber

Bringing us God's Word recently were Bros. Alpha Strahm (Bern, KS), Jim Knobloch (Elgin, IA), Dale Moore (Elgin, IA), Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR), Don Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN) and Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN). May they be blessed for their service in the Lord.

Little Tyle Dean arrived November 8. He is welcomed into the home of Troy and Julie Olson. One-year-old Trey, as well as grandparents, Bro. Larry and Sis. Marvella Wickman and Gary and Janice Olson (Ayrshire), welcome him, too.

Bro. Leland and Sis. Kathy Metzger, along with their children, Teena, Sherri, Wendal, Randal, Brice and Dixie, received a bundle of joy, Tory Wilmer, December 7. Rejoicing with them are grandparents, Sis. Nima Fehr and Bro. Silas and Sis. Della Metzger.

A singing shower was held at our fellowship center in honor of Sis. Ruth Rehr and Bro. Duane Metzger. On December 3, they were united in marriage. May the Lord impart His blessings on this home and family which includes Bro. Duane's children, Sis. Sara, Brent and Tammy, Brian,

David, Darin, Bradley, Brandon and Donald.

We're thankful to report our hospital patients have all returned home again. They are Bro. Bert Thomann, Sis. Verda Bruellman (Bro. Don) and Sis. Berniece Banwart.

Our annual business meeting was held December 5. Bro. Eldon Banwart was elected church trustee; Bro. Ivan Schmidt, Fellowship Center trustee; and Bro. Alvin Banwart, Village Apt. board; as well as several other brothers and sisters who filled various positions. We certainly want to extend our appreciation to all the brothers and sisters who have now completed their duties.

As we step into a new year, may we think upon the following words and do our part to be the light in the passing throng.

It is human to stand with the crowd, it is divine to stand alone.

**JAPAN, SHIODA
Terri Gramm**

When I left Chicago on August 23, I couldn't comprehend what exactly God had planned for me in Japan. One thing I know is that the prayers of family, friends, brothers and sisters in the church have certainly made my transition from Illinois to Japan much smoother than I expected. I want to thank you all very much for your encouragement through cards, letters, tapes and prayers. God bless.

We were privileged to have Sis. Lois Ehnle's brother and sister-in-law, Marion and Susan Beer, visit us from Colorado.

We want to thank Bro. Akito Inoue and his family for ministering and assembling with us December 3.

Even though Christmas is not a national holiday, people work on Christmas Day, we can still enjoy caroling, programs and services on Saturday and Sunday. The children in our kindergarten will also be acting out the Christmas Story. It is amazing, and yet quite natural, to see 4, 5 and 6-year-olds take on the adult roles of Mary, Joseph, shepherds, etc. It is not quite so natural for adults to take on that humility of a child. And yet, Jesus instructs us in Matthew 18:3 to become as little children in order to enter the heavenly kingdom.

KANSAS, BERN**Kathy Strahm****Lori Baumgartner**

January 1990 -- the beginning of a new year and the beginning of a new decade! May we put the past year behind us and press forward with renewed zeal, counting our many blessings and carrying our crosses willingly.

"Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, 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 appreciated the visiting ministers who assembled with us during the past month. They were Bro. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS), Bro. Jay Luthi (Lamont, KS) and Bro. Loren Knapp (Tucson, AZ). May the Lord bless each of them for their efforts on our behalf.

Also visiting us this past month were the junior and senior Bible classes from Sabetha and Lester, IA. We trust they had an enjoyable time together.

Hospitalized this past month was Bro. Wayne Strahm (Sis. Claudia). He underwent back surgery for the second time and seems to be recovering nicely, which we are thankful for. Frieda Bauman, a resident of the Apostolic Christian Home Apartments, suffered a broken arm from a fall in her apartment. We miss seeing her smiling face among us and hope she will be able to assemble with us again soon.

We rejoice with Bro. Melvin and Sis. Florence Rokey as their son, Bro. Gary Rokey (Kansas City, MO) gave his testimony and was baptized the weekend of November 25 and 26 in Kansas City.

On December 12, we laid to rest Bro. Roy Meyer of our Bern congregation. Bro. Roy's cheerfulness and meek countenance will be greatly missed among us. Bro. Roy passed from this life Friday, December 9 at the Apostolic Christian Nursing Home. He had been in failing health ever since suffering a stroke November 14. We extend our sympathy to his niece, Sis. Ruth Hertzell (Bro. Frank) and her family.

Due to the crowded conditions, it has been decided by our Bern congregation and the Sabetha congregation to hold separate services on holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. We will continue to assemble together for midweek services.

KANSAS, GRIDLEY**Vola Young - Judy Kraft**

Our appreciation to all for the prayers, visits, cards, flowers, food and all other gifts while Bro. Joseph was hospitalized, also since returning home. May the dear Lord add His blessings.

Bro. Joseph and Sis. Edna
Somerhalder

Bro. Joe will be taking up residence at the Apostolic Christian Home in Sabetha and Sis. Edna is moving to Sabetha to be near him. Their absence will be felt in our small community and church.

December 16, Bro. Doug and Sis. Judy Kraft hosted a supper and then the guests divided into two groups and went caroling.

The wondrous story of God's love for all mankind, through the gift of a Saviour was recounted by the Sunday school children and a fellowship hour was held following the program.

KANSAS, KIOWA**Darcy Kisling - Janice Bahr****BELIEVE AND PRAY**

In trial and adversity
Let not your faith grow dim,
But say a fervent prayer to God
And keep your trust in Him.
Let hope not wither on the vine
Of sorrow and despair,
Remember God knows everything
And He is everywhere.
However dark the day may seem
Or frightening the night,
All troubles fade and disappear
And life turns out all right
Provided you maintain your faith
And do not yield to fear
The while you pray for courage
with
A heart that is sincere . . .
Resign yourself most humble now
To do God's holy will

And He will surely bless you and
Your least request fulfill.

James J. Metcalfe

As this new year begins, let us renew our hope, our faith, and our commitment for greater service to the Lord.

