



The Silver Lining

*Stand Still, And Consider
The Wondrous Works Of The Lord*

January 1995



"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

Genesis 8:22

"He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.

He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?"

Psalms 147:17

Stop, And Behold God's Beauty

God is the Supreme Artist and His works are often magnified before our eyes. What wondrous things He doth bring before us so we might enjoy and appreciate His loving kindness.

This Christmas morning we beheld one of the most beautiful frosts I have ever seen. It seemed that God reached down and scattered the frost on Christmas Eve for those who wanted a white Christmas.

There are so many things in God's creation that leave us in awe. The majestic mountains, the amber fields of grain, the awakening of the earth in the spring, and the beautiful turning that takes place in the fall. Once I was driving with a dear friend through a timber area in the fall. My friend turned to me and asked, "Did you notice the beauty of those trees?" Sometimes we must "stop and smell the roses".

I appreciate the outdoors, the timber and all that God gives us to view while we journey here on earth, as I know everyone does. What stirs my soul most is the beauty of the instant moment.

Did you realize that there is only about two days of peak beauty in the fall leaves, about two minutes of peak beauty for a sunset, and about twenty seconds of peak beauty for a cloud formation? The peak beauty of our Christmas frost was only for one short hour. When the beauty is past, it is gone forever. Yes, we will again see frost and there will be more beauty to behold, but the beauty that is past will never again be enjoyed unless we stop and behold it at the moment of opportunity.

I asked a loved one what thoughts might cross the mind while out walking. The answer came in an unexpected beautiful thought. "I look at the clouds and think what beauty. I look at the trees and see God's majesty. I see the stars and I behold God's love for us. I look to the heavens and I see God."

There is beauty all around us, but sometimes we just don't take time to stand still and consider the wondrous works of the Lord.

Yes, in God's creation there is beauty and there is beauty in mankind which God has created.

How long is the peak beauty of our lives? Do we shine forth but for a moment or are we one of those people who are filled with "sunshine" all the time?

*Oh, they say that the sun shines upon you.
And I know in my heart that it's true.
You may come ask me how do I know this,
It's by your smile and the good things you do.*

There surely are those of our loved ones that seem to do the right thing at the right time and almost always have a smile to serve along with the good deed.

The other evening a beloved couple invited some brethren to share a meal on the spur of the moment. It was voiced, "You need some diversion." That invitation came at just the right time and will be cherished for life.

Another beloved one sent a note to a brother which went something like this:

"...trust that God is in control and He makes no mistakes. Be assured you are in my prayers. Please read Psalm 91. It is a Psalm I've read over and over for comfort and strength. My favorite verses are 11 and 12. Sometimes I forget that angels are present if we remember to ask God for their protection. The entire chapter is filled with precious promises. Please read them and I know you'll feel peace."

How often are we the recipient of love and beauty, but we may take it for granted and miss the beauty of the moment. Those precious moments are short and they may last for a few minutes or a few hours, but unless we stand still and consider the wondrous works of the Lord, through His chil-

dren, we will miss the greatest beauty of all: His love!

I often wonder if those beloved ones, who are blessed with God's "sunshine", receive as much love as they give. I would guess, knowing their nature, that they really don't care because they are too busy making happiness for others and spreading "sunbeams" all around them.

Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou has done, and Thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.



The Silver Lining

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

Light From The Word



Writings based
on God's Word

The Role of a God-fearing Woman in Modern Society

It is important today, perhaps as never before in the history of Christianity, to clarify and define the biblical responsibility a God-fearing woman has in the life of the church, the family and society.

Before defining the believing woman's role for today, it is perhaps equally important to clarify what it is not, because today's worldly forces are drawing women into a role that is inconsistent with biblical teachings. The sense of what a woman is to be, or is to become, is shifting—and society is suffering because of it.

Radical feminism, "equal rights", usurping authority over men, self-assertion, careerism, and even reproductive rights are but a portion of a misguided agenda that is strongly influencing women. It is causing a revolution in how women act and pursue life. These misconceptions stem, in large part, from feminist studies curricula that dominates many universities. Such are contrary to biblical perspective and it behooves the discerning, faithful, believing woman not to be taken in by them.

There are fundamental precepts in the Word that must be understood before one can truly grasp the believing woman's duty for today. They are at odds with the feminist agenda.

The woman was created for the man, is the glory of man, and is under the authority of the man (I Cor. 11:7,9; Eph. 5:23). While believing women are of equal value with believing men in God's sight, for the sake of divine order the Bible's godly authority must be followed (I Cor 11). Lest anyone think that a man's leadership position is one of dominance, they should become familiar with the Apostle Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 5:25,28 "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; so ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." Thus, despite man's leadership responsibilities, his headship role is to reflect mercy, empathy, compassion, and Christian love.

The woman's role is not one of mindless, unqualified subordination to the man. To the extent that she is obedient to God, to Christ, and to the teachings of the Word, she

will be able to make enormous contributions to the church, to God's glory. Thus, she functions under an aura of true Christian beauty, purity and holiness "which becometh a woman professing godliness" (I Tim. 2:10).

Included among the believing woman's high calling in Christ Jesus is that of being a "keeper at home" (Titus 2:5). A "keeper" is one who maintains an establishment. A keeper insures continuity from generation to generation. The Word teaches a woman to be a keeper "at" home, not merely a keeper "of" the home (perhaps spending her days at a career that takes her away from her children). Except in unusual circumstances, her family profits most when her special gifts of nurturing can be expended on her children all day, every day.

As a keeper at home, the believing woman can wield a major influence in the family. As she "reverences" her husband and recognizes his headship, and offers support to him along with wise counsel in everyday matters, her contributions can be many (Eph. 5:23). As she is subject to her husband, and he is devout in his love and respect for her, both will benefit.

One of the godly woman's most important roles is to seek virtue. Proverbs 31:10-30 is an apt description concerning a woman's daily duties and objectives. Her fulfillment is found in service to others. Her godly sense of self-denial in preference to the care and welfare of others far exceeds the short-term rewards of a career or involvement in feminist causes contrary to scripture. Proverbs 31 directs her to a life of diligence, redemption of time, thrift, charity, honor, wisdom and compassion.

The godly woman is also a teacher. While she accepts her role to be "silent in the church with all subjection" (I Tim. 2:11), she recognizes her teaching duties in the home, and the wide influence she can have in the daily training and spiritual nurturing of her children. As her children, God willing, become converted she has an equally important task of diligently teaching them, especially if she has converted daughters. She is to teach her daughters eight important things as found in Titus 2:4,5: "that they may

teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed."

Single women can be diligent in the work place and make enormous contributions to the cause of Christ, both financially and in portraying and teaching godly values to all who are subject to their influence. With less family responsibilities, our single sisters often have the opportunity to be a good light as they help those who are in need.

A godly woman will see the importance of outward holiness that reflects both her gender distinctiveness and identity as a believing woman. In order that she may be "chaste", "modest", and "shamefaced", it will require a true devotion to God's Word and appreciation for the church's helpful guidance (I Tim. 2:5,9).

Regarding sexual distinction in dress, I Cor. 11 re-enforces the distinction God makes between male and female, and I Cor. 6:9 points out the sin of being effeminate. Beware of Satan's craftiness and avoid gender cross-dressing (Deut. 22:5). Also, a believing woman's long hair brings glory to her (I Cor. 11:15), and when it is gathered neatly in a godly manner, it inhibits the potential for being sensual and it places her in harmony with God's Word, "Be not conformed to this world" (Romans 12:2).

Perhaps one of the clearest instructions to women in the New Testament is found in I Tim. 2:9,10, which is still applicable for today's sincere, believing woman: "In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

The world is beckoning believing women to turn from godly characteristics as recorded in God's Word, for a freer and less circumspect lifestyle that blurs the differences between a believing and a non-believing woman. May our dear sisters in faith resist these temptations.



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN

Mission Committee

... The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. Matthew 9:37-38

It is a fact of human life that as our journey on earth progresses, our fortunes tend to rise and fall. Although we have been promised by our great and eternal God that we will always be provided for, we have no promise for great earthly possessions. Indeed, this should not be a goal of the believer.

From time to time, situations arise which cause difficulties in our financial affairs, some of which can be quite severe. The scriptures give us directives on how these circumstances can be met and overcome.

One of the basic tenets of the scripture is a strong family unit. The love and esteem in which family members hold one another naturally directs that the first efforts at assistance take place within this unit. Many times over the years, great blessings have come in families who held things together by caring and sharing to the benefit of all concerned. Over a period of time, difficult problems have been resolved with few being aware of their depth.

In our society, it is becoming increasingly difficult for families to maintain lifestyles which perhaps they might wish to enjoy. This is not necessarily bad, and we should encourage one another to live within our means. But when a misfortune occurs which cannot be handled within the family, we are so very grateful to have the spiritual family, our brotherhood, to which we can turn for loving assistance. Long ago our brothers had the foresight to establish local alms or charity funds through which brethren are given an opportunity to share with one another. These funds are also used for needs outside our own brethren when there is opportunity. In small congregations, this can sometimes exceed their limited local resources.

The Apostolic Christian World

Relief Committee functions as a channel to assist those who have needs, including many who are outside the brotherhood. However, we are all aware of the great assistance given to those who suffered loss in recent years through storms and floods, and first consideration is given to those within the church circle. For years, personal needs of individuals in dire situations have been brought to this committee and have been considered on the basis of individual circumstances and availability of funds.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN Good Will Committee

This year, our brethren recognized that there would be merit in establishing a channel for the express purpose of dealing with individual and family financial needs.

After consideration of many brethren, the Elder body approved the establishment of a national good will fund which is administered by a committee of three elders. The name of the committee administering this fund is the Apostolic Christian Good Will Committee. With this in place, the World Relief Committee will no longer consider personal needs. Residual funds designated for that purpose are being transferred from World Relief to this new committee.

Funds have also been transferred from the Free Will Fund, which was set up many years ago as a part of the Brotherhood Building Assistance Program. In recent years, this fund has been somewhat inactive and very likely, many of our brethren are not aware of its existence. Future contributions will come from the Mission Fund and World Relief as approved by these committees.

Individuals are welcome to make contributions, and bequests from estates, trusts, or businesses would always be welcome.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

II CORINTHIANS 9:8

From time to time it may be necessary for the Elder body to approve a general collection from all congregations to replenish this new fund. We are confident that the Lord will provide for our needs. It is not intended that all hardship cases be referred to this new fund, but it will be used only as a "last resort" to assist members and friends of the Apostolic Christian Church. Before applying for assistance, the following sources must be used to the greatest possible extent:

1. Family and friends.
2. Local church good will fund.
3. Government agencies.
4. Other available sources.

In order to be considered for assistance, the applicant must submit a current personal net worth statement and copies of Federal Income Tax Returns for the last two years. This should be submitted through the brother in charge of the local alms or charity fund, with the approval of the elder. This fund will not normally be used to cover business or investment losses, rather to prevent a financial disaster from destroying a family unit. The names of applicants and assistance amounts will be kept confidential, as is now the case in our local procedures in helping one another. A financial report will be given to the Elder body annually. This report will show receipts and total payments but will not show individual assistance amounts.



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
World Relief

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men,
especially unto them who are of the household of faith. GALATIANS 6:10

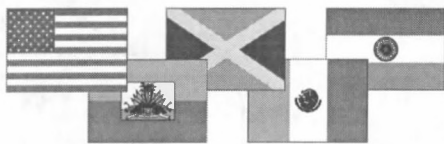
How Projects are Selected and Funded

All efforts are totally dependent upon the resources made available by our great and almighty God. Collections are taken on the local level, and forwarded to the national World Relief Treasurer. The World Relief Committee meets on a regular basis to review existing programs and evaluate new ones. Funds are then allocated to finance approved projects. The World Relief Secretary communicates these projects to the churches through local treasurer representatives.

Four counseling elders serve as chairman and vice-chairmen. Twelve other brothers are chosen as regional committeemen from areas representing our brotherhood across the nation. This committee sets policy for the entire World Relief organization.

Serving under the direction of the World Relief Committee are four boards: Caribbean, European, Mexico, and US, each of which is chaired by a member of the national committee. These boards manage projects, sending material aid and work teams in response to the needs.

As is often the case in humanitarian efforts, these needs far exceed our ability to assist the unfortunate. The World Relief Committee endeavors to assist those who need it the most, prayerfully considering each case. They rely upon your support.



Where the Funds are Disbursed

USA

- Helping rebuild and send materials as quickly as possible to areas throughout the country devastated by floods, earthquakes, fires, droughts or storms.
- Material aid for prison ministries, children's homes, halfway houses, and food pantries.
- Material Aid centers to inventory and distribute clothing, food and medicines.

Europe

- Food packages for Romania.
- Food, supplies and self-help for Ukraine and Yugoslavia.
- Medicinal aid - various countries.
- Vehicles for transportation and distributing food.

Caribbean

Work teams in Haiti and Jamaica for schools and medical assistance, water well drilling and education, and food distribution.

Mexico

- Medical/dental work teams, with opportunities several times a year.
- Home construction work teams.
- Lunch programs and health kits for disadvantaged families.

India

Oversight of Rural Gospel and Medical Missions of India providing humanitarian aid for food, medical needs, orphanage buildings, and education.

How Can I Be Involved?

Sewing, Crafts and Soap Making

There are many opportunities on a local level to make quilts, bandages, layette kits, sewing clothing and several essential craft items. Tons of soap are made each year, and shipped to needy countries. There's work for everyone!

Material Aid Centers

Many opportunities exist for personal assistance in our five Material Aid Centers, sorting clothing for distribution, repairing furniture, packaging food and medicines as well as other items. The possibility of having emergency equipment available is being considered.

Work Teams

Work teams are organized frequently for projects in Haiti, Jamaica, and Mexico. Schedules are published to give volunteers the opportunity for service.

Treasurer Representatives

Each local congregation has its own Treasurer Representative. This is a vital link in our chain of service. If a congregation has questions about any of the opportunities mentioned above, the Treasurer-Representative provides answers and direction.

Financial Support

Gifts large or small are greatly appreciated. It is essential that our brethren pray that guidance be given to those who administer these funds so that the best possible use can be made of them.

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

We're continuing to send used books overseas. Almost daily we receive requests in the mail for Bibles. You may get your books to either of us or Wing or Bluffton World Relief Centers.

Jerry and Arlene Banwart
Box 181 C, 307 W. First St.
Congerville, IL 61729
(309) 448-2416

or

Phil and Gloria Grant
R.R. 2, Box 95A
Antwerp, OH 45813
(419) 258-2197



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
World Relief

**HAITI - JAMAICA
Work Opportunities****JAMAICA**

Three projects are currently planned for the upcoming year. These will utilize 40 volunteers each, and are scheduled for:

- **Montego Bay** **January 4-12, 1995 (FILLED)**
Coordinator - Bro. Mike Finley - (309) 376-7301
- **Deaf Village** **February 2-10, 1995**
Coordinator - Bro. Mike Finley - (309) 376-7301
- **Deaf Village** **May 19-27, 1995**
Coordinator - Bro. Phil Isabel - (219) 261-3541

HAITI

The dates are subject to final approval of an evaluation team from the Caribbean Board of World Relief scheduled for early January.

- **School Project #1** **January 27-February 4, 1995**
Coordinator - Bro. Glen Hackenjos - (818) 442-4957
- **School Project #2** **February 10-February 18, 1995**
Coordinator - Bro. Jim Walter - (815) 692-3158
- **School Project #3** **February 10-February 18, 1995**
Coordinator - Bro. Tim Butikofer - (319) 426-5486
- **School Project #4** **February 24-March 4, 1995**
Coordinator - Bro. Craig Emch - (216) 939-4591
- **School Project #5** **March 4-March 11, 1995 (FILLED)**
Coordinator - Bro. Bill Stoller - (219) 824-4686

Anyone wishing to participate in these projects should contact the Project Coordinator listed above for details.

For additional information, call:
Bro. Harold Witzig - (309) 266-6263

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

Bibles Distributed By Our Churches

Eleven Years --- August 1983 thru July 1994 --- 286,620

Bibles Distributed --- Twelfth Year

	MONTH	TO DATE
August 1994 --	2,740	2,740
September 1994 --	2,982	5,722
October 1994 --	2,317	8,039
November 1994 --	3,258	11,297
December 1994 --	3,559	14,856

*Note---792 Romanian Bibles and Testaments shipped
770 Romanian Bibles and Testaments, 2nd shipment
234 Romanian Bibles and Testaments, 3rd shipment

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.

- NOTICE -**TEXAS, ROUND TOP**

Sandy Darlington

Services for the Houston area are no longer being held in the Holiday Inn. We are now meeting in the home of Bro. Bill Zeltwanger in Round Top, Texas. We will continue to be helped by ministers from various congregations on the last Sunday of every month. If anyone is in the Houston/Austin area and would like to join us for services, please contact Bill Zeltwanger at (409) 249-5102, or Sandy Darlington at (409) 297-8301.

AVAILABLE:

Polyester clothing for quilts and lap robes in 50lb. bales.

Call or write:

Evelyn Hangartner
RR 1 Box 102
Roanoke, IL 61561
1-309-923-7289

SPECIAL NEEDS

Silverton, OR Church
Building Project

The edifice is closed to the elements, with the roof completed. The current needs include:

- A. Brick masons for work on the exterior of the building,
- B. Electricians for electrical and sound system wiring,
- C. Drywall installers,
- D. Painters

While the need is in the sequence listed, any interested volunteer should make contact for latest work schedule.

Bro. Orin Rufener has been directing the project. Local project manager is Bro. Loren Dettlyer. If he cannot be reached at the job site phone, 1-503-873-2582, phone his and Sis. Marlene's home, 1-503-873-4853. For accommodations phone Bro. Jim and Sis. Barb Kuenzi, 1-503-873-4853.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

It is with relief and disappointment that most of us realize the holidays are over. Sometimes it is hard to get motivated again. In the Book of Luke it tells the account of Jesus' birth and then immediately tells about His journey to the temple when He was 12 years old. When He stayed behind and his parents were concerned He said, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Christmas is over and it's time for us to move on. It is time for us to be about our Father's business. It is okay to take time to celebrate but that is not what God has put us here for. Each of us has a "work" and we need to diligently seek it and willingly perform it. We appreciate your prayers this year as we go about the "work" God has called us to here at our homes. Pray for us as we go about the "Father's business".

The holiday season is a busy time of year for many people and our residents are no exception. Anticipation for the holiday activities, parties, and visits from family and friends was great throughout the halls of ACHH. The residents' Christmas party was December 19. A yearly tradition of staff purchasing gifts for residents for this party is also much enjoyed. Another tradition for ACHH facilities is to be invited to Peoria Fellowship Hall for a party sponsored by the Peoria Sunday School and church. Good food and gifts are hard to beat. Another experience for our residents was to tour the beautiful Festival of Lights in East Peoria. We have been blessed by many Christmas carolers -- a peaceful time of the Christmas holidays. Besides these Christmas activi-

ties, our residents have had time for swimming at an indoor pool, having a visit from the Heartland Dogs and enjoying a puppet show.

February Birthdays for all our facilities are as follows: ACHH - John Kamm (18), Lee Anne McKay (19), Virginia Reece (27), Guy Masinelli (28). None at the other facilities.

GATEWAY WOODS APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME Deb Neuenschwander

Christmas, for most of us, brings memories of happy times shared with family and friends. It is a special time of the year for giving. A time when we pause to celebrate the most precious gift of all, the birth of our Lord and Saviour.

Sadly, these cherished memories aren't shared by all. Some don't have family who meet their physical and/or emotional needs. Sometimes the desire to give isn't there. And, most unfortunate of all, sometimes Christ is left out of Christmas.

We here at Gateway Woods have been given the opportunity to show children, who otherwise may never have been shown the difference, what we know to be the real reason for Christmas. We are here, not because we are special or especially skillful, but because we care and are willing to be used.

Where would any of us be if Mary hadn't been willing to be used? Have you ever thought about how Mary felt when she was called? "And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." (Luke 1:28). We are told, "And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be." (Luke

1:29). I think her reaction was normal. She became anxious and wondered what would be expected of her, and she was given reassurance. "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God." (Luke 1:30). And yet, Mary thought of an obstacle that seemed overwhelming. "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34). But God's plan was complete. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35). Finally Mary acknowledged God's omnipotence and yielded to His will. "And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word..." (Luke 1:38).