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Marie Schurter and Bro. Henry Hodel. Both are home and feeling better. May they feel the healing presence of our Lord.

At the rest home this month, many gathered to sing carols and celebrate the birth of our Lord with the residents.

KANSAS, SABETHA**Sharon Strahm - Beth Hartter**

Our high school Sunday school students enjoyed the weekend of November 18 and 19 with the Bern Sunday school students. Many thanks to all of the Bern hosts and hostesses for your planning and labors to make this a blessed weekend.

Those recently troubled with bodily afflictions include Bro. Will Wenger, a medical patient, and Bros. Andy Lehman and Ben Aberle, surgical patients. Bro. Ben is at a Sarasota hospital at this time, recovering from heart bypass surgery. We trust he can feel our prayers across the miles.

The ministering brothers who have shared with us God's Word and timely instructions included Bro. Alpha Strahm (Bern) and Bro. Loren Knapp (Tucson, AZ). As always, we sincerely appreciate the visits of those who serve from the pulpits.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways." (Haggai 1:7) It truly is a delight and encouragement to know that God is yet the Almighty One. Though Satan does a good job of deceiving, there are souls who by grace are able to "consider their ways" and put Satan behind them. Korbin Beyer has answered God's call. We rejoice with Korbin and his family.

The Sunday school Christmas program will be held tomorrow during our noon intermission. This is something we look forward to and hope the occasion is one that the children and young adults will not soon forget but will be able to reflect upon as a precious memory.

As the New Year begins, it is such

an opportune time for all of us to make new beginnings. Each of us know personally what areas of our lives need "construction" or "remodeling." May we be willing to ask God for the "tools" to do His will. It is our prayer that God will bless us all in 1990.

KANSAS, WICHITA
Emma Miller

Bro. Virgil Barth had knee surgery in early December and at this writing, is still experiencing discomfort.

We rejoice with Bro. Al and Sis. Judy Langhoffer as they welcome a new grandchild into their circle of love. Clarke Allen Giltner was born December 1 to Bro. Rocky and Sis. Melinda (Bluffton, IN).

December 16 was the wedding day for Carla Holland and Dan Miller. Carla is the daughter of Bro. Charlie and Sis. Gail Grimm.

Our Sunday school Christmas program was presented December 17. Retelling the events of our Saviour's birth with the enthusiasm of a child is one tradition we want to keep alive.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON
Lester and Glendoris Huber

"Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14. Christmas, the beautiful story of peace on earth, good will to men is ever new in our hearts as we commemorate the dear Saviour's birth. This great gift of love came from our compassionate and Almighty God, and is so precious and so much to rejoice in during this season. As a part of this remembrance, our young children brought us the story of the birth of our Saviour in simple verse and song at our Christmas program December 17. Their childlike innocence and sincerity with which they spoke warmed our hearts.

On Wednesday evening, a group of us, young and old, were together singing Christmas carols to the widows, a young crippled boy who is in a wheelchair, also shut-ins who are not able to be out and about like we. It was enjoyable to bring cheer to these dear ones.

We are sorry to learn that Bro. Harold Fritz's employment with

Cargill, is being transferred to Minneapolis. At the present time he is commuting between Lexington and Minneapolis for the sake of the children's school term. We will miss their help and support they have given in the past years.

We have especially appreciated the scheduled monthly visits of our beloved ministering brothers, young people and Sunday school, as well as vacationers passing through. We pray God will richly bless and reward all the efforts put forth in remembering us during this year of 1989. We want to express thanks again to Bro. Kenneth Eisenmann (Cissna Park, IL) and Bro. Earl Kilgus (Remington, IN) for sharing God's love with us in the past month.

As the New Year unfolds, let us ever praise the Lord for His faithfulness. May we ever keep our hearts and minds stayed on Him, trusting Him for guidance and grace to meet our every need.

MICHIGAN, ALTO

Denise Oesch - Michelle Oesch

We were able to share joy and warmth with our children at our Christmas program last month. To see the littlest to the oldest walking on that journey with Mary and Joseph through their words and songs and see the wonder of the real reason we celebrate Christmas and our Lord's birth.

And as His birth is celebrated and we go on into a new year, we remember our journey is also growing to celebrate our real reason for our rebirth in our Lord's name. And many of us will make New Year's resolutions. May it be to strive to be stronger, and a shining light instead of a dull flame.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 5:16

For when the Lord does come back, may he see our lamps lit and waiting and not be the ones still in the store trying to buy more oil because we've let our burn out. (Matthew 25:1-13).

We also had a visit to our little church, Bro. Lenny Meyers (Chicago, IL).

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY
Peggy Waibel

"I have no yesterdays, time took them away; Tomorrow may not be -- but I have today."

Pearl Yeadon McGinnis

With this Christmas and New Year season, we have had time to reflect on the past. I'm sure we all agree that we couldn't be who and what we are today without the grace of God. Through him our yesterdays are forgiven, our tomorrows are full of the hope of heaven, and most of all we have today to live for him.

With the new year comes new life. Baby Alyssa Michelle (Bro. Scott and Sis. Beth Kent) made an appearance into the world December 12. We pray that she will grace the lives of those around her with beauty and love.

As this year comes to a close, we need to be reminded of the commitments we have made to God and our church. Elder Bros. Ben Maibach and Aaron Steffen labored with Elder Bro. Andy Virkler in the reading of the memorandum. We were very thankful that they gave of themselves to encourage us in our Christian walk of life.

Also visiting us this month was Bro. Hartzel Kaisner. We were very happy to have him with us.

"Jesus said unto him, 'Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.'"

Luke 9:60

"Bro. Neil Ramseyer (Bro. Earl and Sis. Mary Ramseyer) heeded the call to serve his God and Savior in a very special way. He has answered the call to minister. We pray that God will bless his life and the sermons he will give will be an inspiration to everyone who hears them. We appreciate him and his wife, Sis. Sharon, and pray that God will richly bless them.

So as the year 1989 comes to a close, we have a lot to thank God for. Especially the gift of eternal life. We hope that each one will except this gift, the only one you don't have to wait in line to purchase and use your personal savings to buy. Just accept it, repent, and turn your life over to Jesus Christ. For He was the greatest

gift ever given to any of us on Christmas Day.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

Sue Gasser

We were recently reminded that we should daily be preparing for the Lord. As we close this year, I'm sure all of us can think of times when we were pretty lax spiritually, and it's good to be reminded that we need to be diligent and consistent in our spiritual lives.

We enjoyed a visit from Bro. Vernon Schwab (Wolcott, IN) and appreciated his ministry to us.

We had our annual Christmas program and we were encouraged to keep our thoughts and priorities where they should be through the busyness of the season.

Our prayers are with Bill Shaw, who was recently in the hospital and is now back at a nursing home.

Detroit will host services at Woodhaven February 6, 1990 at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome.

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS

Carol Strassheim

How will you be celebrating the New Year? I hope that you will be bursting with joy as you reflect on the past season of Christmas and anticipate celebrating a wonderful New Year before us in the Lord. In spite of all the ups and downs in your life, God's grace helps in every way to lighten the load and to bring joy through His spiritual eyes.

We were thankful to have the testimony and baptism of Bro. Dick Metzger December 11 and 12. It is encouraging to see the peace and joy that Jesus gives to him. Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA), Elder Bro. Harold Messner (Winthrop) and Bro. Russel Wuthrich (Pulaski, IA) were able to be with us and we thank them. Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr also visited on a Wednesday evening.

Our children celebrated with us at their Christmas program December 17. They are always so excited and happy to say their pieces and to sing those Christmas songs. As parents, we realize how precious they are to us and how important it is for us to share Jesus Christ with them.

Sis. Nancy Messner has moved to

the Winthrop area. She will be very missed here, especially by her Sunday school class. We pray the best for her as she moves on.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Christa Sauder - Ruth Nohl

This month we want to welcome a new family to our congregation. Bro. Nathan and Sis. LeAnn Gerber have moved here from Minneapolis, having found employment in this area. We extend a warm welcome to them and their children.

Just as we are excited to welcome a family, our hearts are saddened as we bid a fond farewell to another dear family. Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Joyce Nohl, and their daughter, Julie, have moved to Mission, TX. We will surely miss them, but we pray the Lord will bless them and help them to adjust to their new home.

We want to thank the ministering brethren who came to visit us recently. They were: Elder Bro. Sam Huber (Sabetha, KS), Elder Bro. Corbin Bahler (Rockville, CT), Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS), Bro. Bill Emch (Lamont, KS), Bro. Doug Grimm (Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Elmer Schmidt (Winthrop, MN). May the Lord bless them for their labors in the ministry.

On November 26, we were privileged to witness the wedding vows of Bro. Paul Schmidgall and Sis. Shawn Nohl. We wish them the Lord's nearness and blessings in their married life. Their parents are Bro. Neil and Sis. Linda Schmidgall and Bro. David and Sis. Eileen Nohl.

We rejoice as we greet a new brother-in-faith. The evening of December 2, we heard the testimony of Mike Domnick (Bro. Gary and Sis. Velma) and we welcomed him into God's family following his baptism on Sunday. We hope and pray many more souls will seek to become a child of God.

Our congregation was privileged to hear the reading of the memorandum of our annual brotherhood conference. May we support our elder brothers and be willing to follow the advice they so kindly give us, believing they are the watchmen on the walls of Zion. Elder Bro. Corbin Bahler and Elder Bro. John Lehman assisted our Elder Bro. Art in this duty.

We are enjoying the many special events of the Christmas season. One such event is the annual Christmas program of our Sunday school children. We thank the teachers who willingly take the time and effort to plan a program and help the children learn their songs and pieces. May it be impressed upon the hearts of the children who recite, and the adults who listen, how much God loved us to send His best gift, His Son, Jesus, to be our Saviour.

Requiring hospitalization this month was Bro. Jake Koehl (Sis. Mary), but we're thankful he can assemble with us again.

Once again, an old year becomes history and a new year lies before us. May we serve our Lord faithfully, watching and praying, as we wait for His second coming.

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

Ella Mae Schmidt

Georgia Messner

We are thankful for God's grace, that Archie Lienemann (Sis. Pearl) was able to give his testimony and be baptized. We welcome him, as a brother, into the fold.

Surgical patients this month were Daniel Messner (Duane and Mona), Clint Schmidt (Bro. Dick and Sis. Mary Lou) and Kyle Messner (Bro. Joe and Sis. Kim). The Lord has done a wonderful work of healing. They all seem to be recovering.

We had a blessed evening listening to the Sunday school children recite pieces and sing songs of Jesus' birthday. We all enjoyed fellowship after the program. As was mentioned, the good that we do is our gift to the Lord. May we all resolve to do better with the new year of 1990.

January is collection time for Winthrop.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

Carole Kellenberger

Thanksgiving time was especially meaningful to our Kansas City congregation this year. Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern) assisted our Elder Bro. Gene Marti November 25 as we heard the testimony of our dear convert, Garry Rokey. We were thankful to have many of Garry's friends and relatives with us on Sunday for his

baptism, including his parents, Bro. Melvin and Sis. Florence Rokey (Bern) and his dear wife, Marty, and daughters, Andrea, Megan, Emily and Jessica. We rejoice to see God's working in Bro. Garry's life and welcome him into our little flock. Bro. Gene Metzger (Lester, IA) was also with us. The whole weekend was very uplifting and we thank the ministering brothers for their words of encouragement to our small group. Our continual prayer is that many more would heed the tender call of Jesus.

Christmas is upon us and we are so thankful to God for the gift of His only begotten Son. It was a thrill to have twenty-four children in front of our church to share the Christmas story through word and song. We commend the children and their teachers for the nice program.