Have you ever been called to do something that made you somewhat anxious and caused you to wonder what all it would entail? But then, because you felt the Spirit's prompting, you sought God's will and, like Mary, were given reassurances to calm your anxieties. Still did you think of "legitimate" obstacles to keep you from doing what you're being called to do...job, home, family, time? Obviously, Mary was shown that even the largest of obstacles can be overcome. Did you then, as Mary, acknowledge God's omnipotence and yield to His will?

Are you being called to fill one of the openings: single sister Houseparent, Alternate Houseparent couple, Education Coordinator, Child Care Supervisor, or Office Manager here at Gateway Woods? Are you willing to be used? Sis. Bridget Zollinger (Sardis, OH) is. She will be joining our staff in late December. Bridget volunteered here over the

summer. She will temporarily be filling the Houseparent position being made available by Sis. Marilyn Walder's return to Cissna Park, IL. In addition to wishing Marilyn God's blessings as she moves on, we pray God will go with Danial R. (Girl's House) who returned to her mother's home. We praise God for Marilyn's faithful and enthusiastic service over the past 2 1/2 years and also for Sis. Bridget's willingness to come. We welcome Sis. Bridget and also Gail R. and Tammy R. who have recently joined us in the Girl's House.

As we spend time with loved ones and participate in gift giving, may our focus remain on the celebration of our Saviour's birth. We were reminded of the importance of this as we enjoyed the Sunday School Christmas program. A big thank you goes to many of our children who did a terrific job participating in this. Several of our children: Danial R., Krista D., Mike M., Mary K., Jenny K., and Joel K. also took part in programs presented at their various schools. We appreciate it when they work hard and they can be pleased with their performances. Also, thanks goes out to many who included us in their generous giving during this special time of the year. Please continue to remember all of us in your prayers. Join us in lifting Grandpa Art (Bro. Art Gramm) up in prayer as he goes through this holiday season without our dear Grandma Ruth by his side. May God's blessings be with you all as we enter a new year.

**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
PRESCHOOL
Athens, Alabama
Doris Fischer**

December is typically the busiest time of year and 1994 was no exception. Our preschoolers

worked hard and fast to learn and practice parts for our Christmas play, which was held the Friday before school closed for Christmas. With extra students this year, they all had to exercise more patience than usual during practices.

Finally the night of the play came and with a shimmer of angels' wings and the glitter of the star, our students told their families and friends about the birth of Jesus. The children sang, "Jesus was born on Christmas Day...Jesus loves us every day..." sometimes with such enthusiasm that the words were unclear. Yet, I believe that their sincere enthusiasm is as gladly received in Heaven as the careful pronunciation of an adult.

Preschool closed for two weeks over Christmas but the sometimes confusing lives of our children continue. We hope you'll continue praying for the role our Preschool has in touching their lives with the gospel of peace.

ALABAMA, ATHENS

Pam Moore

We want to thank the volunteers from Morton, IL who took the time and effort on Thanksgiving weekend to bring a truckload of chairs for the Tennessee Fellowship Shelter. We also thank Bob Grimm Chevrolet for furnishing the truck needed to bring the 300 plus chairs.

The first weekend of December we very much appreciated having a group of Bluffton Sunday School children come to spend their weekend volunteering, refinishing the chairs that were brought down the week before. Bro. Ron Kipfer also ministered to us from the Word of God, and we were thankful for that.

This same weekend was Eric and Retta Knobloch's last Sunday

with us in Athens. We said farewell to them and their precious baby girl, Adrian. They moved back to Illinois to be closer to their families.

December, as always, has been full of Christmas events. Our Christmas Dinner was held on Saturday night, December 10. The teenage Sunday School class had a Christmas get-together that Sunday. The Sunday School meal and program was the following Saturday evening. We scheduled Christmas carolling for two Wednesday nights this year to try and reach more people. So, as usual, it's been a very busy and hectic time of year, but also a time full of blessings. If only we could spread more of these blessings throughout the year!

John Moore graduated from the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and a reception was held for him on Sunday, December 18. We pray that God will guide him as he begins a new phase of his life.

We hope you will come to visit us in Athens. We hold services every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. and every Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m.

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Ron and Ev Hoerr

"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 2:6

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8,9

We are always taken back to our "Christian birth" when dear

ones give their testimony and step into the baptismal waters. What a blessing, when on November 26 we heard the testimonies of four of our many converts. On the 27th, Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich and Bro. Loren Knapp (Tucson, AZ) baptized Brandon Labudde, Fawn Esslinger, Heidi Kokanovich and Nicole Baum. Their parents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Kathie Labudde, Bro. Lee and Sis. Patsy Esslinger, Elder Bro. Jon and Sis. Nancy Kokanovich, and Bro. Robert and Sis. Christine Baum.

Our prayers are with our new brother and sisters-in-faith. Treat our dear Lord with respect (Thou, Thee) and love and His goodness enfolds you at all times. A fellowship dinner and singing was enjoyed later in the evening, with many visiting relatives.

Visiting ministers, to whom we give thanks, were Bros. Loren Knapp and Curt Kaufman (Tucson, AZ).

The Sunday School Christmas program is such a joy for everyone. The singing and recitations are our children and grandchildren at their best, spreading Jesus' love! Who could do it better? A reception of Christmas goodies at decorated tables made a festive evening for everyone. Thanks to all our teachers and Sunday School Superintendent, Bro. Robert Baum.

We are looking forward to more testimonies, as Mark Dotterer and Jason Sanders have God's peace in their hearts. Bro. John and Sis. Jeanne Dotterer and Bro. Bill and Sis. Sue Sanders are their parents.

December 18 was the time to make a joyful noise unto the Lord, as many folks went carolling to our shut-ins.

Prayer is bold asking and the Lord appreciates thank you's, too. Praise Him!

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp

Bro. Fred and Sis. Diane Funk have announced their plans to move to the central Illinois area. We will miss them and their children in our little church. They have faithfully attended and served the church in many different ways. We want to express our sincere appreciation for their years of service in song leading, Sunday School, kitchen duties, trustee work, church cleaning, singing, serving lunch and supporting church functions. As you can see, we kept them busy! So much is expected in a small church, but we know the Lord will not forget their work in Tucson and He will continue to bless their family as they settle in Illinois. We hope Aaron, Heather, Adam and Holly will convince dad and mom to visit us often. We wish their whole family God's richest blessings as 1995 brings them to a new chapter in their lives.

We gathered recently to carol at some local nursing homes and ended the evening with a chili supper for the weary singers. As they say, "A good time was had by all." We hope we added some blessings to the lives of some of the people we sang for.

We also gathered together to fill the positions to be vacated by Bro. Fred Funk. Elected were Bro. Jay Knapp, Sunday School Superintendent; Bro. Scott Baum, song leader; and Bro. Steve Bauer, trustee. We need to remember to pray for our elected officers as they carry out their duties. Once again, we thank Bro. Fred for his service.

As of today, December 16, our temperatures are staying right around 65 degrees for a daytime high. Combine that with bright sunshine and you have perfect weather. Come see us!

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Joy Nenadov

I don't know about tomorrow,
I just live from day to day;
I don't borrow from it's sunshine,
For it's skies may turn to gray.
I don't worry o'er the future,
For I know what Jesus said;
And today I'll walk beside Him,
For He knows what is ahead.
Many things about tomorrow
I don't seem to understand;
But I know who holds tomorrow,
And I know who holds my hand.

*Country and Western
Gospel Hymns #84*

Greetings!

As we approach a brand new year, the thought comes, what will this year bring? Isn't it wonderful that we need not worry about it, because while we may not know what the future holds, we surely do know Who holds the future. Jesus our Lord sees our end from our beginning and how comforting it is to commit our lives, present and future, into His loving hands.

We were greatly blessed to be served by visiting Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI). We sure do appreciate his willingness in lending himself to us.

We were so blessed and privileged to host a number of young groups this past Thanksgiving weekend and were very encouraged and uplifted by each one's presence. It's a joy to fellowship with like-minded brethren and our small congregation sure appreciated each and every visitor. Thanks one and all who came.

We welcome Bro. Darryl and Sis. Edie Wieland (Bay City, MI) back to California for the winter months. It's always a delight to have them with us.

May the Lord bless each one of us in the upcoming year.

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Rose Huetten

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4:18,19

Can it be possible that a new year is almost upon us? We have so much to be thankful for and now are looking forward to a beautiful new year.

Visiting ministers this month have been Elder Bros. Edwin Ringger (Gridley, IL), Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix, AZ) and our Elder Bro. John Klotzle (Altadena, CA).

It was a weekend filled with so many blessings. The wonderful teachings and examples given to us will live on in memory a long time. We were told that Bro. Edwin Ringger will soon retire from the ministry. He will surely be missed. We felt honored that he and his wife, Sis. Pat, would travel so far to serve us. May our Lord and Saviour richly bless all of you for coming and visit us again soon. Also, thanks to our visitors and please come again.

"The path that leads to happiness is so narrow that two cannot walk on it unless they become one." On December 10, Helen Varga became the bride of Patrick Andrew from Brainer, MN. Helen's parents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Joanne Varga and Patrick's parents are Denis and Cindie Andrew from Brainer, MN. We wish them God's blessings as they make their home in St. Paul, MN.

A special thank you to Bro. Virgil Graf from Altadena, CA for

putting in the sound system in our new church. May God richly bless you for your labors. We appreciate it so much.

Welcome back, Bro. Steve Varga Sr., from your work in Canada. We missed you.

Bro. Tibor Bozzay has been sick but doing much better and able to fellowship with us again. We missed you and pray that your health may continue to improve.

Our Sunday School presented to us with moving songs, verses and Scripture reading the glorious news of the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Much time and effort was spent in preparation for the program presented December 18, but we were all spiritually touched and inspired as we heard about the true meaning of Christmas.

COLORADO, DENVER

Jamie Grant

Greetings to all as we are already making our way into the new year! All across the globe, people seem to look for a new zeal, a new hope and a new outlook from the new year.

In the United States, many ring in the new year with hors d'oeuvres, music count-downs, alcohol and soon-to-be-broken resolutions. In China, parents put money in a little red envelope under their children's pillow while they sleep, for New Year's Day. The red is supposed to mean good luck.

For some countries, it's not necessarily what you do, but what you eat. In Japan, they celebrate the new year by eating carp. Carp supposedly are able to swim against strong currents and even leap waterfalls. Thus, by eating carp, people say that you, too, will be able to do difficult things in the coming year. Hungarians say that if you eat roasted pig with an

apple or a four-leaf clover in its mouth, you're supposed to have a lucky year. In Israel, they dip apples into honey to bring sweetness into the year. Other lands eat black peas to make themselves strong, chestnuts to bring success and some even eat chicken gizzards, which are supposed to make you beautiful in the coming year.

I suppose the people who put their hope in fish and red envelopes are no less deceived than when I thought I could fulfill my resolutions by my own strength. Looking back on many New Years prior to being converted, I am sorry for my many broken resolutions and for placing hope on perishable, earthly goals.

Lamentations 3:19-24 reminds me that a life in Jesus, brings "newness" that comes not only on January 1. It is our prayer that these words inspired by God to Jeremiah, will make men "super-cautious" of their lives, instead of "superstitious". "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him."

The past month we were thankful to have Elder Bros. Nathan Steffen (Elgin, IL) and Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA) present the reading of the Memorandum to our congregation here in Denver. Thank you, dear brothers, for your willing hearts and time.

Our sympathies are with our Sis. Sharon Braun and her family as her father, Ken Powelson, passed away after battling cancer. Also, to Bro. Al and Sis. Keri

Hany, as their uncle, Alf Hany (Gridley, IL), has passed from this earthly life. We pray that God will comfort each of you as you surely will miss these loved ones.

Several have accepted their new church duties: Bro. Al Hany - treasurer; Bro. Ben Bauman - trustee; and Sis. Kristin Bauman - World Relief sewing committee.

We farewell you, setting aside "Baby New Year", and all the confetti his worldly party has to offer, and leave you with this invitation: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (I Peter 2:2,3)

CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE Dawn Winans - Peggy Bahler

November 15 was a joyous day for Bro. Arlo and Sis. Lynn Hoffman with the birth of their daughter, Heidi Elsa. Her sisters, Kelly, Jennifer and Carole welcome her. Her grandparents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Elsa Hoffman and Bro. Jim and Sis. Jane Moser.

On December 2, Sal and Tammy Petrolito welcomed their new little blessing. A daughter, Dana Marie, was born to them. She is welcomed home by her brother, Nicholas. The grandparents are Bro. Harry and Sis. Joyce Hunt.

December 11 marked the date of another joyous birth of Joseph David to Bro. Dave and Sis. Kim Schneider. His sister, Joanna, welcomes her new brother. His grandparents are Bro. Wilbur and Sis. Marge Schneider and Bro. Keith and Sis. Mary Kloter.

The Memorandum of the Brotherhood Conference was read to us on December 3. Bro. Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) visited our congregation to assist Bro. Kevin in the reading.

Two new souls were added to

the fold on December 11. Sis. Linda Leite and Bro. Kevin Grasso gave their testimonies on December 10 and were baptized the following day. We wish them much grace to walk this new path of life. Elder Bro. Duane Farney (Croghan, NY) assisted in the testimonies and the baptisms of the dear souls. We appreciate his labor of love and wish him the Lord's blessings.

Love of all gifts is the greatest which the spirit does bestow.

Zion's Harp #37

We had two weddings this month. Bro. Matthew Luginbuhl (Bro. Daryl and Sis. Norma) and Sis. Heidi Moser (Bro. Roger and Sis. Joan) were united in Holy Matrimony on November 20.

Bro. Ed Garrow (Bro. Bernie and Marie) and Sis. Cindy Stomberg (Bro. Ron and Sis. Judy) were joined in Holy Matrimony on November 27. We wish both couples the Lord's richest blessings in their new married life.

Sis. Julia Bahler (late Bro. John) went to her rest on November 22. Our sympathy goes out to Bro. Corbin, Sis. Virginia and their family. She truly has attained her wish and desire.

Our sympathy goes out to Sis. Helen Gottier (Al) in the passing of her brother, William Beckley (Belleflower, IL). Also, our sympathy goes out to Sis. Ruth Zahner and Sis. Edna Gottier in the passing of their brother, Walter Ludwig, (Rockville, CT).

We are happy to have recovering hospital patients: Sis. Virginia Bahler (Bro. Corbin), Todd Schneider (Bro. Don and Sis. Sandy) and Sis. Joyce Hunt (Bro. Harry). May God be with them and grant them a speedy recovery.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WASHINGTON Henrietta Meyer

"But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart."

Luke 2:19

By now the Christmas decorations are put away and the thank you notes written, but we need to keep the "good will to men" and the meaning of Christmas in our hearts all year.

This past month our visiting ministers were Elder Bro. Ed Aeschleman and Bro. Jerry Isch (Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Nile Bucher (Bluffton North, IN). Other visitors were from Morris, MN and Peoria, IL.

We have been listening to the tapes from the Brotherhood Conference. May we all be encouraged.

Bro. Matthew Aeschleman has been home for almost a month now. This is the longest stretch he and Sis. Jill have gone for a long time without living out of a suitcase at the hospital. Sis. Jill has learned how to give all the needed medications. Bro. Matt has good days and days that are not as good. Yesterday was a good day; he was sitting in a chair. They live about 70 miles from the rest of us and are interested in what is happening beyond their home. If anyone would like to drop them a note of cheer or encouragement, their address is 102 Esperanza Terrace, Lexington Park, MD 20653.

Services are held the first, third, and fourth Sundays of the month at the Tyson's Westpark Hotel, located about one mile west of the Beltway (I-495) on Route 7. Some from the local congregation meet at 9:00 a.m. for breakfast in the hotel dining room. Services are at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

For more information, assis-

tance, or just to let us know you will be in the area, please call Bro. Matt Fetter (703) 860-5749 or Bro. Ed Stoll (301) 258-5001.

FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE

Mary Ann Klaus

We are participating again this year in helping the Salvation Army raise money for the needy by ringing the bell every Saturday. Bro. Harry Sutter has been in charge of organizing this activity for the past ten years. We thank him and we thank the Lord for the rich blessings we receive from this activity.

The annual Christmas Sunday School program was held on December 18. A wonderful evening of fellowship followed all the singing and exhortations of praise and thankfulness for God's gift to mankind, the birth of His Son. We appreciate all the effort and time spent by teachers, students, and the adult choir in preparing this event.

We carolled to our shut-ins and at a nursing home on Saturday night and then enjoyed an evening of fellowship at the Fellowship Hall afterwards.

Another annual event is the Sunday School's participation in the Angel Tree Program, a ministry of prison fellowship. Volunteers buy a gift for a prisoner's child or children and present it to the child as a gift from the absent parent. Sunday School teachers and students then deliver the gifts to the home of the children. This gives them an excellent opportunity to share the Christmas story.

We were privileged to have Elder Bro. Joe and Sis. Shirley Braker (Morton, IL) and Elder Bro. Chuck and Sis. Miriam Hemmer (Peoria, IL) in our midst this month. We appreciated their inspiring messages and enjoyed fellowshiping with them. What a

wonderful blessing this fellowshiping is.

FLORIDA, NORTH FT. MYERS

Marvin and Rhea Steffen

"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

Let us remind all who will listen that the best Gift to which none compare, was given long ago.

We were thankful for several visiting ministers this month. They were: Elder Bros. Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL) and Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN), and Bros. Dale Stoller (Fairbury, IL) and Ben Wiegand (Columbus, OH). We do so appreciate the brothers and their wives traveling to share with us.

Corey Keller and Tricia Larimore were married on November 25 in Elmore, OH. The groom's parents are Duwayne and Dotty Keller of Punta Gorda, FL. Bro. Roland and Sis. Viola Keller of Punta Gorda are grandparents to Corey. The bride's parents are Terry and Connee Larimore of Angola, IN. The young couple were married in the same church that her parents were married in years ago. We pray God's rich blessings on them as they go through this life together.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA

Jeff and Gloria Fischer

It is so refreshing to meet and greet the visitors who spend time with our fellowship. Our church has been blessed by many who regularly visit. We have sorely missed many who can no longer

make it down here. Even as our church fills to capacity, we often reflect the memories of those who we miss. We wish to welcome all who have made it back and also those just visiting.

Bro. Ed Getz suffered a mild stroke which has affected his vision. He is in good spirits. Recently he said that you have to take a few lumps with the good. He and Sis. Esther have made plans to move from their home to an assisted living facility nearby. The prayers of the church are with them.

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE

Peg Anliker

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

II Timothy 4:2

We appreciate the efforts of Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL) and Bro. Vernon Wettstein (Congerville, IL) who came to be our servants.

Bro. Aaron and Sis. Sarah Steffen and their son, Trenton, moved to Monticello, IL. May they ever seek God's direction in all things. We will miss them in our small flock and we sure hope they come back and visit us.

Several brothers have new responsibilities in our congregation. Bro. Dave Jepson, trustee; Bro. Larry Gramm, Leo Children's Home rep.; and Bro. Bill Schifferer, World Relief rep. We appreciate each one that takes part and fulfills their responsibility to the honor and praise of our Lord.

Our Sunday School children brought us the Christmas story in song and verse. It's so precious to see the little ones sing praises to our Saviour. We appreciate the efforts of the students and their

teachers. Following the program, we went caroling and then had a chili supper.

Recently on a Wednesday evening we packed food packages for the less fortunate in our area. I am reminded of the verse in I Timothy 6:8. "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." Surely many of us have an abundance of food and clothing. Are we content? May we all strive to be.

ILLINOIS

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

Debbie Grieco - Janice Horner

We had much to be thankful for Thanksgiving Day as we enjoyed the freedom of gathering together to worship our Lord and Saviour. Bro. Robert Beebe (South Bend, IN) was able to join us and exhort us through his message to recall past and present blessings and to be thankful for them on a continual basis.

We were privileged to host the Goodfield Choir on November 20 at our monthly hymn sing. Praise God for the gift of song. It has the power to touch hearts where mere words at times can not. We also shared this gift of song with the elderly at area nursing homes on December 17 during our annual Christmas carolling. Those families and individuals who exemplified a servant attitude by taking time away from their busy schedules to minister in song to these elderly souls received tenfold blessing.