After church, December 17, our congregation sang carols at two nearby retirement homes. We then returned to church for our annual chili supper. The food and the fellowship was a terrific way to warm up after caroling. As the snow covers the ground and clings to the trees and the temperature drops, we stand in awe of the Almighty God.

We are so thankful our dear friend, Ed Wreath, was spared serious injury when he rolled his car on slick roads. Also Bro. Joe Farney returned home after being hospitalized with chest pains. Each one is very sorely missed when unable to assemble with us.

May each one of us grow in faith in the coming year and often be reminded of I Timothy 6:7, 8. "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."

MISSOURI, LAMAR

Carol Braker - Becky Marti

We have had several visitors this past month. We especially appreciate the labors of Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA) and our Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO) in ministering God's Word to us. May God bless them always.

Bro. Roy and Sis. Judy Braker have been blessed with a new son. Benjamin Joseph was born Decem-

ber 15 and was welcomed home by Carol, Sarah and David. Grandparents are Bro. Gerald and Sis. Velma Leman (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Raymond and Sis. LuEtta Braker (Lamar).

Sis. Marie Marti was seriously injured in an accident while in Phoenix, AZ. She remains hospitalized at this writing. May she feel God's nearness and healing hand and the prayers of those who love her.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Loida Hodel - Lori Marquart

"Joy to the world the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King! Let every
heart prepare Him room, And heaven
and nature sing."

Isaac Watts

We are looking forward to our annual Christmas program December 17, the first program in our new church.

Visiting ministers since our last writing have been Bros. Greg Gramm (Phoenix, AZ), Arthur Baurer (Princeton, IL) and Ben Wysong (Sabetha). We appreciate and thank them for serving us from God's Word and trust God will bless them.

Born to Sara and Ralph Hoppe November 30 was Ethan Grant. Andy and Krista are happy to have a new baby brother and grandparents are Elder Bro. Nathan and Sis. Marilyn Steffen (Elgin).

"Not my will, but Thine be done."
Our hearts have been saddened by the death of our dear Bro. Jeff Gramm, 30, who passed away, November 17 at his home near Palmyra, MO. He leaves his wife, Sis. Louanne (Bro. Louis and Sis. Ruth Hoerr); his parents, Bro. Bob and Sis. Nola Gramm (Gridley); two sisters and one brother. Funeral services were held here at Taylor by Bro. Kent Heimer and Elder Bros. Roy Grimm and Edwin Ringger. Jeff had been fighting a battle with cancer for some time and only those who have experienced this can really understand and sympathize. May the quality, not quantity, of six short, but happy, years of marriage help Louanne to pick up the pieces and go on with precious memories to fill the days ahead. To know Jeff was to love him and we, at the "church on the levee"

have been enriched because of his friendship.

Dear brothers, sisters and friends: I would like to thank each one of you personally if I could for the prayers in which you offered on behalf of Jeff and myself, as well as for the cards of encouragement you sent. As most of you know, Jeff won the battle of this life November 17, 1989, after his doctors discovered a brain tumor 15 months earlier. Jeff had a pretty good year except for the last few months in which he gradually grew weak and the pain more intense. We appreciated your prayers of love and concern for us for we could truly feel them. We often commented on how special our church is that our brethren really care enough to take the time to pray for each others' needs. I sincerely feel that God heard your prayers for Jeff's wellness but our heavenly Father saw fit to separate our lives for a time. It is my prayer and I know it would be Jeff's too, that if we would not meet again here in this life that we all might have a glorious reunion in heaven above.

In Christian Love,
Louanne Gramm

"My Jesus I love Thee, I know
Thou art mine. I'll love Thee in life,
I'll love Thee in death and praise
Thee as long as Thou lendest me
breath. And say when the death dew
lies cold on my brow, "If ever I loved
Thee My Jesus 'tis now." In mansions
of glory and endless delight, I'll ever
adore Thee in heaven so bright. I'll
sing with a glittering crown on my
brow, "If ever I loved Thee my Jesus
'tis now."

"We want to thank everyone for all the love, gifts and deeds of kindness shown unto us through our misfortune of a fire and Benji's hospital stay. Words cannot express the thankfulness in our hearts toward all of you."

Christian Love,
Ralph, Linda, Benji, James and
Luke Knapp

"To everything there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under
heaven; A time to be born and a time
to die."

Ecclesiastes 3: 1 & 2

**NEW YORK,
CROGHAN/NAUMBURG
Alice Virkler**

Bro. Floyd Graves, Sr., has returned home from the hospital after having had two surgeries in the past month. We are happy to report that he is doing well and our prayer is that he can assemble and minister unto us again soon. May God be near him and his family at this time.

Sympathy is extended to Betty and Bruce Richie as her brother, Howard Widrick, was taken from this life. Our sympathy is also extended to Bro. John and Sis. Berdena Widrick and their family as his brother-in-law, Clarence Mayer, was taken from life into eternity. May God comfort both of these families.

Our Sunday school children presented their program of verse and song on Sunday afternoon, December 17. May each one of them keep the teachings in their hearts as a guide in their future lives.

**OHIO, AKRON
Joyce Gasser**

As we came to the end of the year, we reviewed some of our year's events. As we come to the end of the chapters of the Bible, God reviews seven churches. To six He gives a commendation, to five He gives a condemnation, and to all He gives counsel and a challenge to inherit the promises.

The first one, Ephesus, the original church, means "the desired ones," which were the missionaries that spread the Word to all; but then they lost their first love.

The second was Smyrna, whose name comes from Myrrh, an herb which is beaten into fine pieces to give off its fragrance, which is a picture of the church going through persecution.

The third is Pergamos, meaning "married," as they combined pagan rituals and Christian practices.

The fourth is Thyatira, a time of Dark Ages, as people were not inclined to read the Bible, so they were in darkness.

The fifth is Sardis, meaning "the escaping ones," as certain men escaped the darkness and started preaching justification by faith.

The sixth is Philadelphia, which means "brotherly love." God encour-

ages them to spread the Gospel, as Revelation 3:8 says, "I have set before thee an open door . . ."

The seventh is Laodicea, which is the lukewarm church.

We are thankful He gives us these examples and challenge to motivate us in our New Year resolutions to be as the original ones before they lost their first love.

Bro. Carl Gasser had his four score and tenth birthday, as he was 90 years old December 3.

We were blessed to have Bro. James Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) minister to us.

Sis. Evelyn Baumgartner had surgery, and we pray that she will feel God's presence as she recuperates.

This past year we had seven baptisms, four births, one wedding and one funeral.

OHIO, COLUMBUS

John Grimm

We are thankful for our visiting ministers this past month. They were Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH), Bro. David Graf (Akron, OH) and Bro. John Zeller (Morton, IL). May God bless them and their families.

The wedding of Sis. Julie Sauder and Bro. John Grimm is scheduled for March 4 in Mansfield. Because the Columbus church will be invited to the wedding, there will not be services in Columbus.

OHIO, JUNCTION

Laurie Schlatter

We thank Elder Bro. Kenneth Sauder (Mansfield) for ministering unto us this past month.

"For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Isaiah 55:12

May we remember in this new year the joy and peace of our Savior.

OHIO, LATTY

Rhonda Stoller - Kathy Sinn

"Therefore I say unto you, what-

soever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Mark 11:24

Bro. Lee and Sis. Desma Klopfenstein have felt the joy of answered prayer. God has blessed Bro. Lee and Sis. Desma with a baby girl. Our prayers continue to be with you and your family.

Sharing with us the precious Word of God was Elder Bro. Kenneth Sauder (Mansfield). We appreciated you being with us Bro. Kenneth. May the Lord be with you and your family and please come back and visit us at Latty.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Revelation 21:4

Our heavenly Father called home a loved one from our congregation. Bro. George Laukhuf went home to receive his crown. Bro. George left behind many nephews and nieces that will miss him dearly. Our prayers are with the family. May you feel your lives being carried on wings of prayer as you walk through this valley. God will supply your every need.

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

Philippians 4:6-7

OHIO, MANSFIELD

Linda Morrison

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." (Isaiah 53:1, 2) We have heard the story of Jesus' birth during this Christmas season but how many have believed? Has it just become a convenient fairy tale to tell once a year? How much of what we hear is not scripturally sound . . .

three wise men, animals that sang of the gifts they gave, a drummer boy visiting the babe . . . have we too accepted the fairy tale aspects of Christ's birth?

Bro. Harry (Sis. Mary Mae) Bocka and Kimberly Fairchild (Bro. Ron and Sis. Sheli) had surgery this past month. Bro. Pete (Sis. Karen) Baltic and Sis. Wilma McCutchen had accidents resulting in arm injuries. Sis. Elda (Bro. Alvin) Riegenbach was also in an accident. We are thankful their injuries were not more serious and pray God will bless them with a complete recovery. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Ephesians 6:18)

The Sunday school children presented Christ's birth in spoken word and song. May we be willing to share Christ with the same joy and enthusiasm that the children have. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." (Mark 10:15)

I want to apologize to Sis. Becky Vent for leaving her name out of her father, Bro. Dave Beery's, obituary. I am truly sorry and I apologize to both Sis. Becky and her mother, Sis. Lena. But I did have to think, better our names be left off an earthly list than off God's Book of Life.

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7) May that be our lot and portion in this new year.

OHIO, RITTMAN

Diane Gasser - Lois Stoller

We are glad for the willingness of visiting ministers to serve us, as well as our own. Bros. Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) and Gary Maibach (Smithville, OH) have recently visited us.

"I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see." (Hymns of Zion #97). We rejoice with our four converts who are beginning to understand God's "Amazing Grace" since they are repenting. The converts are Marsha Hartzler (Bro. Vince and Sis. Jane), Mary Beery (Bro. Everett and Sis. Carol), Jan Miller (Bro. Mike and Sis. Norene)

and Dave Stoller (Bro. Everett and Sis. Marge).

Bro. John and Sis. Wilma Steiner and Bro. Alpha and Sis. Helen Maibach welcome a granddaughter, Calla Lynn, the daughter of Bro. Dave and Sis. Lynn Steiner (Columbus, OH). Calla has two brothers, Nathaniel and Isaac, to help care for her.

Travis Dean is an addition to the family of Dean and Heidi Mills. Grandparents, Bro. Ed and Sis. Marilyn Trent and Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Mills, and brother, Tyler, welcome a little boy.

Arriving in the home of Todd and Kelly Jenkins is a baby girl, Rochelle Lynn. Sis. Clara Jenkins is pleased to have another grandchild.

Recently Bro. Lester Riegenbach (Sis. Lorena), Sis. Mary Winkler, and Sis. Betty Keiper (Bro. Reinhart) have been in the hospital. We hope they will soon feel well enough to assemble with us again.

We wish to remember Sis. Mildred Reusser with sympathy since her brother, Paul Eisenbarth, and sister-in-law, Callie Straub, have passed away.

On December 3 the engagement of Bro. Scott Stoller (Bro. Everett and Sis. Marge) and Sis. Charlene Rufener (Bro. Joe and Sis. Lilas, Smithville, OH) was announced. May they depend on God's guidance as they plan for their marriage.

Marcene Miller (Bro. Mike and Sis. Norene) has completed her college education. We wish her God's blessings as she seeks employment in education.

Singing carols is a special part of the Christmas season. We gathered for our annual Christmas program and listened to various age groups sing with zeal. The congregation joined in harmony to "sing hallelujah with good cheer." (Zion's Harp #7).

OHIO, SARDIS

Paula Figel

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33. As we are in

the beginning of another year, we may be wondering what will be in store for us. As we journey on and realize that God has been good to us, and we look to Him and ask His help, He will never fail us.