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall

answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Matthew 25:37-40

We rejoiced as we welcomed Ron Masters (Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary) and his wife, Tami (Jim and Anita Allen), into our congregation as brother and sister-in-Christ. Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) was present to assist with their testimonies on December 10 and their baptismal ceremony on December 11. In this season of the celebration of our Saviour's birth and of gift giving, these two souls accepting God's gift of salvation exemplifies the reason Christ came to the earth as a babe. If we accept the babe in the manger, we must look forward to the cross for completion of God's purpose and gift for mankind.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 6:23

On December 14, Elder Bro. Everett Hari presented a topical Bible study which focused on the genealogy of Christ and how He was descended from the line of David as prophesied. Through this and other prophesy fulfillments we were again reminded that God is accurate and true to His Word. It is also interesting to note that in the Jewish culture a man's genealogy was of utmost importance because this proof of his line of descent determined what role in which he could serve and thus established his identity. Thus, establishing Christ's direct link to the line of David was paramount to his identity as the Messiah. Old Testament genealogies culminated with this final one of Christ's and after His birth, gene-

alogies disappear from Scripture. Once Christ was born, the only family line which God recognized is that which had a direct source to Christ. Therefore, we as Christ's converted brothers and sisters are of royal lineage and inherit that identity and the privileges that go with it.

Bro. Mel Sorg was taken to be with the Lord on December 16. Our prayers are with his wife, Sis. Lenora, and her daughter, Vonnie Risner, as well as his children, Roger Sorg and Suzanne Crawford. We grieve with them at his absence. Bro. Mel had such a sweet, kind and gentle spirit that he will be sorely missed. It has been said of him that he was not only a gentleman, but was a "gentle" man. He strove to keep the unity of the "Body" and served as a role model to many. He loved to talk of the Lord's promise we have that we will inherit a Heavenly home far above what we humanly can imagine. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." (John 14:2). Our hearts are lifted up as we picture Bro. Mel, who was an avid walker, walking these streets of Heaven and taking it all in. We yearn for the day that we will join him.

Our Sunday School children once again have blessed us with a beautiful Christmas program on December 18 which focused our attention on "the reason for the season", the birth of our Saviour. We so appreciate the effort and hard work of the teachers and children as they prepared to bring this gift to us.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD

Brad & Cheryl Kupferschmid

Another year is dawning,
Dear Master, let it be,

In working or in waiting,
 Another year with Thee.
 Another year of service,
 Of witness for Thy love;
 Another year of training
 For holier work above.
 Another year is dawning,
 Dear Master, let it be,
 On earth, or else in Heaven
 Another year for Thee.

Hymns of Zion #150

Yes, another year has arrived, and as the above song implies, God is still the same God of mercy and love today as He was 1,994 years ago when He sent His Son to this earth to die on the cross for our sins. If 1995 was our last year of service for the Lord, wouldn't we strive a little harder (through His grace) to serve Him better? We don't know if this is our last year for Him, but it may be.

On November 18, the Bradford congregation gathered together for a two-fold purpose. We had a singing for Bro. David and Sis. Shirley Kieser and Elder Bros. Joe Stoller and Dave Kieser. Bro. David and Sis. Shirley have moved to Princeville and have made Princeville their home church. We pray that the Lord will bless them for their labors of love for our congregation. We also wish God's many blessings upon Elder Bro. Joe Stoller and Retired Elder Bro. Dave Kieser and thank them for their many years of service.

Christmas carolling serves as a reminder of the true meaning of Christmas and allows us to use God's gift of our voices to sing praises to Him and His Son. On December 2, our congregation's all-church Christmas carolling was held as we gathered together to reap these blessings.

Bro. Ralph Joos (Sis. Jenny) had back surgery this month and was hospitalized for a short time. He is recovering at home now. We

pray that the Lord's healing hand will continue to rest upon him.

We always appreciate our visiting ministers who so unselfishly give of themselves for the Lord's use. We pray the Lord will bless Bros. Gary Brown (Forrest, IL) and Don Manz (Junction, OH).

ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN

Margie Heintz

On the Saturday prior to Thanksgiving, our Sunday School students and teachers gathered at church to prepare food baskets for some needy people in our area. The younger children decorated boxes while the older students shopped for groceries. The boxes were then packed with food and delivered to several families and to a local homeless shelter. A truly generous attitude was displayed by the students and was noted and appreciated by the teachers.

Early in December, our college students held their annual babysitting day for the children of the families of our congregation. The students entertained the young children with a variety of activities, including baking cookies, creating cards and eating pizza. Parents enjoyed the day doing things that can't be done with little ones around.

A number of college students took a break from pre-final studying to go carolling at several households of our church families and their neighbors. The songs of the season sounded beautiful and were appreciated on that brisk winter evening.

Our thanks go to all of our students who reach out in so many ways to support and encourage our congregation.

The Sunday School Christmas program was held on Sunday afternoon, December 11. The question was raised regarding those

who welcomed and those who missed Christmas on the first Christmas Day; and a more personal and significant question was raised: Have you been missing Christmas?

Following the program, many adults and children went carolling to area convalescent homes and to a children's special care center. Then everyone returned to church to enjoy a chili supper together. It was a time of sharing and celebrating the truth of Jesus' birth. May none of us ever overlook or ignore the truth of Christmas.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...The mighty God...The prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6

We want to welcome two families to our congregation. Jerry and Sis. Ila June Hari have recently retired and moved to Urbana from Cissna Park, IL. Bro. Aaron and Sis. Sarah (Ricketts) Steffen and their baby have moved to Monticello from Belvidere. Aaron's work has brought them to this area again. We are glad that both families will be worshipping with us and we pray that they will feel God's love as we work and fellowship together.

As we look back at the accomplishments and blessings of the past year and look ahead with anticipation to the new, it has been suggested that Jeremiah 9:23,24, expresses an appropriate attitude with which to ponder the past and future years:

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me,

that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

Jer. 9:23-24

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Kathy Schlatter

We may not always put our Christmas decorations up early, but we do leave them sometimes longer than usual. Thus, I hope you won't mind my sharing an analogy from our first set of Christmas lights this year. I was given the demonstration of all the possibilities, and being a novice, I was amazed. There was the one called "waving", then blooming, next fading -- and there were three different speeds of chasing. And, after all that came the original one, the steady glow, plus one could set the dial for a combination of all of them, one after the other. At first when I was asked to view this, I was tired, but I became wide-eyed. Spiritually, "waving" seemed like wavering, and of blooming and fading, neither one was appropriate, for in each one, either at the end of that particular cycle or at the beginning, was the only time all of the light was being reflected. For that reason, blooming could be chosen over fading, but...it was not ideal. The three speeds of chasing truly gave me reason to think. I think Thanksgiving to Christmas seems the fastest -- yet my goal for a number of years now has been to give my time and not always be so busy or be perceived as being so busy. (What if someone doesn't ask for my help because they think I have no time?) Ah, but there was the steady glow, actually the original of Christmas tree lights. No longer, perhaps, is it considered as "trendy" in the world of decorations, but since

when have we as Christians been asked to set trends? Christ set the example and, with His help alone, can we follow day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, steadily showing forth through our lives the steady glow of His love and plan of salvation. The world doesn't need one more demonstration of all of the above from us. It needs us as examples of stability as we aspire to be "...steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (I Corinthians 15:58)

We were appreciative of our visiting ministers. Bros. Wayne Laubscher (Cissna Park, IL), Howard Plattner (Alto, MI), Arnie Gerst (Taylor, MO) and Don Wagenbach (Washington, IL) spoke with the forthright sincerity of the Word and blessed us by being His vessels. May He grant them peace and grace as a reward here and more stars in eternity.

Miracles still happen. Casey O'Shea (Bro. Tom and Sis. Jean) has been seeking wisdom. Through the fear of God, she has been able to become humble and repentant. We who are already in the faith, in watching her repentance, are ourselves reminded, renewed, re-energized. Our love and prayers are even more with Casey in this, her first spiritual Christmas and year.

Our Sunday School children gave us a gift in their Christmas program about God's gifts. First of all was Jesus and from Him we can receive love, peace, faith and salvation. Their songs and pieces never have seemed more touching and sincere. If we remember John 3:16, it includes God's greatest gift offered as the greatest opportunity, giving the greatest promise in its absolute certainty that we all may have eternal life, the greatest possession. May all chil-

dren, parents, and teachers feel the warm glow of Christ's appreciation for this act of praise.

Bro. Rick Meyer (Bro. Lenard and Sis. Charlotte) and Sis. Rachel Laubscher (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Gloria), both of Cissna Park, IL were married there in the Lord on December 11. All of us were given so many reasons to rejoice and to reflect as they were bound to each other in His love and peace. Two fathers shared the Lord's wisdom with their children and we were all blessed. We were reminded that life is full of trivial things which can frustrate us, but that we should deal kindly with the people involved in those frustrations, seeking the jewel of contentment, for those who are content are continually feasting. May the Lord bless Bro. Rick and Sis. Rachel together in the future as He has before, and we send them our delight and prayers.

Until it happens, it hasn't happened. If only I can stay in the Lord's will, neither the concerns of life that could worry me (flying American to Ecuador, a possible teachers' strike at my school) nor those times and activities I especially anticipate that do not transpire (A \$200 shopping spree that wasn't really mine, the quiet evening I thought I had when there was an Academic Bowl meet and work at school until 11:30) will more than momentarily affect me. The Lord is so good and His plans for me so much better than anything I know. Let me rest in His choices.

As I get older, I have different ways of looking at things. I have a pair of magnifying glasses to use with my contacts. Both give me new appreciation for clear-sightedness - not always being farsighted and seeing that which is near in a blur and vice versa. May I always appreciate the Lord as my focal point - and the events of my life,

of my community, of the world will appear clearer and my perception be improved.

What a joy 'twill be when I wake
to see
Him for whom my heart is
burning!
Nevermore to sigh, nevermore to
die
For that day my heart is yearning.
I'll exchange my cross for a starry
crown,
Where the gates swing outward
never;
At his feet I'll lay every burden
down,
And with Jesus reign forever.
Hymns of Zion #173

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

Cyndee Anderson
Anna Marie Reutter

Today I had a note of encouragement that came in the mail from my Secret Sister. In it was a card intended to be passed on to someone else, saying, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." (Matthew 6:34). Needless to say, it has already been passed on. What a day brightener!

On November 18 Bro. Herman Bauer had open heart surgery and is recovering nicely. After Bro. Dale Farney was hospitalized for back surgery and seemingly doing well, bleeding ulcers showed up which caused him to have two more surgeries. At this writing, he is stable. Sis. Doris Knapp was hospitalized for tests and observation. Bro. Emmanuel Manz was hospitalized due to a heart attack. We pray for healing and may God's will be done.

Jerry and Sis. Ila June Hari have moved from our community and are at home in Urbana. Bro. Dale and Sis. Lili Koehl and children, Barry and Karmi, soon will

be relocating in Fairbury. We will miss their presence in our congregation.

Our sympathy is extended to Sis. Marguerite Bauer and her family over the loss of her brother, Ralph Schmidt, who passed away on December 1.

Funeral services for our aged Sis. Marie Kuebler were held December 13. She has seen many years in the nursing home. When visiting her, she always displayed a radiant smile. Lawrence is the only surviving member of that Kuebler family.

We appreciated having the family of our retired Elder Bro. Ezra Feller and Sis. Edna assemble with us on December 4. Among them were Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO) and Bro. Todd Feller (LaCrosse, IN). It was good to have them minister to us.

On December 11, our congregation was given a beautiful exhortation on love when the wedding of Bro. Rick Meyer and Sis. Rachel Laubscher was solemnized. Parents of the couple are Bro. Lenard and Sis. Charlotte Meyer and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Gloria Laubscher. Visiting ministers for this day were Elder Bros. David Wiegand (Champaign, IL) and Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) and Bros. Lenard Meyer (Chicago, IL), Kenneth Dietz (Bradford, IL) and Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL). We appreciate each visitor and thank the ministering brethren for their service in the Lord's work.

On December 15, we will have all-church caroling, dividing up into four groups and singing in four area nursing homes and to various shut-ins. Our annual Christmas program will be held on December 21.

By the time you read this, our Holiday season will be over, but we hope the warmth and glow it has brought will radiate on into the New Year. May we always

walk in the Light, as Bro. Tom Stock brought out in a sermon, "We must examine every corner of our heart to see if we are walking in the Light", Jesus being the Light.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Beth Steffen - Arlene Banwart

The Priceless Gift

Have you been to Bethlehem
As the shepherds and wise men?
What was it that there you saw --
Just a baby in the straw?
Or God's greatest gift to men:
Propitiation for their sins?
Is your "inn" ready today
For the Christmas Gift to stay?
Or does pomp and world hold
sway?
No room for Him -- some other
day.
No 'morrow's promised you or I;
Yesterday went swiftly by.
Today invite Him to be your
Guest;
Find true meaning of Christmas
"fest".

This poem was shared by a dear sister for whom we caroled. She was a former Sunday School teacher of many of us and made such an impact on our lives. May Sunday School teachers be encouraged and realize their lives and teachings make a difference.

In November our church hosted ACYF (Apostolic Christian Youth Fellowship when high school students from the churches in IL, Taylor, MO, and Burlington and Oakville, IA each sing two hymns of praise). It's uplifting when we see these young people and we pray they'll carry on the faith. We thank Bro. Stephen Baner (Gridley, IL) and Bro. Kenneth Knapp (Taylor, MO) for their inspirational talks afterwards.

With thankfulness we report that Will Good (Mr. and Mrs.

Wendall Good) and Laura Schieber (Bro. Mike and Sis. Mary Schieber) have made a beginning in repentance. Our prayers are with them.

Bro. Alvin Schrock has moved from their duplex into the Apostolic Christian Home in Eureka, while Sis. Naomi Schrock has recovered sufficiently to return to her own home. Sis. Jeanette Knapp is still at the Apostolic Christian Home and is improving, gaining some use of her hands. Bro. Emil Stahl and Marie Eglin were hospitalized, but we are thankful they are home again.

Blessing us with preaching God's Word this past month were: Bros. Gary Brown (Forrest, IL), Sid Kauffman (Cissna Park, IL), Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN), Kenneth Knapp (Taylor, MO), Tim Zimmerman (Gridley, KS) and Elder Bros. Wes Knapp (Goodfield, IL), Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) and Edwin Ringger (Gridley, IL).

Sis. Elsie Knapp's funeral was held here on November 26. Congerville had been her church for over 35 years; however, the past couple years she and her husband, Bro. Ben, had been making their home with their daughter, Sis. Marge, and Taylor, MO has been their church. Also surviving are a son, Bro. Ralph (Taylor, MO), and a daughter, Doris Baldeon (Gilroy, CA).

On November 27, Sis. Myra Steffen (Bro. Duane and Sis. Lois) and Bro. Joe Wiegand (Bro. Willis and Sis. Betty) of Goodfield, IL were united in Holy Matrimony. We pray God's blessings on them as they establish a Christian home and assemble in Goodfield.

Christmas blessings were enjoyed December 14 at our annual Sunday School program entitled "Wise Men Still Seek Him". One student shared: "Untold numbers of men have come and gone since

Jesus shed His blood upon the tree. But the well of salvation has not run dry. There is still sufficient to cover you and me. One thing has not changed in twenty centuries --- WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM."

Note of Thanks:

Ruth Miller would like to thank the anonymous donor for the Silver Lining subscription. She appreciates their thoughtfulness.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Renee Anliker

Debbie Sauder

Approaching the Christmas season there are many preparations and activities, that we hardly find the time to accomplish all we set out to do before the holiday has come and gone. Along with this time of year also comes some very special times we all look forward to. From the lips of innocent little ones and through songs of the older Sunday School students, we were reminded of our Saviour's lowly birth so many years ago. May God bless the efforts of each teacher, parent and student who contributed to our annual program. Another time always appreciated is when we gather together as families and sing carols to those less fortunate. The joy, just a few moments spent, that it can bring to someone else is so rewarding. May God help us to be more diligent to do things for others at every given opportunity.

"...our hearts are yet in close communion beating:
In Jesus' name we bid the
farewell greeting."

Zion's Harp #114

Following what we believe to be God's leading, Bro. Jeff, Sis. Crystal and Jonathan Cargill have left our community and will be assem-

bling with the brethren in Fairbury, IL. Though we will miss them, we trust they will visit often and be rewarded for their submissive hearts to follow God's promptings.

Two brothers have spent time in the hospital this month: Bros. John Feucht and Elvis (Sis. Marilyn) Kellenberger. We are grateful they both have returned home and commit them into God's hands for restoration, according to His will.

Our prayers have also been with Patty (Tim) Kilgus in the loss of her grandmother. May those who are ill and those who sorrow always feel the prayerful support of a church who loves them.

These souls betrothed before thee stand:

Thy blessing we implore;
Unite thou them in heart and hand,

And guide them evermore.

Hymns of Zion #286

On November 26, Bro. Ron officiated the service which united Eric Schambach and Erika Anderson in Holy Matrimony. May God richly bless them as they establish a God-fearing home where God himself will always be a welcome guest. Parents of the couple are Bro. Bob and Sis. Jeanne Schambach and Ken and Anita Anderson of St. Charles, IL.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Isaiah 55:6,7

We are thankful and deeply humbled that God, in His mercy, has touched several hearts among

us to seek after His ways in true repentance: Kay Kellenberger (Bro. Keith and Sis. Ida), Jason, Matt and Scott Schambach (Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie), Eric and Erika Schambach (Bro. Bob and Sis. Jeanne) and Merrillee Johnston. May they each find God's grace to be sufficient and His pardon abundant. While the waters are troubled, may we earnestly pray for those yet standing outside the covenant of grace, that they, too, might turn and seek the Lord while He may be found.

The weekend of December 3 and 4 the World Relief committee meetings were held here in Elgin. We enjoyed the many visitors it brought to our area, including the following ministering brothers: Elder Bros. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO), Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix, AZ), Ed Swartz (Bluffton, IN), John Klotzle (Altadena, CA), Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO) and Bros. Hartzell Kaisner (Detroit, MI), Doug Grimm (Sabetha, KS), Jim Hoerr (Peoria, IL) and Andy Hunyady (Columbus, OH). Others visiting us this month were Bros. Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL), Walt Hermann (Princeville, IL) and Marvin Schmidgall (Eureka, IL). We appreciate the labors of all our ministering brothers and trust God will always endow them with the true inspiration only He can provide.

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

Hymns of Zion #150

As we approach the brink of yet another year, none of us know just what is in store, but God, our faithful Guide, is well aware and will prepare us. Some of us may not ever see the start of another year here on earth, but while we have life and breath, let us make

the proper preparations and perform the daily maintenance so our spiritual status is that we are found ready, whenever our time of departure is required.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Dori Blunier

Thankful for God's Spirit of direction in their lives, Bro. Duane Rocke (Bro. Curt and Sis. Beth) and Sis. Bonnie Young (Bro. Norm and Sis. Lollie, Fairbury) were joined together as one on December 4 in Fairbury, IL. We pray that God will continue to bless them all their lives.

Also, on December 4 we rejoiced with Bro. Stan Wiegand (Bern, KS), son of Bro. Elton and Sis. Loretta, and Sis. Marilyn Metzger (Bro. Doug and Sis. Betty, Sabetha, KS) who announced their engagement. May God also be their lifelong guide.

On December 10 and 11, we were inspired by the testimonies and baptisms of four young people who recognized the emptiness of their lives and welcomed Jesus into their hearts. They are: Leann Stoller (Bro. Stan and Sis. Lola), Amy and Julie Kupfershmid (Bro. Ed and Sis. Donna) and Teri Martin (Bro. Lewis and Sis. Arletta). The story of conversion never grows old but is always refreshing to our hearts.

This past month God called two of our older brothers Home to be with Him. Bro. Ben Wettstein passed away on November 20. We extend our sympathy to his wife, Sis. Anna; his two sons, Bro. David and Bro. Lyle of Gridley, IL; and his two daughters, Sis. Lois Stoller, Bloomington, IL, and Sis. Freidora Wiegand, Eureka.

On December 2, Bro. Henry Frey passed away. He is survived by three daughters, Sis. Betty Schumacher (Washington, IL), Letty Hueni (Bremen, IN), and

Sis. Wilma Buck (South Bend, IN). May God be their comfort.

We appreciated the ministry of Bros. Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO), Trent Meiss (Iowa City, IA), Nate Stoller (Bradford, IL), Ted Hirstein (Morton, IL) and Elder Bros. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL) and Bob Walder (Congerville, IL).

As we look forward to the year of 1995, may we renew our desire to serve our Master first before all other things, and may we be encouraged to remember that God is faithful.