The Christmas program was held December 17, with a good number in attendance. The Christmas story was told in word and song by all the Sunday school children. May God bless each and every one who took part, including the teachers for their love and patience.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE
Stephanie Luginbuhl
Kim Stoller

"And the Lord God said It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."
Genesis 2:18

Bro. Scott Stoller (Bro. Everett and Sis. Marge, Rittman, OH) believed God has chosen Sis. Charlene Rufener (Bro. Joe and Sis. Lilas) to be his helpmate. Their engagement was announced December 3.

We were privileged to have visiting brethren who ministered unto us. May the Lord bless Bro. Dave Graf (Akron, OH) and Bro. Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH) for their labors.

We are always thankful when those who have been sick and afflicted are able to assemble with us again. Hospitalized this past month were Corban Riegenbach (Bro. Ed and Sis. Anita), Mike Beery (Art and Eileen) and Sis. Ann Maibach (Bro. Ken).

Jana Michelle is the name of Bro. Jim and Sis. Karen Widmer's new daughter. Jana's sister, Julie, is excited to have a playmate. Grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Joann Widmer (Rittman, OH) and Bro. Gary and Sis. Mary Ann Maibach. Great-grandparents are Tug and Sis. Alma Maibach and Bro. Ernest and Sis. Louise Graf (Akron, OH).

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient.
 If a child lives with encouragement, he learns confidence.
 If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate.
 If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice.
 If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith.
 If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself.
 If a child lives with acceptance, and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.

OHIO, TOLEDO

**Frances Laidig
 Josephine Rehklau**

Christmas -- what a blessed time of the year. Without our dear Saviour, life would have no real meaning. We had our annual Christmas program this evening and there is something especially beautiful in seeing all ages standing together, reading of His birth, reciting poems and then all together singing carols. It is a period when all ages are giving their time and attention to praise the Lord and it is heartwarming and refreshing for us who attend. We pray that not one of them will forget the Lord as they go on in life and can experience the true peace and joy that only He can give.

Sis. Anna Weigele is in the hospital at this time. We pray that Anna will be well enough to return home soon and assemble with us again.

We extend our congratulations to Bro. Kent Rager (Bro. Walter and Sis. Sharon). He has finished his course of study at Purdue University with a degree in computer and electrical engineering. Starting in January, he will be working at the Motorola Corporation in Chicago. We wish him God's blessings in his chosen profession.

Who is he that cares and watches over our life and soul's estate? Our heavenly Father.

January is our month for the Silver Lining dues.

OREGON, SILVERTON

Rosa Lee Kuenzi

As they have done at various times in the past, our single member group invited several other church groups

to Oregon for the Thanksgiving weekend. This year's groups from Cissna Park, IL; Gridley/Lamont and Wichita, KS; and West Bend, IA; made the more-than-three-thousand-mile round trip to Oregon. The group enjoyed their traditional Thanksgiving dinner, made a couple of stops to carol, spent some time at Restless Surf and made it back in time for a Pork Chop BBQ Potluck at the Mollalla Sr. Center. They attended Sunday services at the Portland church and had their Sunday dinner at the Multnomah Falls Lodge to conclude the weekend's activities. "Praised be the Lord who gives us strength, Who leads and gives direction. My brethren when you kneel in pray'r as a chain Binds us in God together, And when we part, Unites each heart In Jesus' name forever." Zion's Harp #195, vs. 8. Dear reader, if you were part of this year's group or from a past year's Thanksgiving visitors . . . may you know you are still in our hearts; we pray you will keep us in yours.

We were greatly encouraged, edified and clearly lovingly warned through the Word, the prayers, and the minister's reading and explaining the conclusions of the 1989 brotherhood conference recently. We were also privileged to receive holy communion humbly served to us by Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) and deacon Bro. Clarence Dietrich. Such an uplifting weekend gives us strength and courage on our pilgrim journey.

Other visiting ministers this past month, in addition to Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr, were Bro. Myron Knobloch (Lester, IA) and Bro. Garth Steffen (Portland, OR). Our sincere thanks to these dear brothers for their labors of love on our behalf.

Two blessed events of the Christmas season we have recently enjoyed were Christmas caroling and the Sunday school program. After their rounds of caroling, the four vans full of hoarse and happy carolers ended up at the home of Bro. Chuck and Sis. Karen Walter for plenty of refreshments. Then, on Sunday night, the 17th of December, we gathered to hear the beautiful retelling of the birth of Christ by the Sunday school students. Thirty-eight youngsters carefully recited their well-practiced

pieces, read the familiar passages of Scripture and sang the songs that once again remind us of the humble birth of Jesus. But, thankfully, all though this joyous story of Bethlehem ran the thread of the message that Jesus died to bring us. "Tis not the manger, but the cross, that sets the spirit free." Hymns of Zion #36.

**PENNSYLVANIA,
 PHILADELPHIA**
Franz Soni

"Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds."

Psalms 36:5

We thank Bro. Carroll Gerber (Bluffton, IN) and Bro. Kevin Ryan (Rockville, CT) for delivering us God's Word. May God richly reward them and their families for their efforts.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

Luke 6:38

The weekend of October 21 and 22 was a special weekend for our congregation. We hosted young groups from Rockville, CT, Akron, Mansfield, Rittman and Smithville, OH, and Washington, D.C. It is such a blessing to share precious times with brothers and sisters-in-Christ.

Sis. Lori Schock has come to this area from Akron, OH. We welcome her and look forward to having her worship with us.

We were blessed to have Elder Bro. Corbin Bahler (Rockville, CT) visit us and bring us God's Word. May God richly reward him for his efforts.

TEXAS, ZAPATA
Viola Perdelwitz

I looked across the lake this evening and saw a beautiful sunset. We should all be thankful and look for the beauty around us.

Most of our winter residents are here now and it is a blessing to meet

and greet each other on Sunday mornings. We welcome Bro. Lloyd, Sis. Joyce Nohl and their daughter, Julie. They have moved to Mission, TX, from Morris, MN.

We are happy to have ministering Bro. Eugene Bertschi and his wife, Sis. Dorothy, here for the winter. We look forward to visitors this winter.