Note of Thanks:

The Ben Wettstein family wishes to extend their thanks for the kindness and love shown to them during Bro. Ben's illness and death.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

Sally Fehr - Thelma Slagel

"But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: A land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."

Deut. 11:11-12

Today, dear friends, we stand upon the verge of the unknown. There lies before us the new year and we are going forth to possess it. Who can tell what we shall find? What new experiences, what changes shall come, what new needs shall arise? But here is the cheering, comforting, gladdening message from our Heavenly Father, "The Lord thy God careth for it. His eyes are upon it alway to the ending of the year."

...We cannot tell what loss and sorrow and trial are doing. Trust

only. The Father comes near to take our hand and lead us on our way today. It shall be a good, a blessed new year!

Streams in the Desert #1

I was so impressed with the last sentence of this meditation. No matter what happens in 1995, "it shall be a good, a blessed year" if we trust in the Lord. May He grant us renewed courage and faith as we face another year.

As they go forth upon life's way,
Sustain them by Thy grace;
May they Thy holy laws obey
And live in joy and peace.

Hymns of Zion #286

This is our prayer for Sis. Bonnie Young and Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN) who were united in Holy Matrimony on December 4. Their parents are Bro. Norman and Sis. Lola Young and Bro. Curt and Sis. Beth (Eureka, IL). They will be living in New York for a time and assembling with the Croghan-Naumburg congregation.

When I became a prodigal, and
left the old roof-tree,
She almost broke her loving heart
in mourning after me,
And day and night she pray'd to
God to keep me in His care;
O Saviour, tell my mother I'll be
there.

Tell mother I'll be there, in
answer to her pray'r,
This message, blessed Saviour, to
her bear!

Tell mother I'll be there, heav'n's
joys with her to share;
Yes, tell my darling mother I'll be
there.

Gospel Hymns #801

We welcomed our new Bro. Frank Schmidt (Pearl) into the fold on November 20. How wonderful it was to hear him testify of

the conviction that came to him through the love and faithfulness of his parents. Years after they had passed on and he had reached a high age, their prayers were answered when he came to the Lord in repentance. May this be an encouragement to all God-fearing mothers and fathers.

We, who in God's name are here
assembled,
Solemnly do clasp our hands;
That Christ's death and suffering
be remembered,
Faithfully for Him to stand.
Thus in unison our hearts have
spoken.
Lord, to show Thy favor give the
token;
Speak Thy blessing ever true;
Amen, Peace be unto you.

Zion's Harp #11

We assembled on Sunday evening, November 27, to partake of the Lord's supper. How precious is this time of solemn reflection and soul-searching each year as we prepare for communion. Then, when the evening comes, it is such a blessing to feel the unity of the Spirit as we gather in holy quietness to remember the Lord's death and suffering. We thank Elder Bros. Don Sauder (Roanoke, IL) and Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) who shared the evening with us.

Other visiting ministers who labored among us this month were: Bros. Art Baurer (Princeville, IL), Earl Gerber (Forrest, IL), Gary Maibach (Smithville, OH), Virgil Metzger and Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL), Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO) and Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN). God bless you.

The angels in heaven are rejoicing (St. Luke 15:10) as Dorothy (Traub) Martin (Everett) of San Antonio, TX is turning to the Lord in repentance. We wish her much grace.

We extend deepest sympathy to the family of Sis. Frances Schrenk who passed into eternity on November 16. She was 83 years old. Sis. Frances was from the Chicago area and had been residing in Fairview Haven.

Sis. Lydia Bachtold, age 96, finished her earthly course on December 2. We extend sympathy to her son, Bro. Lloyd (Sis. Vi); granddaughters, Joy Grofft, Sis. Jill Wenger (Bro. Rich, Forrest) and Sis. Jean; and her brothers, Bro. Alph (Fannie) and Bro. Ezra (Sis. Aldine) Steffen.

We also sympathize with Sis. Lucille Meiss and her family in the loss of her grandson, Ralph, age 31, in an auto accident.

Walter Metz, brother of Sis. Della Meiss (Bro. Eli), passed away on December 10. May the Spirit of the Lord be your comfort.

Dan and Amy Bahler are thankful parents of Courtney Christine, born on December 7. Shanna is happy to have a little sister. Grandparents are Bro. Ralph and Sis. Jeannette Bahler and Bro. Donald Steidinger and Sis. Alice Steidinger (Gridley, IL).

Our prayers are with Sis. Vi Bachtold (Bro. Lloyd) and family in her recent affliction. May God grant healing as He sees fit, and may He grant grace that we can accept His will when He doesn't.

The afflictions of our time
Are not worthy of the glory
Promised in that realm sublime
To the patiently enduring.
See how Jesus as a lamb
Suffered for the sins of man!

Zion's Harp #243

ILLINOIS, FORREST
Marlene Walter
Mary Bachtold

MOMENTS

In the happy moments ---

Praise Him.
 In the difficult moments ---
 Thank Him.
 In the busy moments ---
 Bless Him.
 In the quiet moments ---
 Worship Him.
 For in all our moments ---
 He is there.
 In goodness -- in kindness --
 In Love.

By Roy Lessin

As we begin a new year in this busy world we live in, may we remember to take life moment by moment for God is always near.

The weekend of November 26 and 27 was a special one for Rachel Wenger (Bro. Ed and Sis. Renee), Rachel and Jennifer Ifft (Bro. Larry and Sis. Shirley), and Gina Metz (Bro. Gene and Sis. Carol) as we welcomed them as our new sisters-in-faith. We were thankful to have Elder Bros. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) and Art Bahler (Fairbury, IL), and Bros. Dale Moore (Elgin, IA) and John Hartman (Fairbury, IL) visit us for this blessed occasion.

We extend a warm welcome to Bro. Bud Manz who has chosen to assemble with the Forrest congregation since his move from Junction, OH. We look forward to having him fellowship and worship with us.

On December 3 a reception was held to honor the November 5 wedding of Kyra Ifft (Warren and Sis. Betty) and Ron Carr, Jr. (Gloria Donowitch, Chillicothe, and Ron Carr, Sr., Pontiac). May God bless them now and throughout their lives together.

A new baby girl, Erica Leigh, is welcomed into the family of Steve, Kay, Darrin and Ashley McBride. Happy grandparents are Gene and Sis. Velma Schladenhauffen and David and Mary McBride.

We have had several hospital patients this month. May Bro.

Wilbur Wiegand, Bro. Eldon Waibel, Bro. Leroy Koehl, Sis. Emma Ifft, Sis. Lil Bachtold and Sis. Barb Edelman feel God's nearness and the prayers of the congregation.

We extend sympathy to Bro. Rich and Sis. Jill Wenger and family in the death of her grandmother, Sis. Lydia Bachtold (Fairbury, IL).

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Barb Brim

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

Revelation 3:12

What a wonderful promise this verse holds for all who have through grace become overcomers of this world. As we have celebrated the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, let us also rejoice in His promise of life everlasting in a new and glorious Jerusalem where with angelic hosts on high we will sing hallelujah!

Our church family was increased this month by two of the Lord's littlest angels. We rejoice with Bro. Phillip and Sis. Nikie Hodel on the birth of their first child, Danielle Mackenzie. Happy grandparents, Gary and Sis. Wanda Edwards and Bro. Curt and Sis. Melita Hodel, had a very special Thanksgiving.

Just in time for Christmas, our newest Lord's blessing is little Clayton John Carroll, first child of Bro. Harold and Sis. Laura. Clayton's grandparents, Bro. Gail and Sis. Jane Wiegand and John and

Barb Carroll are all thrilled with his addition to their families. May the Lord bless these little ones throughout their lives and lead them to Heaven through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Rejoice!

We were happy to celebrate the union of our Bro. Joe Wiegand (Bro. Willis and Sis. Betty) to Sis. Myra Steffen (Bro. Duane and Sis. Lois) of Congerville. Surely God will bless these two dear souls as they begin their new life together in His name.

We joyfully looked on as our Sunday School performed in their Christmas program this month. What a wondrous sight the angels beheld, the blessed Babe of Bethlehem, made even more special as seen through the eyes of our dear children. Thanks to all the Sunday School teachers and helpers for being shepherds to the youngest of our flock and praise God for His gift of grace to us all.

Our thoughts and prayers are with our Bro. Elmer and Sis. Minnie Grusy this month upon the passing of our dear Sis. Frieda Grusy. May your sorrow be leavened with happiness for her return to the arms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We are happy to report that our hospital patient this month, Sis. Jill Zimmerman (Dean and Sis. Inga), is home and recovering nicely from surgery. We miss you and hope to see you back in church soon!

We wish to thank our visiting ministers and their families for selflessly sharing their time and efforts with us. Thank you, Bro. Steve and Sis. Donnalou Baner (Gridley, IL), Bro. Don and Sis. Connie Manz (Junction, OH), and Bro. Marvin and Sis. Joan Stieglitz (Leo, IN) for the love and fellowship you've shared with us.

Notes of Thanks:

Willis and I want to thank all of you for your prayers and all other expressions of concern during the hospital stay and since coming home. May God bless you as only He can.

Love in Christ, Willis and Betty Wiegand

The family of Frieda Grusy wishes to express their sincere thanks for the many deeds of love and kindness shown to them in the passing of their loved one.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY Perry A. Klopfenstein

For many, as a new year begins to unfold, it is a time of resolution and renewed ambition to live better lives. For the dedicated believer in Christ, however, such resolutions should occur daily, not annually. The Word teaches, "He who will lose his life shall find it." As we, by God's grace, surrender our will to His will, we thence can find the true riches for our inner man, and our overall resolution can be one of eternal value.

As converted people, our resolutions, daily, should be to "die daily" (to self) and become "crucified with Christ" so we may serve Him without reservation.

As we witness the decline of enduring values we hold dear in our nation, and they lose the predominance they once had, we should not despair or become negative. Our attitude should be one of optimism and hope. Too, we should rejoice that God has called us (at this time in history) to shine out as lights and to be a positive influence for the enduring values of Christ Jesus. As never before, we as believers should seek to be conformed to the way of Christ and the Apostles and less conformed to the ways of the world.

On November 27, four souls

were baptized and we all rejoiced in God's mercy. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way and few there be that find it." New names in the Book of Life are: Sisters Kathy Kincade (Don and Sis. Alyce Rose) and Heidi Maurer (Bro. J.D. and Sis. Sandy); and Bros. Jay Kiefer (Bro. Richard and Sis. Louise May) and John Kaupp (Sis. Esther and the late Bro. Walter). Ministers here for the weekend were Elder Bro. Everett Hari (Bloomington, IL) and Bro. Lenny Meyer (Chicago, IL).

Bro. Richard and Sis. Rae Jean Kuntz became the parents of a son, Oliver Ray, born December 12. He has a sister, Abbie Lee, age 2. Grandparents are Bro. Clyde and Sis. Wilma Kuntz, and Ray and Ellen Lenaway, Pekin.

Our dear friend, Don Schieler, was hospitalized with a heart condition and returned home on December 16. He is convalescing and we wish him well.

Sis. Vi Hany was again hospitalized briefly and is back home.

Bro. Curt Gramm was announced on December 18 to marry Sis. Susan Knapp (Taylor, MO). She is the daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Luann Knapp, Taylor, MO. He is the son of Ron and Ann Daughtery, Gridley, and the late Bro. Willis "Butch" Gramm.

ILLINOIS, MORTON Phyllis Farney Cheryl Wuthrich

Bro. Chris Hauter was called Home on November 25. May our Lord comfort and bless his wife, Sis. Marie; his son, Miles; and his other relatives and friends.

Sis. Ida Huber's funeral was held December 12. May God's comfort be felt by her two sons, Robert and Vernon; her daughter, Eileen Spring; her nine grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Sunday, December 11, was the Christmas program. We wish to thank our young people and children for bringing us the Christmas story through hymn and verse.

December 18 we are planning to hold our all church Christmas carolling. It is indeed a blessing to carol to those who are shut-in and/or sick.

May each of you feel God's closeness and blessings in 1995. Have a blessed New Year in the Lord.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA Cara Nussbaum

It's hard to believe another year has passed. I pray that as each of us contemplates a new year, that first and foremost we can put Jesus first in our lives each day. Here are some other things to think about. Resolve to...mend a quarrel, seek out a forgotten friend, give a soft answer, encourage our youth, forgive an enemy, listen, apologize if you're wrong, try to be understanding, avoid envy, be appreciative, kind and gentle, laugh a little, extend your hand to a stranger, find beauty in all that surrounds you and speak your love again and again.

I apologize that I missed a birth last month. Another precious baby girl was born to Bro. Ed and Sis. Sara Dingledine on November 1. She was named Lesley after her late grandfather, Bro. Leslie Unsicker. She joins sister, Rebecca, at home. Her grandparents are Sis. Eunice Unsicker and Gary Dingledine and Norma Milard.

On December 5, Bro. Joel and Sis. Tania Hoerr welcomed a new baby girl. Taylor Marie was welcomed home by brother, Mitchell. Her grandparents are Bro. Carl and Sis. Evelyn Hoerr and Bro. Rich and Sis. Jan Schock.

We rejoice with four more souls

who have given their hearts to the Lord and have been taken into the fold of Jesus Christ. Baptized on November 27 were Doug Brewer (son of Sis. Kathy Brewer), Randy Marx (Sis. Becky), Alan Oberghel (Bro. Matthew and Sis. Betty), and Brandon Plattner (Kevin Plattner and Mary Rosenak). We ask God's richest blessings upon each of them.

We wish to thank the ministers who visited Peoria this past month. They are Elder Bros. Edwin Ringger (Gridley, IL) and David Bertsch (Leo, IN), and Bros. Don Wagenbach (Washington, IL) and Doug Wagenbach (San Diego, CA). May you each be blessed for your service to the Lord.

We were saddened by the death of Sis. Naomi Haefli and extend our sincere condolences to her family. They include, Bros. Ernest, Bob and Dick of Peoria, Sis. Helen Mangold (Roanoke, IL), and Sis. Francis Koch (Tremont, IL).

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

Martha Jane Siebenthal

Visiting minister this month was Bro. Al Langhofer (Wichita, KS). May God bless him and his wife for this labor of love.

"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord."

Proverbs 18:22

Believing God has led them together, Sis. Krista Scholl (Bro. Robert and Sis. Arlene) and Bro. Perry Kieser (Bro. Verle and Sis. Vonnice) of Bradford had their engagement announced December 18. We wish them God's blessings and may they look to Him for guidance in this important step in life.

Several from our congregation went to Mexico on a work project. May God bless this endeavor.

On December 18, our Sunday School Christmas program was held. May God bless each student for their willingness to tell the wonderful story of love and we thank the teachers and parents who work with the dear children.

We extend our sincere sympathy to Andrew and Bernice Streitmatter on the death of his sister, Helen Streitmatter. May the Lord be their Comforter at this time of sorrow.

Some of our loved ones have been in the hospital or in for tests. We pray for God's healing power where it can be His will. Bro. Herman Baer (Sis. Mary), heart surgery; Bro. Ronald Rumbold (Sis. Jackie), skin graft; Sis. Cathy Kieser (Bro. Mark), Bro. Earl Feucht (Sis. Margaret), foot surgery; and Sis. Stacy Francis, tests. We hope they can feel our love and prayers.

As we reflect over the past year, our hearts are filled with gratitude for the many blessings God has shared so abundantly. Our prayer is that each will glorify God's name with the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.

What Will You Do With This Year That's So New

As we start a New Year
untouched and unmarred,
Unblemished and flawless,
unscratched and unscarred,
May we try to do better and
accomplish much more
And be kinder and wiser than in
the year gone before.
Let us wipe our slates clean and
start over again,
For God gives this privilege to all
sincere men
Who will humbly admit they have
failed many ways
But are willing to try and improve
these "New Days"
By asking God's help in all that
they do

And counting on Him to refresh
and renew
Their courage and faith when
things go wrong
And the way seems dark and the
road rough and long.

"What will you do with this year
that's so new?"

The choice is yours -- God leaves
that to you!

Helen Steiner Rice

Two things you can do that are
really worthwhile; when you meet
a person, speak kindly and smile.

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

Jana Gastman

Annie Leman

We rejoice with the angels in Heaven that seven dear souls have turned their lives to Jesus in repentance: Jim and Connie Hodel, Matt Feucht (Bro. Randy and Sis. Carol), Kristy Hoffman (Bro. Dick and Sis. Ann), Sarah Hodel (Bro. Brent and Sis. Marge), Kory Kaeb (Bro. Bill and Sis. Patsy) and Ross Wuthrich (Bro. Bill and Sis. Val). We pray that God will be near each one and grant them grace for each day.

December 11 was a blessed day as the Sunday School children and Bible Class students shared their Christmas program with us. We appreciate the enthusiasm they showed as they brought forth the message of Christ's birth through song.

Rachel Braker and Greg Braman announced their engagement. Their parents are Bro. Harland and Sis. Martha Braker and Roger and Alice Braman of Goodfield. We rejoice with them and wish them a happy life together.

We wish to extend our love and sympathy to our Sis. Helen Mangold in the passing of her stepmother, Sis. Naomi Haefli, of Peoria.

We pray God will bless our visiting ministers this month: Bros. Don Braker (Kansas City, MO), Ted Herstein (Morton, IL) and Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL).

Our hospital patients this month were Sis. Elsie Bradle, Bro. Jerry Fischer, Bro. Dave Fischer and Adam Knepp (Bro. Rich and Sis. Janet).

Note of Thanks:

A very sincere and warm "Thank You" to everyone who so kindly remembered me in the hospital and since I'm recuperating at home from a broken knee. Everything was greatly appreciated and I humbly thank you and pray God will bless you.

Sincerely, Sis. Mary Hoffman

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

Barb Dill - Barb Kaeb

We are always grateful for visiting ministers willing to share God's Word. This month they were Bros. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH), John Steiner (Oakville, IA) and Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL). We pray that God will richly reward them.

We extend a warm welcome to Betty Kemp and her daughter, Amanda, who have recently moved into our community. We look forward to having them worship with us.

Jeff and Anita Wagenbach have a little son, Luke Alan, who arrived November 15. He was welcomed home by his sister, Mackenzie, and grandparents, Bro. Simon and Sis. Lavonne Wagenbach and Bro. Warren and Sis. Carolyn Prather.

Bro. Doug and Sis. Jill Huette were blessed with twin boys, Nathan Douglas and Philip Douglas, born December 9. Happy and thankful grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Marilyn

Huette and Bro. Dick and Sis. Nelma Eastman (Eureka, IL).

Bro. Carl and Sis. Mary Ellen Sinn rejoice in the birth of their grandson, Christopher Kenneth, born November 29. His parents are Ken and Ruth Smiciklas.

Those spending time in the hospital have been little Jesse and little Levi Kaiser (Bro. Tim and Sis. Ruth) and Sis. Gail Sinn (Bro. Jeff). Our thoughts and prayers are with these loved ones.

A double funeral was held December 13 for Sis. Esther Schmid and her sister, Sis. Marie Schmid. Sis. Esther passed away the preceding Saturday, and one day later Sis. Marie passed away at the nursing home. They are survived and deeply missed by their two sisters, Sis. Sophia Sauder and Sis. Helen Laidig; one brother, Bro. William Schmid; and 11 nieces and nephews.

We also extend our sympathy to Bro. Arnold Rassi on the death of his sister, Sis. Martha Wuthrich, and his brother-in-law, Orville Romersberger. May God comfort and bless them all.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

Denise Romersberger

Sue Ruppert

Giants. The word depicts big, ugly, mean creatures that want to kill those that are small and helpless. In the fairy tales of our youth, giants were always vanquished by the hero who used his head and was cunning enough to outsmart the dumb giant. Even David of the Bible overcame Goliath with fearlessness and use of his own skills. But wait!...There is a big difference between the story of David and those fairy tales. If we really examine that Bible story, we will find that David did not depend on his own strength and skills. He was confident not in himself, but in the

"...Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel..." (I Samuel 17:45). The rest of the Israelites were frozen with fear but David was courageous because he recalled how God had delivered him out of tight situations before. ("...The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine..." I Samuel 17:37.) Then he went forward and armed himself with five choice stones, though only one was needed to fell the giant.

What a parallel to our spiritual lives! We, too, are held back by fear when facing the many giants of sin in our lives. It is only when we remember that God is in control, and that He will fight the battles, that we can go forth in confidence. The five stones can be likened to the weapons that God provides for us:

1) Faith to believe in an all-powerful God, 2) Trusting in that faith, 3) Prayer, 4) Reading the Word of God, and 5) Worshipping God in the fellowship of others. If we keep all these close to us, we, too, will have the right one to sling at any giants that oppress us. Praise be to God that He does provide for His own!

We thank Bro. Ted Witzig (Morton, IL) for these thoughts that he presented to us at our monthly Bible study! We are also thankful that God provides spiritual food for us even in the stories that we first learned in Sunday School. We also want to send appreciation to our other visiting ministers: Bros. Doug Wagenbach (San Diego, CA) and Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City, MO). We were glad to have them and their families "back home" again over Thanksgiving.

We are excited over the engagement of Sis. Charlotte Mangold to Bro. Brent Hoerr (Taylor, MO).

Parents are Sis. Mary and the late Bro. Charlie Mangold (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Robert and Sis. Emma Hoerr. May God bless them richly in the coming months and years!

We are also thankful that Bro. Chris Bucher has returned home safely from Russia, where he was involved in spreading the Gospel to others. He is sure to have many experiences to relate to us about his time there. Welcome home, Chris!

Sis. Betty Schumacher (Bro. Lloyd) experienced the loss of her father, Bro. Henry Frey. Though we are always sad when loved ones die, we also can rejoice because of the hope of eternal life with our Saviour. Sis. Betty relates that her parents were converted later in life. She was twelve years old at the time and remembers what a change occurred in their lives and in their family's life. We thank God for his mercy and grace to all of us!

We continue to pray for our Bro. Joe Herman and his family, as his health continues to deteriorate. We know that he is being well taken care of by the staff of Peoria Home. Remember Sis. Lucille and the rest of the family in your prayers. It is through the prayers of the ones we love that we can find the strength to continue to face what is in front of us.

On Wednesday evening, December 14, we enjoyed the presentation of the Christmas story through songs and verses of the Sunday School children. Every year we watch the little ones work hard to learn their pieces and then stand in front of the congregation to tell the old, old story. And every year we reap the blessings! Thank you children and teachers and parents! We are glad to see growth in numbers, as our Sunday School looks bigger every time they all gather together.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON
Jaci Gerber - Brenda Bertsh

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."

Psalm 91:1,2

On November 19, Sis. Ella Yergler went to be with the Lord. Her children are Bro. Truman (Sis. Marcella), Bro. Robert (Sis. Carolyn), Bro. Dick (Sis. Lil) and Bro. Claire (Sis. Mary Jane).

Also, on November 19, Lyle Tonner was taken from this life in a tragic accident. His parents are Bro. Harry and Sis. Clara Tonner.

Sis. Mary Speheger passed away on November 27. Her children are James, Charles and Ann Pollard. Let's remember to keep these families in our prayers.

We have added two new lambs to the flock. They are Bro. Dan and Sis. Florence Habegger, an older couple who have attended with us for many years. Sis. Florence was very ill, and passed away on December 12. We are thankful that she has asked the Lord to go with her the last mile of the way. Their sons are Larry and Richard.

There are many others who have been hospitalized recently. They are: Sis. Kay Gerber (Bro. Keith), Bro. Ralph Schwartz (Sis. Leona), Bro. Kenneth Schaefer (Sis. Alice), Bro. Charlie Meyer, Bro. Ed Schwartz Sr. (Sis. Josephine), Bro. Clarence Steffen (Sis. Freida), Bro. Bob Herring (Sis. Janet), Bro. Bill Ringger (Sis. Marge) and Brandon Longenberger (Bro. Terry and Sis. Twila).

Though troubles assail and dangers affright,

Though friends should all fail and foes all unite,
Yet one thing secures us whatever betide,

This promise assures us: "The Lord will provide."

Though often the heart with storms be oppressed,
Afflictions do smart by Satan distressed,

"O what shall befall us?" we wearily sighed;

Still He who protects us, "The Lord will provide!"

Zion's Harp #86

We praise the Lord for calling Tom Rohr and Janon Fiechter to repentance. Janon's parents are Bro. Don and Sis. Suzie Fiechter. May God go with them each step of the way.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH
Susan Harris - Kay Steffen

"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you."

I Corinthians 11:2

We are grateful for the visiting ministers who shared the message with us this month. They were Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton, IN), Bros. Lynn Stieglitz (Leo, IN), Allen Stoller and Gary Tonner (Bluffton, IN), Ron Messner (Washington, IL) and Elder Bro. Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL). May God bless each of these brothers for lending themselves on our behalf.

On November 26 and 27, we were privileged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptism of four young souls who have committed their lives to the Lord. We welcome our new sisters, Lindsay Fiechter (Bro. Dean and Sis. Cyn-dee), Nichol Reinhard (Bro. Vic and Sis. Peg), Amy Lantz (Bro.

Dan Jr. and Sis. Charlene) and Jaila Gerber (Bro. Neil and Sis. Karen). Not only do we pray for grace for these dear sisters as they begin their walk with the Lord, but may all of us seek grace and guidance as we continue our walk in this life of service for Thee.

We were happy to hear the engagement of Sis. Amy Smeckens (Mike and Sis. Melissa) and Bro. Jarrod Gerber (Bro. Linus and Sis. Nancy). We wish them God's blessings.

Bro. David Moser (Sis. Dina Fae) and Sis. Sheri Leman (Wally and Sis. Marilyn) were united in marriage on December 18. Our prayer is that the Lord will lead and guide them in this new walk together.

We wish God's blessings to Jason and Stacy Bussel on the birth of their new baby girl, Corrinne Nicholle, born on December 12. Grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Cathy Bussel and Keith and Carolyn Griffiths.

Those who have spent time in the hospital this month are: Bro. Bob Herring (Sis. Janet), Daniel Shorb (Bro. Brett and Sis. Cindy), Sis. Lucille Borrer, Adriene Troxel (Rob and Sis. Tonya) and Bro. Ted Neuenschwander (Sis. Deb). May we always be prayerful for those who spend time in the hospital.

As our children sang to us of the birth of our Lord, we were reminded that we should keep the spirit of Christmas in our heart all year. As we begin a new year, our focus should always be on that baby that was born in a manger and later died on the cross and shed His blood that we might live.

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE Val Gutwein

A new year has dawned upon us once again. What will 1995 hold for us as believers and for those

that continue to turn their back on God?

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise..." (II Peter 3:9).

There is a deadline approaching. Each one of us must someday give an account for how we lived our lives. One day life will cease to exist as we know it today. Are you ready to face the One who created you and gave you life? Could this be the year that our Lord and Saviour returns for those whom He has redeemed with His precious blood? We need to be prayerful. Praise God that He is faithful and desires all to come to repentance.

November 27 was the date for Holy Communion here in Francesville. It was a special time of remembrance for the church. We are very grateful to Elder Bro. Edwin Ringger (Gridley, IL) who faithfully assisted Elder Bro. Wendell in this work.

Alisha Kay arrived on November 26 to Bro. Jan and Sis. Val Gutwein. She has one sister, Tess, to welcome her home. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." (Psalm 127:3). We praise God for His gift of life to us. Grandparents are Bro. Ben and Sis. Miriam Metz and Bro. Harold and Sis. Maxine Gutwein. Great-grandparents are Bro. Carl and Sis. Dorothy Bachtold (Forrest, IL) and Lydia Gutwein of Francesville.

We pray that God will continue to heal Bro. Brian Huber who has recently undergone shoulder surgery. The Lord is the Great Physician, and what a privilege to approach Him and ask for His healing mercies on those who need healing.

We are grateful once again to the many ministers who have come and shared their love with us: Bros. Mark Barr (Detroit,

MI), Ken Wuethrich (Indianapolis, IN), Vernon Schwab (Wolcott, IN) and Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN). May the Lord Jesus Christ richly bless these brothers for their labors of love and kindness towards us.

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS

Sandy Lichtle

Melissa Baumgartner

Greetings of love and joy in our precious Lord and Saviour. What a blessing it is to remember Christ's birthday.

Our church was able to spend last Wednesday evening carolling to shut-in loved ones. We enjoyed special fellowship with each of them.

On Sunday, December 18, our Sunday School children told us the blessed Christmas story in verse and song. The children did a special job of memorizing their parts and telling the story with their whole heart full of joy. May our hearts always hold the child-like joy that came on that first Christmas night.

Our hearts ache as we bid farewell to Bro. Gordon and Sis. Kathy Gerber and their girls, as they plan to relocate to Hong Kong. May God's loving presence continue directing and leading them.

We thank Bro. Marvin Stieglitz (Leo, IN) for sharing the Word with us. May God bless him richly now and in eternity.

INDIANA, LACROSSE

Judy Gudeman

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

II Corinthians 9:15

Two souls, having repented of their sins, have found peace with God and man. Julie Heinold (Bro. Gene and Sis. Evie) and Lana

Stoller (Bro. Steve and Sis. Anna Marie) are thankful for God's gift and are looking forward to baptism soon after the New Year.

We have so much to be thankful for in God's gift to mankind. Jesus paid a debt that he did not owe because we owed a debt that we could not pay. We pray that many more souls will answer the call of the Lord in this new year of 1995.

Visiting us from Junction, OH this past month was Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter and his family. We are always happy to have visitors from across the country and even across the world. We were also privileged to have Bro. Ervin Vidakovics and his son from Ersekcsanad, Hungary with us for a Wednesday evening.

May God keep each of you safe and healthy throughout the coming year!

**INDIANA, LEO
Ethelyn Schlatter**

On Thanksgiving Day we welcomed Elder Bro. Edwin Ringger, his wife, and Bro. Byron Stoller and family (Gridley, IL). We were blessed as Bro. Byron read Psalm 103. Our hearts rejoiced as we sang:

God of unlimited compassion...
For Thy most wonderful
redemption,
For the atonement of our wrong,
For Thy most gracious invitation,
And for Thy Word with promise
strong.
Yea, for the comfort of Thy Word
Our hearts bring thanks to Thee,
O Lord.

Zion's Harp #75

Bro. Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN) was with us on December 4th. We appreciate the ministering brothers who were originally from Leo when they return.

On December 11, the Sunday

School presented a Christmas program. One student, portraying the Apostle John, viewed today's celebrations, looking for the true meaning of celebrating Jesus' birthday. It was very thought provoking.

Bro. Jeff and Sis. Tina Schumacher welcomed a little daughter, Olivia Joy, into their hearts and home on December 3. Jonathan and Zachery were happy for a baby sister and also that grandpa and grandma came to visit and help out. It was nice to have Bro. Loren and Sis. Liseten Strahm (Sabetha, KS) with us for a couple of Sundays.

The families from Gateway Woods and the Sunday School went carolling on December 16. We divided up into four groups and were undaunted by the rain.

**INDIANA, MILFORD
Marguerite Hoerr
Judy Longcor**

"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth."

Psalm 34:1

Our dear Sis. Martha Wuthrich was laid to rest and went to meet her Lord. Her husband (Walter) preceded her in death. She has three sons, Virgil (Sanford, FL), Bro. Alan (Warsaw), and Bro. Stan (Milford); one daughter, Jean Gudeman (Phoenix, AZ). We all truly will miss Sis. Martha. Sis. Martha deeply loved her Lord and appreciated her soul salvation so much. She often shared family memories with many of us and you could feel the deep love she had for her children and grandchildren. We extend our deepest sympathy to her family. Our loss is Heaven's gain.

Now thank we all our God,

With heart, and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done,
In whom the world rejoices,
Who from our mother's arms,
Has blest us on our way,
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

Zion's Harp #236

On Sunday, November 20, was our Thanksgiving program. Through songs, poems and recitations we were once again reminded what a blessed people we truly are. A special thank you to the committee, teachers and students for a lovely program.

Our Bro. Harold Emch (Sis. Kathryn) this past month has undergone two urological surgeries at an Indianapolis hospital. He is now home recovering. Our prayers and thoughts have been with Bro. Harold and Sis. Kathryn.

God is our refuge and our
strength,
A very present help indeed;
He in the time of trouble sends
His grace to meet our every need.

Hymns of Zion #4

Sis. Tillie Kasbaum fell this past week and broke her hip requiring her to have surgery. We pray that she will feel God's healing hand and the prayers of those who love her.

Chad Beer, along with his family, Bro. Lee, Sis. Sandy and Marc, continue to covet our prayers during this time.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Matthew 26:41

**INDIANA, REMINGTON
Amelia Schini**

A Christian's demise
Breaks all earthly ties.
When the night of death is over
Spring eternal he'll discover.
When a Christian dies
Glorious dawn will rise.

Thanksgiving Day truly was a day for giving thanks for our dear Sis. Anna Beckley who could lay down her armor and go to be with her Saviour evermore. After sixteen years in Parkview Nursing Home of Francesville due to a stroke, the Lord said "This far". Sis. Anna leaves to mourn her loss, two sisters, Sis. Lora Zahner (Bro. Ed) and Sis. Clara Zahner (Bro. Emanuel), both of Rockville, CT; one sister-in-law, Sis. Emma (Witzig) Beckley, of Remington, and a number of nieces and nephews.

On December 2, the death angel came down and summoned Bro. Henry Frey home. He has been in our Eureka, IL nursing home for some time. His first wife and mother of his three daughters was Sis. Sallie Knochel. Several years after her death he married Sis. Cora Stoller of Gridley, IL who also preceded him in death. His daughters are Wilma (Don) Buck of South Bend, Letty (Bob) Hueni of Bremen, and Sis. Betty (Lloyd) Schumacher of Metamora, IL. Bro. Henry lived here at Remington many years and was brought here for burial. In February, Bro. Henry would have been 100 years old.

We are thankful for both of these "soldiers of the cross" to be relieved of their earthly pain.

On Sunday, November 27, it was such a pleasant surprise to see our dear friend, Sherri Franz, put on a veil. She and her husband, Joe, have been attending our services for over ten years. We pray for Sherri and Joe.

On Sunday, December 4, we had a special service marking Bro.

Earl Kilgus' retirement from the ministry. Bro. Earl has been a faithful and loyal servant in God's service. He has been a very willing and submissive servant. We will miss him on the pulpit but feel that after forty years, he is deserving of his retirement. May God bless him.

That same Sunday, Bro. John Grimm (Columbus, OH) stopped here enroute home from visiting relatives in Chicago, IL. Bro. Earl had the morning service for his last Sunday. In the afternoon, Bro. John had the service. Also, our dear Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) was here. At the end, he conducted a fitting service for Bro. Earl's retirement.

On Sunday, December 11, Elder Bro. Andy Virkler and his wife, Sis. Maxine (Bay City, MI) paid us a visit. Their son, Stan, lives here.

Closing thought: One resolution I have made, and try always to keep, is this: To rise above little things. (John Burroughs)

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

**Carolyn Frank
Gigi Schafer**

The holiday season is upon us, and it is good to reflect upon the true meaning of our celebration. It seems so easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of "busyness" that accompanies this time of year. The Bremen community hosts a "holy walk" each year where visitors are transported to long ago Bethlehem to experience the sights and sounds surrounding our Lord's birth. Many of our Sunday School students were able to attend one Saturday evening and really enjoyed the learning experience and their time together. It was mentioned during the service on Sunday that we need to be on a holy walk every day. We were encouraged to keep

our focus on not just the Lord's birth, but His death and suffering that provided our redemption. Our wish is for a blessed and Christ-filled holiday season.

Saturday evening, December 3, the adults enjoyed our annual Christmas supper at an Amish home. We were blessed with visiting brethren who shared the evening of fellowship and carolling with us.

Our yearly organizational meeting was held December 14. Five offices were filled as we look forward to the responsibilities of 1995. We pray for all those holding positions and appreciate the faithful service of this past year. Special thanks to Elder Bro. Jesse Beer for sharing the evening with us.

On December 17 our congregation enjoyed an afternoon of Christmas carolling at some local nursing homes. It is always a blessing to be able to share the old hymns and carols with those who can no longer get around as they once did. The Sunday School hosted a chili supper following the singing.

On December 18 our Sunday School presented its annual Christmas program. They told the story of our Saviour's birth through songs, poems and Scriptures. One class wrote its own Biblical account of "The Night Before Christmas". We appreciate the efforts of the children and teachers in preparing the program for us.

We would like to thank the ministering brothers who blessed us with God's Word this month. They are Bros. Al Langhofer (Wichita, KS), Harold Schmidgall (Gridley, IL) and Elder Bro. Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL). We are so thankful for their willingness to fellowship with us.

The months of January and February we will be on an alter-

nating Wednesday night schedule. We will meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesday evenings in the homes of our members. Anyone traveling in our area, please contact one of our ministers for the times and locations.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Ken and Cindy Susdorf

Greetings to all in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

It seems that the month has just started and here we are at the end. Another month closer to the return of the Lord. Another month we've all had to get ready and help others get ready for that time. This has probably been said millions of times over the last 2000 years or so. But, dear ones, let's not get slack while we are waiting. Our eternal life with the Father awaits us.

We had a really blessed church Christmas dinner this month. Special thanks to our food committee. The setting, program, and food were greatly appreciated by all. We're looking forward to Christmas carolling in just another week or so.

The Sunday School is in the process of having their food drive for the needy. This year we will be working with the cancer association to give our food and gifts away. We realize how a disease such as this can drain a family emotionally and financially. We pray that God will grant special blessings to all. As we are told in the Word, someday we'll understand.

We sang a farewell hymn to Bro. Roy and Sis. Aldine Frieden as they will now spend the winter in Texas.

Visiting minister this month was our own Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL). We thank him for his labors on our behalf.

Until next month, the Lord will-

ing, fare thee well.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT

Sheri Bahler

We have been blessed with several visiting ministers this month. Bro. Doug Harmon (Toledo, OH) was with us on Thanksgiving Day. Bro. Marshall Heinold (Washington, IL) came for our Topical Bible Study. His topic was Witnessing. Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Leo, IN) was here on Sunday, December 18. May the Lord richly bless these brothers for their labors of love.

Our Sunday School children once again reminded us of Christ's love for mankind as they told the Christmas story at our program. We pray that these little children will keep this story in their hearts to ponder throughout their lives, just as Mary did.

We gathered together on Friday, December 16, to sing Christmas carols to some of the elderly in our community. The Christmas season always seems to be an excellent time to share God's Word with other people. Yet, we should take the opportunity to do this the whole year through and not just during this season. May each one be blessed and continue to grow as the Lord wills in the new year.

IOWA, AMES

Luann Schmidgall

We were thankful to have Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) bring us the Word of Life on December 4. May God bless him and his wife for making the effort to be with us.

Our hearts are overflowing with joy as we have six more converts in the Ames area. Darin Massner (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Gail, Burlington, IA), Chad Kuntz (Bro. Bob and Sis. Edra, Oakville, IA), Tricia Metzger (Bro. Galen and Sis. Mary Jo, Oakville, IA),

Brad Meyer (Bro. Raymond and Sis. Twyla, Lester, IA), Kay Kellenberger (Bro. Keith and Sis. Ida, Elgin, IL) and Nicole Dalhauser (Bro. Ken and Sis. Ellen, West Bend, IA) have all surrendered their lives to the Lord. Our prayers are with them as they begin their heavenly journey.

IOWA, BURLINGTON

Monica Eisenmann

Lorna Knapp

Elder Bro. Ed Lanz and Bros. John Steiner and Jon Schmidgall (Oakville, IA) all blessed us with visits and meditations on God's Holy Word. Even as we are thankful for visiting ministers, we likewise appreciate the tireless efforts of our home brothers expounding the truth in season and out of season.

We rejoice that we seem to be in season at the present time. Recently two souls have turned their backs to the world. We pray they will lay a firm foundation and that there will be more who will come to the Saviour.

Our Sunday School children recently told in verse and song of our Saviour coming to us in the stable so long ago in Bethlehem. What a wonderful gift of love! May we express our thankfulness through a daily life of total devotion and obedience.

Our thoughts and prayers are with our Bro. Ken Scheitlin who is once again undergoing cancer treatments. Also, dear Sis. Emma Eberhardt is currently hospitalized. May God grant them grace to endure and may their trials bring forth the fruit of drawing them closer to their Lord.

We are thankful for the mild weather that has made it possible for our retirement apartments to be progressing nicely adjacent to the church. We ask God's continued blessing on this endeavor.

IOWA, ELGIN
Gloria Frieden

At the time of this writing we are drawing close to the end of another year. No doubt we can all remember times of joy and times of sadness, times of ease and times of struggles, yet at all times we knew God was with us. What a blessing and comfort it is to know He is always with us.