Silver Threads

HELPING OTHERS

You gave on the way a pleasant smile
And thought no more about it.
It cheered a life that had been dark
the while

Which might have been wrecked
without it.

And so for that smile that was given
there,

You'll have a reward sometime --
somewhere.

You spoke one day a cheering word,
And passed to other duties.

It cheered a heart; new promise stirred
And painted a life with beauties.

And so for that word of golden cheer,
You'll have a reward sometime --
somewhere.

You lent a hand to a fallen one;
A lift in love was given.

You saved a soul when hope was gone
And helped him on toward heaven.
And so, for that help you proffered
there,

You'll have a reward sometime --
somewhere.

Sermon . . .

(Continued from Page 32)

trust Him for what is out ahead, we certainly will be able to make it to the end of our days, regardless of how well we are educated.

It is a wonderfully story when we look into the Word of God and find how Abraham, in the beginning of His life, was led unto a promised land . . . to his descendants who believed the same way he believed.

I think we can hardly understand in our own day, how much separation there was between the Jews and the Gentiles, and how thoroughly these people depended upon the law. But in

Galatians, it tells us the law was simply the schoolmaster. (See Galatians 3:24). The law actually told men what was really right and wrong. Until there was something specific to tell what was right and wrong, sin was not charged.

Now then, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" Romans 4:1. We know, loved ones, that when God talked to him, he obeyed. There was one impatient time in his life and it causes trouble yet today. Not that we are looking for somebody to blame the difficulties between the Arabs and the Jews. But here was a man who tried to obey God and follow Him with all his heart.

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Romans 4:3. He believed God. Now then, with all the years that have passed by and all of the Scripture that has been added to the Word since that time, how well do we believe Almighty God in our own day?

Do we really believe that He loves us? Do we really believe that He is concerned about us? And that He will take care of us? Do we really believe that a good dose of tribulation or hardship or trouble is actually good for us? Or does it make us feel like He is working against us?

Our Aunt Nettie is in the hospital right now, and some of us first cousins have said, "Poor Aunt Nettie!" But why not just trust Almighty God? He is certainly aware that she is ninety-four years old . . . certainly aware that she would like to go home. So do we really believe He is going to take care of her and just take her right to that last day that she should live? He really will, won't He?

So when our own tests and our own trials come, rather than lamenting what is happening to us, almost being embarrassed over what is happening to us, why not be sure to ask Him, "What is it supposed to mean to me? What is this supposed to do for me?" Can we really believe He is not going to destroy us?

He is going to strengthen and restore us and make us more fit for His use and for His service. He has something for all of us to do.

Here was a man who believed God. He believed to the point that he

obeyed Him. he moved when he was supposed to move and it was accounted unto him for righteousness.

"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Romans 4:7, 8. David, in Psalms 103:3, wrote much the same thing.

If any of us are not at peace with Almighty God today, if any of us are concerned about ourselves, if any of us are afraid of death, here we have God's Word that our faith -- our believing what God has caused to be written in this Book -- will take care of whatever is wrong in our life.

Remember, "to believe" in Greek requires five English words to bring full meaning: to adhere to the Word, to cleave to the Word, to have faith in the Word, to trust in the Word, and to rely upon the Word.

To that extent, following the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ for repentance, conversion and baptism, certainly our life can be cleansed from within, have peace with God and we can feel good about ourselves and have no fear about the future.

"Perfect love casteth out fear." I John 4:18.

What counted to us for righteousness because we believe God as did father Abraham? What did it say? Through him all nations of the earth should be blessed. (See Galatians 3:8, 9). We know that that phrase certainly points to the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the Lord Jesus is not here.

Before He left the earth, He turned the church over to men, to the believing people. That blessing has continued only by those who believe God.

Our immediate neighbors, but not only those, anything that we can do that benefits people a thousand or twelve thousand miles away, is still a blessing through the Lord Jesus Christ, of the sending out of that Word.

Those people who pick up and leave their homes and go into a wilderness land and leave comfort behind have chosen a more difficult way than we have the easier way back home but there does need to be support back home.

So when we look at our own lives, and the things that we are most concerned about, we are overlooking the

promises of Almighty God. I know we are concerned about weather itself, aren't we? The fact that nearly forty percent of the church lives from agriculture, the weather really is a big thing to us. We depend upon Him for our blessings. So we are concerned what it will be like in the coming year.

But He knows that, doesn't He? Just remember the people in the shop have the same concern. A company can change hands and the man who has been on the job for twenty-five or thirty years can lose his job overnight. We could just worry about that, if we are inclined to worry.

We really are in His care. We really do need to look to Him for our help and strength.

Take a look at what happened to Abraham. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." Romans 4:20-22.

"What He has promised. He was able also to perform." Romans 4:21. Do you know what Jesus said just before He ascended into heaven? "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:20. Do we believe that?

There was another time that Abraham didn't stagger. Back at that time, people were offering up their children to gods. God told Abraham, "Take thy son," and He even said it in a more emphatic way. "Thine only son, and offer him up." (See Genesis 22:2).

Then He made it a little more difficult. He didn't tell him to go out in his backyard, but He told him to go to a certain place. It was three days away. Can you imagine what our hearts would be like if we had to take our child and go on a three-day journey and know that at the end of that journey, we would lose our child by our own choice? We ourselves would offer him up and lose his life?

How did Abraham handle it? Abraham decided that even after he was dead, God could really bring him back to life. All of this was accounted to him for righteousness . . . made him right in the sight of God! (See Galatians 3:6).

Adam and Eve were in the garden. They had that whole garden at their disposal. There was only one restriction, and that was the thing they did wrong. There was just one absolute moral right or wrong. When Eve drew too near that tree, too close to the place of temptation, then the devil began to walk to her, caused her to doubt, and when she looked, she took. Then she influenced her husband, and paradise was lost.

God did not cast away mankind at that point. It is the same way in our own lives. When something goes wrong, that is not the end of things. There is always a way that a man can again be justified, made right in the sight of God. In that day, they needed to be clothed with the skins of animals so they were not ashamed.