We were blessed with two visiting ministers since the last writing: Bro. Jim Knoblock (Winthrop, MN) and Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL). May God richly bless and provide for these brothers as they continue in His service. Bro. Joe assisted our Elder Bro. Paul Butikofer with the reading of the Memorandum. Again, we felt the love and concern of our Elder body who so faithfully and lovingly give us these admonitions. May we take heed and obey. Bro. Joe also exhorted us on guarding our thoughts. I find this to be a continual battle to keep my thoughts under control. Satan is ever trying to enter thoughts of pride, mistrust and discord in our minds to destroy our peace. The words to a song come to mind. "Watch and pray the tempter may be near you, keep the heart with jealous care, lest the door a moment left unguarded, evil thoughts may enter there." Remembering what the Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:8 will help us keep the evil thoughts away. The following is a little poem I read that makes it clear how important it is to watch our thoughts.

Watch your thoughts - they
become actions.

Watch your actions - they become
habits.

Watch your habits - they become
character.

Watch your character - it becomes
your destiny.

Author Unknown

Wishing you all God's nearness
and grace as we meet the cares
and challenges, heartaches and
blessings of the new year.

Notice: Please submit your Silver Lining dues for Elgin by the end of January. Thank you.

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE
Laura Funk

Visiting ministers the past few weeks include Bros. DeWayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN) and Fred Eberhardt (Burlington, IA). We want to thank these brothers and their families for coming and bringing our congregation the Word of Life.

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

Hymns of Zion #150

As we begin a new year, do we
resolve to have our time spent on
the Lord or on ourselves? Which
would benefit us the most?

IOWA, IOWA CITY
Janette Schulz

Greetings to all! Another year is swiftly coming to a close. We thank all of our visitors this month, and all of those who supported us in the past year. None of us know what tomorrow or next year holds for us, but how thankful we can be that we DO know Who holds tomorrow. May we place our hands in His and look forward in faith to 1995.

I don't know about tomorrow, I
just live from day to day.
I don't borrow from its sunshine,

For its skies may turn to gray.
I don't worry o'er the future, For I
know what Jesus said,
And today I'll walk beside Him,
For He knows what is ahead.

Every step is getting brighter, As
the golden stairs I climb;
Ev'ry burden's getting lighter;
Ev'ry cloud is silver lined.
There the sun is always shining.
There no tear will dim the eye,
At the ending of the rainbow,
Where the mountains touch the
sky.

I don't know about tomorrow, It
may bring me poverty;
But the one who feeds the spar-
row, Is the one who stands by me.
And the path that be my portion,
May be through the flame or flood,
But His presence goes before me,
And I'm covered with His blood.

Many things about tomorrow, I
don't seem to understand;
But I know who holds tomorrow,
And I know who holds my hand.

The rest of this month promises to be very busy, with the Christmas program, two evenings of caroling, and many family plans and seasonal activities. We pray that Christ will be the focus of Christmas for each of us, and that God will keep us all safely as many miles are traveled during this time. May our "holidays" be "holy days" and our most precious gift be our eternal salvation.

IOWA, LESTER
Sue Warner
Cindy Leuthold

In this season of rejoicing we have much to be thankful for as two dear young souls have tired of the ways of the world and have turned their hearts to the Lord in repentance. We offer prayers of encouragement to Brad Meyer

and his sister, Joy, as they seek God's promise of "peace on earth, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

We were blessed to have as our guest ministers Bro. Roy Koehl and Bro. Bierne Messner (Morris, MN). We are ever grateful for brethren willing to speak the true Word of God.

We extend a hearty welcome to Bro. Curt and Sis. Beth Feucht and their darling children, Jed and Samantha, who have recently moved to our community from the Washington, IL area. Bro. Curt grew up in our area and we are happy to have them worship with us.

This month we have several from our congregation who experienced surgery. They are: Sis. Martha Feucht (Bro. August), Jeff Myrlie (Roger and Pat), Bro. Raymond Meyer (Sis. Twyla), Bro. Elmer Metzger (Sis. Mariann), Sis. Karoline Doorneweerd, Bro. August Knoblock (Sis. Florence), and little Cassie Metzger (Bro. Tom and Sis. Deb). We are thankful to report that all have returned to their homes to recover. Among other hospital patients to be remembered were Bro. Larry Peterson and Bro. Orvie Knobloch (Sis. Loretta). Bro. Orvie now has moved to live at Valley Manor in Rock Valley, IA following a stroke. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and all others as they endure the afflictions of the flesh.

Our Sunday School children have been working and practicing for the Christmas program to be held this coming weekend. Their innocence and joy is truly a blessing as we approach this blessed Christmas season.

IOWA, OAKVILLE

Melody Steiner

Debbie Wagenbach

Bros. Gary Endress (Bradford,

IL) and Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA) have recently shared our pulpit in Oakville and brought forth God's Word. We trust that God will bless them for their service.

Rory Ann Wagenbach is the new addition to Bro. Colin and Sis. Barb Wagenbach's family. She is welcomed home by Reilly, Alicen, Carly, Whitney, and Reid. Bro. Paul and Sis. Dorothy Wagenbach and Sis. Hilda Gerst are thankful for a new granddaughter. May God be near each of our couples who are raising children. What a challenge it is in the world today to raise these children in the fear and admonition of the Lord; but we are thankful that we need not fear, for God will always see us through if we but trust in Him.

IOWA, PULASKI

Ernestine Wuthrich

Bro. Russell Wuthrich spent several days in the hospital. We are thankful he is able to attend services again and making a satisfactory recovery. We so often take our health for granted and it can change so rapidly without warning.

Montie Wuthrich (Bro. Bill and Sis. Ernestine) and Amy Lawson recently recited their marriage vows. We wish them blessings on their marriage and home.

As we begin a new year, we hear of people making resolutions to change their lifestyle and become a better person. How long are the resolutions kept? A day? A week? A month? Or is the list made with good intentions and never any successful accomplishments made? Is it because we are trying to do it on our own instead of letting the Lord make a difference? Also, our "good works" for others are beneficial only if we let the Lord make the difference and not our desire to be noticed for our

accomplishments. Maybe our only resolution should be "Let the Lord make the difference!"

IOWA, WEST BEND

Mary Gerber - Lela Banwart

We rejoice and thank God as we welcome three dear souls into the fold of Jesus Christ. Our new members in the family of God are Bro. David and Sis. Diane Gerber (Bro. Noah and Sis. Emma Gerber and Mark and Laura Montag), and Bro. Shon Bruellman (Julie). His parents are Bro. Don and Sis. Verda Bruellman. We were grateful to have Elder Bro. Leo Moser (Lester, IA) with us on December 10 and 11 to assist Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr and Bro. Wayne Grimm as the loved ones brought forth their testimonies of faith and were baptized. Other visiting brothers who served in the ministry that weekend were Bros. Dale Moore (Elgin, IA), Alphi Moser (Morris, MN), Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS) and Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City, MO). We thank each one for his part in a most blessed weekend.

We are thankful that Miriam Frieden has again been able to assemble with us after a hospital stay. Eli Gerber (Pearl) remains hospitalized at this time. We pray God will grant healing so he may again be among us. Ben Skoglund, teenage son of Bro. Mark and Sis. Lori Skoglund, was seriously injured in a snowmobile accident. He remains hospitalized at this time. We trust God will be near each one who is ill or injured. May His grace be given to these dear ones' families, as they stand by their loved ones' side in the months and years that lie ahead.

He giveth more grace when the
burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when
the labors increase:

To added affliction He addeth His
mercy,
To multiplied trials, His
multiplied peace.
When we have exhausted our
store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere
the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our
hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only
begun.
His love has no limit, His grace
has no measure,
His power no boundary known
unto men:
For out of his infinite riches in
Jesus
He giveth and giveth and giveth
again.
Annie Johnson Flint

We wish these brothers and sisters much grace as they assume new duties in the church: Bro. John Fehr (usher), Bro. Lynn Mogler (parking attendant), Sis. Karen Banwart (World Relief), Bro. Art Mogler (Retirement Village board), and Sis. Eunice Fehr (Silver Lining correspondent). We thank those who have so willingly served in these capacities in the past.

At the dawn of a new year, how blessed it is to know that God holds the key to all that is unknown before us.

He holds the key of all unknown,
and I am glad;
If other hands should hold the key,
Or, if he trusted it to me, I might
be sad.
Gospel Hymns #399

JAPAN, TOKYO

Andrew and Jana Klaus

At the end of November, we had our annual fall fellowship meeting at a nature preserve in Yokohama, with both Tokyo and Shioda churches attending. Be-

sides hiking and having an outdoor picnic, Elder Bro. Akito Inoue spoke to us on the meaning of "journey", comparing Abraham's journeying with our Christian walk of faith.

We celebrated Christmas with the Sunday School program on December 25. Christmas is widely celebrated here in Japan, although more commercially than in a spiritual sense. However, it is associated with Christianity, and most Japanese feel at ease in visiting a church at Christmas time more than at any other time of the year. We were thankful for several first-time attenders to our church over Christmas.

Also, although many children attend Sunday School, many of their parents do not attend church regularly. Christmas is one time when at least the mothers do make the effort to come to church. We pray that the seed sown will grow and continue to be watered.

Several visitors were with us over Christmas/New Year's. They were Elder Bro. Akito's brother, Bro. Hisato Inoue, and his daughter, Sis. Rebekah (Bloomington, IL); and Sis. Jana's brother, Bro. David Kieser (Princeville, IL). It was a joy to have their added support.

We wish you all another blessed year walking in the steps of Jesus, abounding in the work of our Lord.

KANSAS, BERN

Donna Edelman

Diane Kaeb

"Tis not the manger but the cross that sets the spirit free." (Hymns of Zion #36). As we celebrate the birth of our Lord, we rejoice in His generous plan of salvation. We appreciate our Christmas program where our children sing praises of Christ's humble birth. We also pray for God's

guidance as we lovingly teach them.

Bro. Harvey and Sis. Marie Grimm celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on November 19. May God continue to dwell with them during their allotted years together. They appreciate all the kindness, love and wishes showered on them at this time.

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord."

Psalms 127:3

Bro. Duane and Sis. Holly Meyer are the happy parents of a daughter, Claire Loree, born November 21. She has one brother, Keithen, to help care for her. Bro. Leonard and Sis. Nancy Baumgartner and Bro. Leroy and Sis. Helen Meyer are the happy grandparents.

"Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing."

Proverbs 18:22

We rejoice with the following three couples as their engagements have been made known. They are Bro. Stan Wiegand to Sis. Marilyn Metzger (Sabetha, KS). Their parents are Bro. Doug and Sis. Betty Metzger (Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Elton and Sis. Loretta Wiegand (Eureka, IL).

Also engaged are Sis. Shirley Strahm (the late Bro. Ephraim and Sis. Lorene) to Bro. Darrell Rufener (Bro. Chester and Sis. Roma, Rittman, OH).

We also congratulate Bro. Alan Meyer (Bro. James and Sis. Jeanne) and Sis. Colleen Hartter (Bro. Roger and Sis. Ilene, Sabetha, KS). Believing God has led them together, may He continue to lead and guide them as they make their wedding preparations.

We appreciated having Elder Bro. Nathan Steffen (Elgin, IL) and the many visiting brethren

who were here for the Zion's Harp Study Committee meeting. We are so thankful to see and feel such a deep concern to maintain unity and enhance the Sunday services. Through inspiration of song, lost souls could be called to a true repentance and believers could be directed to a closer walk. May God bless Elder Bro. Nathan and our other visiting ministers, Bros. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS) and Jim Knoblock (Winthrop, MN) for their service in bringing us God's Holy Word.

We were overjoyed to hear that Dayra Meyer (Bro. James and Sis. Jeanne) is seeking the Lord in repentance. As our young people turn to the Lord, we praise God for answering our prayers and the prayers of those who have gone on before.

Our thoughts and prayers have been with Bro. Wayne Miller (Sis. Pearl) and Sis. Leola Lehman (Bro. Ed) who are both in the hospital at this time. Our prayers have also been with Susan Menold (Bro. Don and Sis. Pat), surgical; and Bro. Jeff and Sis. Kim Baumgartner as they continue to seek medical help for their baby daughter, Olivia. How comforting are the words of the Lord, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Hebrews 13:5).

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

Hymns of Zion #150

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, we trust that in each new day we can live in fulfillment of God's will, sharing with others the blessings of His grace.

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT

Joleen Sinn

Thanksgiving is past and

Christmas is upon us. On Sunday the 18th our Sunday School presented their Christmas program. It is such a blessing to hear each piece and song. We pray that our Heavenly Father will have a great harvest from these seeds planted in Sunday School.

We had two surgery patients this month. Chris Kraft (Roger) had her tonsils out and Sis. Ruth Bahr (Bro. Jim) had foot surgery. God has answered our prayers and they are both recovering.

As we read this, 1994 will be past and we will be beginning a new year. Let us pray that this new year will find us living for our Lord and Saviour each and every day.

Another year is dawning,
Dear Master let it be.
In working or in waiting, Another
year with Thee.
Another year of mercies, Of
faithfulness and grace.
Another year of gladness, In the
shining of Thy face.
Another year of progress, Another
year of praise,
Another year of proving Thy
presence all the days.
Another year of service, Of
witness for Thy love;
Another year of training For
holier work above.
Another year is dawning, Dear
Master, let it be,
On earth, or else in Heaven,
Another year for Thee.
Hymns of Zion #150

KANSAS, GRIDLEY

Doug and Judy Kraft

Our congregation has enjoyed our recent visitors from far and near. A special thanks to Elder Bro. Charles Sinn (Ft. Scott, KS) who was with us December 11 and Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO) who spent a Sunday with us on December 18. We so

much appreciate their efforts.

On December 18, our Sunday School children presented their Christmas program. It is always so inspiring to hear the young children tell of the Christmas story. The children enjoyed Christmas caroling after church, then returned to church for a meal with our congregation.

We all have many fond memories of our church here in Gridley. Our last Sunday of gathering here in our church will be December 25, 1994. We look forward to going together with the Lamont congregation.

KANSAS, KIOWA

Darcy Kisling

Janice Bahr

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

Hymns of Zion #150

May each one's prayer be to draw closer to the Lord, whether we are just beginning or ending this journey here on earth. May His will be ours that we can serve Him more faithfully in this new year!

Our Sunday School students have been practicing faithfully for their Christmas program. They also went carolling to share their joy in the celebration of the birth of our Saviour.

The Kansas churches met to work on World Relief projects at the MCC Center in Newton, KS. The fellowship is always wonderful.

We had several hospital patients this month. Wilmer Diel (Sis. Betsy) underwent heart tests this month. Sis. Jan Willson had surgery, and Sis. Rachel Kraft was hospitalized and is now recuperating at the Kiowa Manor.

Please remember these and others with ill health in your prayers.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

James 5:16

Note: The Silver Lining subscriptions are due at this time.

KANSAS, LAMONT

Jane Isch

Our Sunday School Christmas program was held December 11 when the children told the true story of Christmas in verse and song. May God bless the efforts of the students and teachers. Following the program, we enjoyed an afternoon of Christmas caroling and a supper together.

The following weekend we all went to Gridley at noon to assemble with them one last time in the Gridley church. We were thankful Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO) could be with us for this very special and sentimental time. New Year's Day of 1995 will be the first Sunday that Lamont and Gridley will be joining as one congregation. We look forward to it with great anticipation and thankfulness.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:"

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Thus united and in concord
Let us walk the path of life;
Hand in hand, O may love bind us
For each other's welfare strive.

Zion's Harp #237

KANSAS, SABETHA

**Mary Kay Wenger
Sharon Strahm**

We were blessed with visiting ministers, Elder Bros. Lawrence Luthi (Lamar, MO) and Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI). Their fellowship and the precious Word were appreciated.

Curtis and Valerie Keim welcomed a baby son, Nolan Marcus, into their family on November 24. He has a sister, Crystal, and two brothers, Derik and Austin, to love and help care for him. Bro. Harvey and Sis. Arleta Wenger are his grandparents.

We were happy to hear the engagement announcement of Sis. Marilyn Metzger (Bro. Douglas and Sis. Betty) to Bro. Stanley Wiegand (Bern, KS). His parents are Bro. Elton and Sis. Loretta Wiegand (Eureka, IL). We wish them God's grace and blessings as they plan for their March 12 wedding and future together.

On December 11 our Sunday School youth shared with us the Christmas story in song and verse. We appreciate their eagerness and efforts; and it just warmed our hearts to listen!

Our prayers have been with Sis. Faye Percy who has spent time in the hospital and with Sis. Ruby Grimm (Bro. Gerald) as she endures afflictions with her eyesight. May God be with each of them and provide strength and healing. I think of the hymn "The Lord Will Provide". It also is so appropriate as we embark on a new year.

Though troubles assail and
 dangers affright,
Though friends should all fail and
 foes all unite,
Yet one thing secures us whatever
 betide,
This promise assures us: "The
 Lord will provide!"

His call we obey as Abram of old,
Not knowing our way, but faith
 makes us bold;

Where'er He shall lead us, the
 way He doth guide;
He knows best who rules us; "The
 Lord will provide!"
Zion's Harp #86

KANSAS, WICHITA

Emma Miller

Our Sunday School has been involved with seasonal activities which included serving the December church fellowship dinner on the evening of December 11. Training children to participate in worthwhile endeavors is a responsibility we should not take lightly. We are instructed in Proverbs 22:6 to "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

The students are cooperating to present the Christmas story on Sunday, December 18. We are using the narration from Hymns of Zion, #35, "The Nativity" and adding appropriate carols---one of them being the beautiful "Christmas Carol", Zion's Harp #7. Often this hymn is used during morning service when the children are in Sunday School and many of the little ones are not familiar with it, yet they can sing it so beautifully. This is another opportunity to train our youth. The concluding hymn will be "The Son of God" and of course, we will need congregational help on this melody since it is one that is known mostly by the older generation.

In conclusion, I think of the hymn from the Zion's Harp that begins, "Flourishing youth, Thou our hope and fond expectation."

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON

Doug and Rebecca Germann

We'll ne'er forsake the Bible,
Our banner of defense;
In youth or age it is our staff
And leads us now and hence.

The sun whose light illuminates
The darkened vale below,
Redemption now to all the world
Through Jesus Christ does show.

Hymns of Zion #237

As we celebrate the birth of the Saviour, we reflect upon the many promises and prophecies that are contained within the Bible. What would we do without this precious book? Can we imagine a world without our Bible or even one day without the Word of Life? No wonder the Bible is still the number one best seller. Throughout history there have been people who have tried to do away with the Bible, but sooner or later they were the ones to be eradicated. Even through the dark ages when there remained only a glimmer of faith, the Bible was able to stand the test of time. Later, men like Zwingle and Froelich were inspired by this Word and the flames of faith spread around the world. The Word of God has stood the test of time, and the following poem sums up this struggle.

The Anvil of God's Word

Last eve I paused beside a
blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the
vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the
floor,
Old hammers worn with beating
years of time.

"How many anvils have you had,"
said I,
"To wear and batter all those
hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then with
twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers
out, you know."

"And so," I thought, "The anvil of
God's Word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat
upon,

Yet, though the noise of falling
blows was heard,
The Anvil is unchanged, the
hammers gone."

John Clifford

This past month we were blessed to have many guests come to Lexington. A special thanks to all who came to be with us.

On the weekend of December 4th, the Sunday School collected clothing and school supplies for the children and church in Arad, Romania. This is our second shipment of goods from the children here. May God bless these cheerful givers.

On December 11, Bro. Ken and Sis. Lyn Wuethrich and family and others from Indy and Francesville, IN came to share their time and talents. Thanks to Bro. Ken for sharing the Word with us. We enjoyed our monthly potluck and singing on that Saturday evening.

On December 17 we were again blessed when Bro. Glenn and Sis. Lou Riegenbach came from Smithville, OH to spend the weekend and share God's Word. On Saturday evening we went caroling and on Sunday our Sunday School presented the Christmas story to the church in song and verse. A special thanks to Bro. Glenn for sharing his time and talents.

The year has gone so quickly! We have a great deal to be thankful for and another year to look forward to. May we each strive to uphold the faith and precious Word.

MICHIGAN, ALTO
Jane Grawburg

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

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

Luke 2:10-11

As we celebrate the Christmas season, we need to remember Jesus, our most precious gift.

Sis. Helen Steffen is the second of our snowbirds to go south for the winter. She will be staying in Phoenix, AZ. We pray that God will be with her and that she will have a wonderful winter in the south.

Love and prayers are with Sis. Kate and Carl Wheeler, as Carl has moved to Sherbrooke Nursing Center. May God be with them in the days ahead.

Jason and Angela Sixberry have been blessed with a new son. Justin and Leanne are very happy to have their new little brother, Travis, at home with them. Sis. Virginia Schutte is their grandmother.

We've gone Christmas caroling again this year and some of our children made special cards in Sunday School for residents at a nursing home. At our Christmas program, our children shared so beautifully the story of God's gift, His only begotten Son, as a babe lying in a manger. In the quiet splendor of this blessed season, may our thoughts turn to God's love for us.

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

II Corinthians 9:15

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY
Marlene Mosher

Our Lord has seen fit to have some of our loved ones bear the cross of illness, but all are on the mend for which we praise our Lord for His healing mercies. They are: Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Sis. Marlene), Bro. Glen Rueg-

segger Sr. (Sis. Margaret), Sis. Kathryn Wackerle (Bro. Ronald), Bro. Elias Schlatter (Sis. Ella), Bro. Joe and Sis. Elizabeth Waibel, Bro. Winsor Mosher (Sis. Loretta) with bruised ribs, Sis. Loretta Mosher (Bro. Winsor) underwent carotid artery surgery but is home again and on the mend, and Sis. Vickie Ramseyer who had a hip replacement. We wish the Lord's blessings and healing powers to all of them.

We were blessed to have with us ministering Bro. Don Gudeman and Sis. Mary (LaCrosse, IN). Elder Bro. Bob Walder and Sis. Gloria (Congerville, IL) were with us for the reading of the Memorandum from our fall 1994 Brotherhood Conference.

Brothers of the Bay City congregation have put together a bean bagging operation for World Relief distribution in five and ten pound clear plastic bags.

God gave a baby boy to come live in the household of Bro. Mark, Sis. Natalie and little sister, Elyse Berg. The baby's name is Jacob Samuel. Grandparents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Marlene Ramseyer.

Life is a mixture of sunshine and rain,
Laughter and teardrops, pleasure and pain.
All days can't be bright, but it's certainly true,
There was never a cloud the sun didn't shine through.
Helen Steiner Rice

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

Holly Barton

Marlene Reinhard

This month has been a flurry of activity as everyone is preparing for the holiday season. The Sunday School children reminded us of the spiritual preparation we must each one partake in as they sang songs and recited special

scripts in our Christmas program.

We pray God will bestow renewed health and strength to our dear Bro. Joe Szilagyi (Sis. Martha) who was hospitalized this past month.

May God grant our dear friend, Madolyn Lehnert, who resides at Woodhaven, the grace and strength necessary for our daily trials and temptations as she has turned to the Lord in repentance. We praise God for beckoning souls to follow Him, whether they be young or old.

We thank Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) for traveling to Woodhaven to be used in God's service for the monthly Tuesday evening worship service. On February 7, the Beverly Hills congregation is scheduled to host services at Woodhaven at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

As the year of 1994 draws to a close and a new year lies before us, let us each one reflect back over the past twelve months and begin the new year from the spiritually growing seasons of our life and not from the valleys of discouragement.

A New Beginning

It doesn't take a new year to begin our lives anew.

God grants us new beginnings each day the whole year through.

So never be discouraged for there comes daily to all men,

The chance to make another start and begin all over again!

Helen Steiner Rice

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS

Delores Sauder

As a new year begins, we wonder what God has in store for His family. We need to live one day at a time and strive to walk closer to God.

On December 11 the Sunday School program was held. The children were excited to bring forth the story of Jesus' birth in verse and song. We thank the teachers for all their labors to make this possible, as each one received a blessing.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Maxine Sauder

Linda Schmidgall

As another year is dawning, may we be thankful for all the blessings God has provided in this past year, and in the new year may we strive to live according to His way and will.

We appreciate Elder Bro. Sam Huber (Sabetha, KS) for sharing God's Word with us. May God bless him for being a willing servant.

We rejoice with Sis. Judy and Sis. Joyce Wulf, as their mother, Dorothy (Moser) Durkee, is repenting and beginning her walk with the Lord. We wish her much grace in this most important step in life.

We want to express our sympathy and love to Emil and Arlene Greiner in the passing of their daughter, Lynette Eystad (Dan); and also to Sis. Lillie Luthi in the passing of her sister, Sis. Lena Hohulin (Fairbury, IL). May God grant them strength.

Our hospital patient this month is Bro. Henry Nohl (Sis. Anna). Our thoughts and prayers are with him and we ask God to be near and bless him.

The Christmas story was again told to us at our program on Sunday, December 18. What a joy it is to hear young voices honor the birth of our Saviour through verse and song.

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

Jan Messner

Joleen Messner
Greetings!!

Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace.
Another year of gladness
In the shining of thy face.
Another year of service,
Of witness for Thy love;
Another year of training
For holier work above.

Hymns of Zion #150

May we look to our Saviour for
His guidance in the coming year
and have the courage to do His
will.

As the Christmas season ends,
may we remember the message
our Sunday School children
brought to us through pieces and
singing of Jesus' birth.

We were privileged to have Bro.
Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL)
bring forth the Word to us in No-
vember. May God bless him, Sis.
Marlene and their family for mak-
ing the effort to spend time with
us.

Our patients recovering from
surgery are Sis. Rose Alice Howk
(Bro. Roy), Sis. Geraldine Mess-
ner (Bro. Harold) and Bro. Elmer
Schmidt (Sis. Hazel). May they
feel God's grace and strength dur-
ing their recovery.

Travis Redmann (Darrel and
Jane) has recently joined the
armed forces. His address is as
follows:

AB Travis L. Redmann
470213092

527 G. Avenue #4219
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-2837

Reminder: February is collec-
tion month for the Silver Lining
dues.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

Joan Fehr - Jamie Marti

On December 11, the Sunday
School children presented their
annual Christmas program.

Many thanks to the teachers and
students for all their efforts. It is
so refreshing to hear about the
true meaning of Christmas.

Many thanks to Bro. Galen
Rokey (Bern, KS) for ministering
to us on December 18. We always
appreciate your visits.

MISSOURI, LAMAR

Carolyn Banwart

Becky Marti

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

On November 19 and 20 we
were privileged to hear the testi-
monies and witness the baptism
of three souls: Ulista and
Jonathan Banwart (Bro. Alfred
and Sis. Carolyn) and Kristen
Braker (Bro. Bob and Sis. Janice
Stoller). We appreciated the ef-
forts of Elder Bros. Bob Walder
(Congerville, IL) and Charles
Sinn (Fort Scott, KS). Also shar-
ing the weekend with us were
Bros. Don Braker (Kansas City,
MO) and Dale Moore (Elgin, IA).

On December 10 and 11 we
heard the testimony and wit-
nessed the baptism of Dorothy He-
imer (Bro. Stan). Our visitors
included Elder Bros. Gene Marti
(Kansas City, MO), John Lehman
(Bern, KS), Wendall Gudeman
(Francesville, IN), and Bros. Andy
Moser (Valparaiso, IN), Kent He-
imer (Taylor, MO) and Ron He-
iniger (Bloomington, IL). May
God bless them for their labors of
love.

May we remember the true
meaning of Christmas in our
hearts during the holiday season.

And as another year ends, may we
be thankful for all the blessings
God has bestowed on us and pray
for His help and guidance as we
start a new year.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Betsy Schrenk

The St. Louis congregation has
been blessed in the past month by
visits from many people, includ-
ing the following ministering
brothers and their wives: Ron
Kipfer (Bluffton, IN), Gary En-
dress (Bradford, IL) and Tom
Stock (Cissna Park, IL). The
weather has been unusually mild
and that makes traveling so much
easier.

One Sunday we read St. Mark
9, where Christ was teaching
about "salt". May each of us know
and live the Word so that our lives
are an accurate reflection of
Christ's teachings. Then the peo-
ple around us can see and under-
stand what it means to be a
Christian. We will have salted
their lives.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Rusty and Amy Adrian

Greetings dear ones in the pre-
cious name of our Lord and Sav-
iour Jesus Christ.

On November 20, some of our
Bible Class, along with their par-
ents, had the privilege to travel to
Congerville, IL for ACYF. It was
truly a very blessed day as we
worshipped and praised our Lord
together.

We were thankful to have visit-
ing minister Bro. Art Baurer
(Princeville, IL) with us this past
month.

Our sympathy goes to Bro. Ben
Knapp and family for the passing
away of his dear wife, Sis. Elsie.

Also our thoughts and prayers
are with Vernon Huber (Sis. Judy)
and family for the passing away of

his mother, Sis. Ida Huber (Morton, IL). Realizing there are times in our lives when we wonder why certain situations come before us, may we look to Jesus Christ for the strength and comfort we need.

On Sunday, December 4, we were pleased to hear of the engagement of Bro. Brent Hoerr (Bro. Robert and Sis. Emma Dee) to Sis. Charlotte Mangold (Sis. Mary) of Washington, IL. May they feel God's nearness as they plan to become one in the Lord.

The afternoon of December 11 was a blessed time as many went caroling in Quincy sharing the true meaning of Christmas through song.

On December 18 our Sunday School brought to us the wonderful Christmas story of our precious Saviour's birth. To see and hear the wonderful story told by our youth through scripture reading and songs sang was truly an encouraging time. How thankful we can be for such a loving God who was willing to send His only Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Note: The Silver Lining dues for Taylor are due in February.

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

Now it is accomplished! I'm no
longer mine;
Lord, I will forever and always be
Thine,
For Thou has created and
purchased me too,
Baptized with Thy Spirit, Thou
makest me new.
Zion's Harp #209

On November 20 we welcomed Anna Mellnitz as a sister-in-faith after the fruits of her repentance were accomplished and she could give her testimony of faith and be

baptized. May the Holy Spirit continue to be her guide each day of her life. We thank Elder Bro. Andy and Sis. Maxine Virkler (Bay City, MI) for being with us and serving us with God's Word for the weekend.

Our prayers of sympathy have been with Virgil and Sherry Sturtze and Jim, as Sherry's mother was taken from this life into eternity. May God be their strength and comfort.

Our Sunday School children presented a program of song and verse on December 18. As they spoke of the birth of the Saviour, may each one of them hold these teachings in their hearts as they go from day to day. It is our prayer that in due time each child may turn their hearts to the Lord in repentance.

OHIO, AKRON
Joyce Gasser
Diane Jarret

Our hearts were warmed as we gathered to hear our Sunday School children sing of Jesus and the Christmas story. We were reminded to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas throughout every season of our life. May God bless the children, teachers, parents, and ministering brothers who contributed to the Christmas program.

Sis. Sara Henico replaced Sis. Susie Bako as Sunday School teacher. We thank Sis. Susie for her efforts in instructing these precious young children.

What joy as Bro. Wayne and Sis. Jane Klotzle welcomed baby daughter, Kaitlin Marie. Kaitlin has an older sister, Meredith. Grandparents are Bro. Irwin and Sis. Jane Klotzle (Rittman, OH) and Sis. Donna Metzger (Lester, IA).

January 22 marks the 40th anniversary of Bro. Richard and Sis.

Evelyn Baumgartner.

Prayers are with Bro. Irvin and Sis. Evelyn Walker, as they are both hospitalized.

In 1994, the Akron congregation had growth by three new members and nine births. In addition, there were three deaths and three marriages.

OHIO, COLUMBUS
Julie Grimm

As another month has passed, we once again have appreciated visiting ministering brothers. Bros. Dwight Stoller (Latty, OH), Bill Brake (Sardis, OH) and Elder Bro. Ken Sauder (Mansfield, OH) have shared God's Word with us.

December 11 was our annual Sunday School Christmas program. The theme compared God's prophecy of old, of the birth of our Saviour, to the prophecy of His return. It was special to hear our young people sing Silent Night in Hungarian, a language very precious to some of our local brethren. Following the program, we enjoyed carolling as a church.

The Sunday School once again adopted a local nearby family for Christmas. Certainly we are a fortunate people as we consider the many gifts God bestows upon us both spiritually and materially.

OHIO, JUNCTION
Sandra Manz

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

Hymns of Zion #150

While searching through our hymn books for songs written especially for New Year's Day, I found only this one. Verse four stood out because several medita-

tions at church recently have dealt with taking time to be holy. When W.D. Longstaff penned the hymn "Take Time to Be Holy", he obviously understood that holiness doesn't just come naturally, but is a virtue that requires grace and effort and quiet time. Now that the busyness of the holidays is in the past, maybe this would be the ideal time of the year to take time to be holy.

After spending several days in the hospital, Bro. Emmanuel Manz (Sis. Louise) is home and doing as well as can be expected. He receives comfort and strength from reading the Bible aloud in the mornings. May God be near him.

OHIO, LATTY

**Kathy Sinn
Lane Stoller**

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

Romans 14:19

As we begin the new year, may we keep this verse in mind as we think on our relationships with others. It may be our brother or our sister, our co-worker or even someone we come in contact with out on the street.

We are thankful the following brothers could visit our Latty congregation and speak the Gospel message: Bros. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH), Dan Stoller (Remington, IN) and Walt Steffen (Milford, IN). May they feel the Holy Spirit's guidance every time they are called to speak.

Our prayers for those hospitalized have been answered as all have returned home. May God continue to grant strength and healing to Bob Price (Aldean), Sis. Esther Stoller (Bro. Loren), Sis.

Clara Stoller and Reuben Stoller (Bro. Craig and Sis. Ruth).

On December 3, Duane Sinn (Elder Bro. Ray and Sis. Ann) and Carrie McClure (Earl and Allison McClure, Payne, OH) were joined as man and wife.

December 10 was the wedding day of Amy Grant (Bro. Phil and Sis. Gloria) and Christopher Hopkins (Kirk and Laurel Hopkins, Antwerp, OH).

We pray that God will bless these two young couples as they begin their life together.

On December 9, Bro. Roy Stoller (Sis. Beulah) was laid to rest. We will continue to remember Sis. Beulah and her family in our prayers.

Our annual Sunday School Christmas program was held on December 14. It was truly a blessing to sit and hear children of all ages sing of the birth of Jesus. We thank the teachers and song leaders for their labors of love.

OHIO, MANSFIELD

Cari Mann

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:15

As Bro. John Grimm (Columbus, OH) preached the Word to us on Thanksgiving Day, he reminded each of us that we should count our blessings every day and not just on one day of the year. We are thankful that he and Sis. Julie could be with us.

On December 4 we had our annual meeting. The following brothers and sisters were elected to serve in the coming years: Bro. Tim Gerber - trustee; Sis. Joyce Boliantz - kitchen; and Sis. Becky Moser - World Relief. We offer a prayerful thanks to Bro. Clair Keever, Sis. Barb Tucker and Sis.

Sue Sauder whose terms on these respective committees have come to an end. Let us each remember to support those in our prayers who do serve us in one way or another.

Bro. Joel and Sis. Sue Beer became new grandparents twice the weekend of December 10 and 11. Jonathan David was born to Bro. Ed and Sis. Judy Dawson on Saturday, December 10. Big sister, Margie, is glad for a new playmate.

Then on Sunday, December 11, Johanna Leigh was born to Bro. Chuck and Sis. Tammy Beer. Big brother, Wesley, is sure proud of his little sister. Also rejoicing as new grandparents are Tammy's parents, Bro. Ken and Sis. Jane Hartzler (Smithville, OH).

"I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High."

Psalms 9:2

On Sunday, December 11, our Sunday School students brought this verse to life as each class gave praise for the birth of the Son in their own special way. We are thankful for our teachers who with patience continue to guide the children.

Our hospital patients this month have been Ben Oesch and Sis. Susan Foss (Rick). They are both on the road to recovery. We are grateful that they may assemble with us once again.

At this time of year when everyone around us seems to be focused on the "gifts" they will receive, let each of us remember the two gifts that should be our focus. The first and very most important is the gift of the Son, which ultimately leads to the gift of salvation. There is no more priceless gift on this earth. The second is the gift of today. As this little poem reminds us, let us

treasure the day for what it is.

Yesterday is history.
Tomorrow is a mystery.
Today is a gift "heaven-sent"
Perhaps that's why it's called "the present."

May each of you and all of your loved ones feel God's richest blessings in the coming year.

OHIO, RITTMAN

Linda Ramsier
Marsha Rufener

Know ye the Son, the sacred Son
of God?
The Hero great is born in
Bethlehem!
He came to us from His exalted
throne,
As prince of peace, As God's
eternal son!
Know ye this Son? Yea, He is
known,
The dauntless Hero, God's own
Son!

We appreciated those who stand and bring forth the good Word to us. We want to thank Bro. Bill Brake (Sardis, OH) for his labors.

Tony and Julie Zollinger welcomed a son into their family. Mathias James was born November 27. Sister, Elaine, now has a playmate. Grandparents are Bro. Rudy and Sis. Brenda Zollinger and Mr. and Mrs. Michael Wilkinson.

Tyler and Travis Mills have another brother to play with, Trenton Edward. Trenton was born to Dean and Heidi Mills on December 8. Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Mills and Bro. Edward and Sis. Marilyn Trent.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have been hospitalized: James Gasser (Rebecca), Bro. Fred Marty (Sis. Erma), Sis.

Wilma Ramsier (Bro. Kenneth), Glenn Winkler (MaryJane), Bro. Charles Zollinger and Joe Zollinger. May the Lord continue to strengthen each one.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Lawrence Stoller (Sis. Mary) on the death of his brother, Bro. Roy Stoller, of Latty, OH.

The engagement of Bro. Darrell Rufener (Bro. Chester and Sis. Roma) and Sis. Shirley Strahm (Bern, KS) was announced December 11. Our prayers are surely with them as they plan for their life together.

Know ye the Lord, the gracious
friend of Man,
Who clothed Himself in pilgrim's
garment plain?
He came to us the prince of
David's house!
An angel's message did the world
arouse!
The Son has come! From
heaven's dome
Resounds the angel's joyous song!
Hymns of Zion #249

OHIO, SARDIS

Renee Miller

We measure our time that we spend on the earth in seconds, minutes, hours, days, years, decades, centuries and so on. As time marches, do we draw strength from the hope we gain by having faith in God? Sometimes when we hope for something that doesn't happen, it brings tribulation. Words inspired by God teach us to rejoice in this because tribulations grant us patience which offers experience which also supplies hope (Romans 5:1-4). Thank you, God, for the joys and sorrows of 1994 and grant us patience and experience in 1995.

When those that are away from us come home, and when those that are usually with us go away, it affects our emotions. This is

especially true at a special time like Christmas. There were several significant changes in our Sardis congregation that will make 1994 a time that we look back on as a year of new steps. Some of these steps that were not previously reported are as follows: Ben Zollinger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry) is serving our "land of the free and home of the brave" in Haiti. Sis. Laura Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Mim) has been employed in the Rittman/Smithville area as a school teacher since the beginning of the 1994 school year. Sis. Bridget Zollinger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry) has recently accepted a houseparent position at Gateway Woods. We also remember our college students who have just begun or who are nearing completion. Whether each of these young men and women came home or were away for the holidays, we pray that each of them have gained a special measure of hope through their experiences.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE

Margaret Blough
Edith Miller

On December 11 we were privileged to listen to our Sunday School children present their annual Christmas program. It was truly a blessing to listen to the various ages unfold the Christmas story through song. So impressive it was to hear the innocent little voices ring out "Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus! There is room in my heart for Thee. Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus, come! There is room in my heart for Thee." (Gospel Hymns #98). We surely hope and pray that these same words can come from their lips when they reach the age of accountability.

We are thankful that one soul

has found room in her heart for the Lord Jesus. Barbara Carmany has expressed this desire, and we wish her much grace as she begins this new walk of life.

On the weekend of November 26 and 27 we had the blessed opportunity to hear the testimonies and welcome into our fellowship Adam Uhler (Dale and Sis. Marilyn) and Andy and Elizabeth Fetzer. Our prayer for our new brothers and sister is that God will richly bless them and continue to guide them throughout life's journey. Our thanks to Elder Bros. Henry Dotterer (Rittman, OH) and Eugene Pamer (Akron, OH) for assisting Elder Bro. Andy Stoller in this work. Also, we thank Bro. Ron Steiner (Rittman, OH) for ministering to us that same day.

Also ministering to us at Smithville during the past month was Bro. Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL). We wish to thank him and his family for being with us for our Thanksgiving Day service.