In our own day, by our faith, by believing upon Him to the point that it is considered righteousness, we are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

So do we really stagger? Do we hesitate about the way the Bible is written in comparison to our own lives? Or do we really believe He is going to see us to the very end? Indeed, He will! In those times when life is trying, and we all get our turns, loved ones, over and over there will be those times that just seems as if there is no way out.

I am amazed at the number of people, when they get to that point, who tell me they don't want to live any longer. But that is not the way to handle it, is it?

There is just one way . . . just at that point, believe like you never believed before. Just kneel down with the Bible open in front of you and plead with your heavenly Father for the solution.

Everything is so clear, so plain, and so easy for Him and He has the power to bring about His answer of His solution to our problem. He has the strength to do it. No matter how impossible it might seem to us, he is able to do it. This is how all things are done.

When we need to turn to Almighty God, when we are weary and tired of life itself, and we are in need of conversion, all we need to do is make that choice to draw near to Him. The rest of it comes about, not by any human intention, or not any ability.

He doesn't put it that way. He doesn't say that we have to be of a certain intelligence. He doesn't say we need certain capabilities.

There are not any prerequisites when we come to Him, but we just come to Him with a fully submissive heart, willing to give our lives over to Him, trust Him for the rest of this life and the next million years. Then after that, He will still continue to take care of us.

So whether we can read our own name, or whether we are at the top of the class, we are still in the same place. We need to believe Him when He speaks to us.

People so often ask, "What is the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament?" Not very much . . . just the ceremonial sacrifice is abolished for the greatest extent. But we need to believe just the way the father of faith, Abraham himself, believed in his own day. When God said, "Move," he moved. He followed.

There was a famine in that land and he had to pick up and go to Egypt for awhile. He could have complained, "What do you mean? I came to where you wanted me to come and now I have to move again?" That wasn't the point.

When God speaks to us, He wants us to believe Him. It will be counted to us for righteousness in this day as much as it was in Abraham's day.

Do you know what? "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hebrews 11:6.

So we are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and by faith we have access to this grace wherein we stand. Once we have come, then He has that heavenly help to keep us going to our last day.

If the end of our days is spent upon the bed for a longer period of time that we think, it is really for some special reason. Maybe not for the person who is upon his death bed, but maybe for some of the rest who gathered around. He wants it just good and clear, everyone of us are in the hands of Almighty God. There is just no comparison to seventy or eighty years on earth to eternity itself. We need to be encouraged.

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SERMON BY ELDER BRO. LOREN STOLLER OF LATTY, OH

"Believe God As Abraham Did" Romans 3:28 - 5:2

It is really something to be thankful when we think how clearly we are able to understand our present position before the Lord. To be able to stand in grace and have the privilege to just as firmly believe as Abraham believed in his own day, is a blessing within itself.

As people, we just miss the mark so very many times when we think about our earthly sojourn. We seem to have so much attached to how well we live, and how well we are getting along. We seem to be so concerned about having good incomes, having nice homes, driving nice cars, and wearing good clothing. Loved ones, this is all a part of vanity.

All too often -- and I need to be reminded of these things just as well as anyone else -- among believers, we just put so much emphasis upon life here that we forget about our real mission. Just remember, there are countless people upon the face of the earth that do not have the Word of God.

The entire Bible is only translated into three hundred languages. There are far more languages upon the earth into which the Bible is not translated than there is. There are possibly over five thousand tongues and dialects.

The Book of John is in print more than any other Gospel . . . just that one portion. Really, if any man had just that portion, he could easily draw nigh to Almighty God.

Now then, God is altogether different to so many people upon the face of the earth than He is to us. Almost all men worship something, some kind of a god far beyond themselves; and that proof actually comes

to them by the creation itself.

When a man who has never seen a printed page looks up into the sky and sees the sun, the moon and the stars, and he sees the function of the earth, and he may not have a watch, but by the sun, he is able to tell time. He begins to marvel as a young person that there is something absolutely wonderful about all the creation and he believes in some kind of god. That sense of right and wrong that is in the heart of every human is there also. So he begins to worship something.

But in this land of opportunity and freedom in which nearly every one of us has grown up, Satan will be right here with many different things to try to take the faith that we have in our Lord Jesus Christ away from us.

We sang in this hymn, number forty-two, about the Pool of Bethesda. Take a look at the illnesses that were listed here. Great multitudes were gathered under those porches: blind, lame, deaf, rheumatic, palsy struck and withered, consumptive weak, infirm, leprous, crippled, poor and whoever was distressed. I suppose depression would come under distressed.

Yesterday while at the Lutheran Hospital, I heard one of the employees say that the new Lutheran Hospital is already under construction on the west side of town. I think the question came up, "What are you going to do with this big building?" He said, "Part of it is going to be a chemical dependency unit." He is talking about people who are afflicted by drugs and alcohol.

They might have had a little trouble

in that day. You know we have all the things that are listed in this song, but we have got a lot, lot more, haven't we, heavenly Father? The greater part of all man's ailments are found in drawing nearer to Almighty God, whether we are brilliant people or whether we can hardly write our names.

I remember years ago at work (and I've seen this happen a couple of times), we had people that could not read their own names, let alone sign their own names. So at the beginning of the week, one of the other employees would take this man's time card and put a big black circle up in one corner. When he would come and ring in each morning, he would pick out the card with the big black dot. But he was able to make it.

That man still had the opportunity, by the words of other people, to draw nigh to Almighty God and to have the right kind of influence in his mind that would provide for him a healthy body. We certainly don't want to say by any means whatsoever that if we have an affliction, that it means we are not thinking right. But a part of being well, is our mental attitude. For someone who is seriously sick, I think it is well determined that if they had a strong will to get better, they will get better faster. I don't mean that that overcomes everything.

So if we can draw nigh to Almighty God, if we can feel good about ourselves, (and by that, I mean be at peace with Almighty God and be cleansed by the blood of the Lamb), and if we can feel that Almighty God will make things work out so that we can

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