Our only hospital patient this month was Bro. Jeff Gasser (Sis. Deb). May God bless him with returning health.

OHIO, TOLEDO

Eddie Fetter

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

II Timothy 4:2

We are thankful that our ministers, whether they are from our home congregations or are visiting, keep this charge that has been given to them. Our recent visiting ministers were Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) and Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH).

Sis. Clara Beard was a recent hospital patient. How grateful we

can be that God is the Great Physician, who cares for both body and soul through life's difficulties as well as in times of happiness.

Congratulations and best wishes are extended to two college graduates. Sis. Rita Beer has finished a course in x-ray technology and has returned home to Milford, IN. Chad Sancraint (Dave and Sis. Connie) has earned a degree in actuary science from Miami University (Oxford, OH). May God bless and lead them as they enter their professions.

OREGON, PORTLAND

Lori Martin

Mary Berg

We enjoyed the fellowship of a church potluck on Sunday, December 4. After dinner, Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) read to us the Memorandum. He was assisted by Bro. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR). We appreciate the efforts of Bro. Wayne and all of our dear Elders and their labors of love.

Friday evening, December 16, the Sunday School caroled for several of our older members. They then practiced for their Christmas program and had pizza together.

Sunday, December 18, after a potluck dinner at the church, the Sunday School presented to us the story of the birth of Christ in word and song. What a joy to see their performance after weeks of practicing. As parents, we just pray these memories will stay with them and the seeds planted in these early years will grow to maturity and bring forth fruit. We thank our Sunday School teachers for their efforts and extra time spent with our children.

We thank ministering Bro. Art Metz (Silverton, OR) for spending the day with us and laboring on our behalf. "I am come a light into

the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." (St. John 12:46). As Christ came as the light in a dark and sinful world, Bro. Art reminded us of our duty as God's children to reflect the light of Christ to those around us.

Bro. Paul and Sis. Ann Rumbold have been unable to worship with us for a number of weeks. We miss them so much and pray that God will provide for their needs and comfort them during this difficult time.

OREGON, SILVERTON

Peggy Schulz

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

As 1995 dawns, may our hearts be renewed in zeal to serve our Master and Lord.

We were blessed this past month to have Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) and his wife, Sis. Kathy, with us. Bro. Wayne and Bro. Clarence shared the Memorandum with us. How thankful we are that the Lord provides the flocks with faithful Shepherds who watch for our souls and sound the warning in these evil days. May the Lord bless Bro. Wayne for coming to serve us once again.

Our hearts were warmed by the message imparted to us by the Sunday School, as they shared the Christmas story in our recent program. It is a story that never grows old.

Bro. Lewis Kuenzi spent a few days in the hospital but we are happy to report he is now back home. Darwin Sinn (Bro. Tom and Sis. Edith) suffered an injury to his eye from a stray BB. We pray his eyesight may be restored.

**PENNSYLVANIA,
PHILADELPHIA**
Franz Soni

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

Philippians 4:6

We rejoice with Bro. John and Sis. Kay Lanz over the birth of their daughter, Brittany Kay, who was born on November 29. Welcoming Brittany Kay at home are brothers, Tyler, Travis and Christopher, and sisters, Emily, Breanna and Abigail. Grandparents are Bro. Edwin and Sis. Marilyn Lanz and Bro. Wilbur and Sis. Marjorie Schneider (Rockville, CT).

We thank our Sunday School teachers and their students for their Christmas program on December 11. It is refreshing to know the true meaning why we celebrate the birth of our Lord.

After a potluck dinner at Bro. John and Sis. Kay Lanz's house, a group traveled to an area nursing home and fellowshiped and sang Christmas hymns to the residents.

We welcome all who are in the area to come worship with us. Services are Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and at 12:30 p.m. and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. If you need more information, please call Elder Bro. Edward Aeschleman at (302) 478-7846.

TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE
Gwen Leuthold

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will

return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

Luke 12:35-37

As we begin the new year, may we all take a few minutes to stop and reflect on how we may better serve the Christ whose birth we just celebrated so that we may be ready to meet Him when He returns again.

For our December monthly service, Elder Bro. Jesse Beer and his wife, Sis. Shirley, traveled from Milford, IN to fellowship and worship with us. We thank them for their efforts in traveling and wish them God's blessings.

We were saddened to learn that Trista Banwart and Dave Miller have moved back to the Ft. Scott, KS area. We will greatly miss both of them and thank them for all they did in their time spent with us. May God bless and guide both of you.

As far as our church remodeling project, we are awaiting approval for an addition to the kitchen area. We hope that permission will be granted and construction can begin soon. We ask for your prayers in our behalf.

Especially with the new year beginning, we wish to extend a hearty welcome to come visit us here in the south. Our services are usually scheduled the first Sunday of the month. In January, Lord willing, we will hold them January 8 due to the holiday on the 1st. February 5 and March 5 are also upcoming service weekends. Call and let us know if you are in the area on these or other scheduled service weekends.

Also, please call if you feel the Lord leading you to relocate. We will be glad to help in any way. Bro. Don and Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928, Bro. Don and Sis. Enid Miller (615) 384-5948, Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 352-3940

TEXAS, DALLAS
Christine Kaiser
Kimberly Kaiser

As a new year begins, we look ahead to unknown challenges and changes. Thankfully, Jesus Christ is there to be our constant source of support and hope. The Dallas area is grateful, too, for the wonderful support we receive from other Apostolic Christian churches and our visitors. Our recent ministers and their wives were Bro. Dale and Sis. Tina Frank (Oakville, IA) and Bro. Wes and Sis. Esther Moser (Lester, IA). May God bless His messages and the kindness displayed by our brethren each Sunday.

We extend a special invitation to anyone traveling in the Dallas area to come worship with us. Our services are held on the first and third Sundays of each month at the Holiday Inn in DeSoto, TX. Service times are 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Please contact Bro. Howard and Sis. Dolores Rapp (214) 867-4074, Bro. Bill Zeltwanger (409) 249-5102, or Bro. Greg and Sis. Christine Kaiser (214) 335-0105 for additional information.

TEXAS, ZAPATA
Viola Perdelwitz

Our winter family is beginning to return. We look forward to the fellowship and thank each and every one for their effort. We welcome Bro. Ben and Sis. Wilma Blunier from Champaign, IL. Bro. Ben and Sis. Wilma have spent a few months in Zapata

Silver Threads

FACTS ABOUT ANGELS

Angels are servants of God and their purpose is to do His will. Here are just some of the many things they do:

ANGELS ANNOUNCE

"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." *Luke 1:26-33*

ANGELS PRAISE GOD

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,"
Luke 2:13

ANGELS GIVE WARNINGS

"And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."

Matthew 2:13

ANGELS ADVISE

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:18-21

ANGELS EAT

"Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full." *Psalms 78:25*

ANGELS FIGHT OUR BATTLES

"And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite:" *Exodus 33:2*

other years. They now have purchased some property in Zapata so we are hoping they spend more winter months with us. We appreciate Bro. Ben helping with the song leading. Bro. Emil and Sis. Grace Strahm have been part of

our winter family for many years. Because of health problems, they sold their property in Zapata, but we still hope they find time to visit here. Bro. Emil and Sis. Grace will be missed. They served many years on different committees.

Bro. Emil helped build many homes for our winter families.

The town of Zapata is growing and we have more business places. We welcome anyone traveling near here to stop and worship with us.

"LOVING AS WE ARE LOVED"

Sermon By Elder Bro. Lester Hartter of Bern, KS

I John 3

We are really thankful for the Word of God. We are thankful for the Holy Bible which speaks directly unto the heart. It is the Word of God that teaches us the way of life. It teaches God's will for us and for one another. There is not another book in the whole wide world that compares with the Holy Bible. It is the Book that has been with man for centuries and the Bible teaches us that it will be with us even to the end.

We read in one place, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1). We believe that when we read the Bible, God is speaking to us.

I think we all realize and acknowledge the fact that God has created us. He made us, even from the dust of the earth. He placed us here upon this earth for a definite purpose. He did not place us here and then leave us here without us knowing His will. God presents His will unto us through His Word.

Even though this chapter was penned by John, one of the apostles, yet the Word teaches that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. It is good for doctrine, for correction, for righteousness and it is good for us if we will apply it to our lives. (See II Timothy 3:16).

But the Word also teaches us that we should not only be hearers but much more doers of the Word. (See James 1:22). We want to be a people that does what God tells us to do. In order to do what God wants us to do, I think we all realize we have to put down our own self will oftentimes. By nature, we are not going to do the will of God. It just isn't natural because man is born a sinner.

Sin entered into the world back there in the Garden of Eden. It is the power of darkness, for it was Satan that brought sin into the world and caused man to sin. We don't have to be victims or circumstances just because

we were born in this world in sin. It doesn't mean that we have to remain a sinner.

God, in all His love, mercy and compassion, even back there in the Garden of Eden, after man sinned drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden. But not really to punish them, as I used to think. He didn't drive them out to punish them. He drove them out, the Word teaches us as we can read it in the book of Genesis, to keep the way of the Tree of Life.

As I understand the Bible, if they would have remained in the Garden of Eden and partaken of the fruit of the Tree of Life, they would have lived forever in a fallen state and a separated state from God. But God loved man too much, whom He created in His own image and in His own likeness; He loved us too much to let us merely be victims of circumstances, so to speak.

So He drove them out of the Garden of Eden to keep the way of the Tree of Life. Then already, He had in mind to send the Saviour into the world...Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in due time and which He did.

Jesus then took His place upon the cross. We read in the New Testament of the Bible over and over of how He suffered and died and shed His blood for the remission of sins for all the world...for all those who will believe on Him and obey Him.

It is then through this process of repentance, conversion and faith in Jesus Christ that you and I today can again have that close and intimate relationship with God that Adam and Eve had before their downfall. There was a close relationship between man and God before sin entered into the world. Sin, the Bible tells us, is a mental wall of partition between man and God. It separates us from God.

But God has made it possible that this partition between man and God---this separation---can be removed. We can again have a close and intimate

relationship with God whereby we call upon God as our Heavenly Father, and He looks upon us as His children.

As we were reminded in this chapter over and over, He speaks here in the seventh verse, "Little children...". God speaks of us as His little children. "...let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." (I John 3:7).

I hope we feel fortunate, dearly beloved, that we live in a day and time wherein we have a Saviour and a Redeemer that through Him we can find our salvation and redemption. We need not go through life here upon this earth without hope of eternal life.

I believe the Bible and I believe what it tells us. I have this conviction that what God says will happen, will happen!

The Bible teaches us in no uncertain words and terms. Even as we were reminded in this chapter, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (I John 3:8).

I believe the Bible when it tells me that if we remain in sin and separated from God, that we have no hope of eternal life. We have something else to look forward to. We don't even like to mention or talk about it, which seems most terrible---eternal regret and remorse. I cannot think of anything that could be worse, even in this life. It seems to me that it would be a terrible thing to go through life, day after day, with the thought of eternal destruction and damnation.

We know that we won't be here long. Even if we attain a ripe old age, it is soon over with. Those of us on the older side, I think we will all have to admit to say that we wonder where time goes. How fast time flies!

I heard of a person only recently who was seventy years old. She said, "I

Continued next page...

Sermon continued...

can't be that old. I haven't lived that long!" She couldn't believe that she was seventy years old already. She said, "I haven't lived that long." It seemed that to her.

So it is with us. It is such a short time that we are here upon this earth. While we are here, doesn't it make good sense for every one of us to do what God really wants us to do?

He began, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us..." (I John 3:1). If we talk about love, there is no greater love than when a man will lay down his life for his friends, we read. (See John 15:13).

God has proven His love for us by sending His Son into the world.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:1,2).

We know not what lies ahead. We don't know what heaven is going to be like. But we can rest assured that it will be something wonderful. It will be something much better than we have ever experienced in this world and time. The best is yet to come for people, who through Jesus Christ have prepared themselves for eternal life.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be..." (I John 3:2). We don't know what it shall be like. But we can rest assured that what God says is true. We have to take Him at His word.

"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (I John 3:3). It would be nice if we all could have this hope within our hearts. He says here that every man that has this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. It would seem, isn't it true, that if we of the household of faith have the hope of eternal life, we ought to be a people who truly strive for righteousness and do the things that God wants us to do? Be a good people...people who love each other and

one another! We are told over and over in this chapter that we should love one another. That is what this whole chapter is about.

I would think that if we have the hope of eternal life, that this in itself would prompt us to be willing to take upon ourselves the cross and follow Jesus. No matter what might come into our life, let us be a people to strive for purity, and to be true and faithful.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (I John 3:4). It's a very simple definition for sin. Sin is the transgression of the law. Sin is disobedience unto God's teachings and commandments.

What does God's Word teach us? And what does it command? Primarily, the first thing it teaches us that people should repent. People should become converted, and through Jesus Christ find forgiveness of sin. In the process of repentance and conversion, this sinful nature should become dead. Sin has to die and it is buried then through baptism.

In fact, the Apostle Paul in the sixth chapter of Romans speaks about baptism and very clearly explains what baptism is. It is the burying of the old sinful Adamic nature in the name of Christ. If it is to be buried, it must be dead. We don't bury anything alive. As long as this sinful nature is alive, so to speak, we can't bury it. When it is dead, we want to bury it and dispose of the old man.

Paul writes there in the sixth chapter of Romans that we then arise to a newness of life...a new creature in Christ. (See Romans 6:4). As we are then a new creature in Christ, a people of God, it behooves us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, even as a tree. We read where John the Baptist wrote, "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." (Luke 6:43).

God tells us that we should become new creatures in Christ, that we should become a people alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and we should then bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. That means that we should be

a people to live a righteous life. This isn't too difficult to do, if we have God's help and we put our trust in the Lord; if we do our part to pray and ask God for His help every day.

It is true, that we still have the facilities to sin and transgress the law of God. This constitutes sin. I know there are a lot of people in this world who don't feel that way. They think once saved, always saved. But the Bible doesn't tell me that.

It's very clear in this chapter. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not..." If we become a people of God through Jesus Christ, He says then, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." (I John 3:5,6).

There is a lot of deception in the world today. The Bible tells us clear and plain and warns us that we should not be deceived. "Let no man deceive you." (See I Cor. 6:9; I Cor. 15:33; Gal. 6:7). He tells us that over and over again. So let us not be deceived.

It says here, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin..." (I John 3:7-9).

Now this need not scare anyone. We of the household of faith must do our part. If we have made up our mind that we are going to serve the Lord, if we do our part, and if we are a humble people (and we were richly reminded also how important prayer is), the Lord promises us that if we ask, it shall be given. (See Matthew 7:7).

Now, if we are a humble people, put our trust in the Lord and pray unto Him every day for His help, His strength, and His guidance, He will not forsake us. But, we have to be a people who submit to the will of God.

It speaks about Satan, the devil, in this chapter that he sinneth from the

beginning. (See I John 3:8). He is going to try to discourage people. He tries to tell us different from what God tells us. But anything he tells us, for the most part, is a lie. It is deception. We want to be aware of that.

I might remind you again today about Judas Iscariot, who was a disciple of Jesus Christ. Do you know what he did? He betrayed his Lord and Master for thirty pieces of silver. He was a disciple of Christ...he was one of the twelve in the beginning. What was the result and the outcome? When he finally saw what he did, and realized the seriousness of it all, he took the money back and threw it down at the feet of the scribes and Pharisees and said, "I've betrayed innocent blood." (See Matthew 27:3-5).

Satan, even though it came through the scribes and Pharisees in that day and time, really, Satan told him, "See thou to it." He wouldn't help him any longer. Satan prompted him to do what he did, but when he realized what he did, and when it really disturbed him, then, "Satan, you take care of it." So that is the way Satan works with man. He gets man into trouble, and then man suffers the consequences. How different from God!

When we acknowledged that we were sinners and repented, we had done things that were wrong...things that we should not have done...things displeasing in the sight of the Lord, but when we cried to Him for help, how loving God was and came to our assistance. He granted unto us peace of heart and mind when we did what the Bible tells us to do...to repent and become converted and be reconciled unto God.

God is the same yesterday, today and for ever. (See Hebrews 13:8). God is not a respecter of persons. (See Acts 10:34). This is for everyone if we will just yield to the will of God.

If we ever come short of eternal life, who are we going to blame? I think every one of us would be as that certain king who prepared a marriage feast for his son. They sent invitations out to come to the wedding feast. We read that a man came in without a wedding

garment. When the king saw this, he asked him how he got in without a wedding garment. We read that the man was speechless and couldn't find one excuse. He knew better, but he was improperly dressed for the occasion. He was speechless. The order was given to bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness. (See Matthew 22:2-13).

This was a parable, so to speak. I feel that is the way it will be with us on that great and notable day, if we fail to prepare ourself for eternal life. We won't have one excuse, I don't think. We all know what God wants us to do.

For the most part, most of us have had believing parents. We were brought up in a Christian environment. We were sent to Sunday School and even as young children, perhaps, God was speaking to us through our Sunday School teachers, telling us what God wants of us as people here upon earth.

Are we going to disregard all this? If we do, the Word teaches us that we will forfeit or give up those things that God has in store for those that love Him...things that eye hath never seen, nor ear hath heard, nor has even entered into the heart of man. (See I Cor. 2:9).

Let's think about it, young and old, whoever we are. God speaks to every one of us because He loves every one of us.

It speaks about love in this chapter. "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." (I John 3:11). Now the Word teaches us that if we love those that love us, what thank have we? For sinners do even the same. The Bible goes so far as to tell us, we should even love our enemies. We should pray for those who despitefully use us. (See Luke 6:27, 28,32). This is part of the fruits of the Spirit that God's people are to produce and show forth.

If we are a good tree, so to speak, we'll produce good fruit. If we are a corrupt tree, so to speak, maybe we won't produce the good fruit, but it will be corrupt fruit. Let's be of those that

can bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother, And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." (I John 3:12). It's been quite some time since I read about Cain and Abel, but as I recall, for these two brothers there came a time when they wanted to bring a sacrifice unto God. We read that Abel was a keeper of the flock, but Cain was a tiller of the soil. In the process of time, they each brought an offering unto the Lord. Abel brought a lamb...a perfect lamb, an unblemished lamb...and sacrificed it unto God. This pleased the Lord, and I think it pleased God because this was a symbol of Christ's coming into the world. We read that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin. (See Hebrews 9:22).

Christ is called the Good Shepherd, and He is also called the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. He came as the Unblemished Lamb and gave His live upon the cross for our sins.

Abel brought forth a lamb and sacrificed it unto God. This was pleasing to God because it was a symbol of Christ who was to come centuries later, and die for the sins of the world.

But we read that Cain brought the fruit of the land. This was not pleasing in the sight of the Lord. It didn't satisfy God. There was no blood shed in Cain's offering. I'm convinced that Cain knew better. We read that God did not have respect for Cain's offering. He did respect Abel's offering when he sacrificed a lamb and there was blood shed.

We read then that Cain became angry because God was not satisfied with his offering. He became angry with his brother and when they were out in the field together, he slew his brother. (See Genesis 4:2-8).

He tells us here, "This is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

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Hungary/Romania 1994 by Elder Brother Ben Maibach

Although over the years I have made many trips overseas, I have somewhat lost count, but I believe 15 to Asia, including Japan and India, and 5 or 6 to Europe - it still creates a lot of apprehension, excitement and anxiety. Also recognizing that quite possibly this could be my last visit to Europe, it put somewhat of a different overview on the entire situation.

Surprisingly enough, it was recommended that we get cholera shots before we venture into Romania, as there was somewhat of an outbreak of that terrifying disease in some quarters. We appreciate the tremendous amount of encouragement we received, especially from many elder brothers in Europe who are deeply grateful for the outpouring of love that our brotherhood has showered upon them.

Our party (throughout this report for brevity sake, we will not use brother or sister names) consisting of Wendell and Marcela Gudeman, Andy Hunyady and his brother, George, and his daughter, Geraldine, and myself all

met at J.F.K. Airport in New York City to fly nonstop on Malev (Hungarian Airlines) to Budapest on November 3. Some additional stress was created on understanding that we were flying the new Boeing 767, 193 persons, 2 engine jet that had just recently been certified for overseas operation. It was gratifying and strengthening to know that our trip had been supported by the entire Elder body at our annual Conference at Fairbury, IL in August, 1994 when Gene Marti, our Secretary/Treasurer of the Mission Fund, shared with the brethren the invitation from the Hungarian church for us to be represented, especially at the dedication of the Szegec Church and old folks home November 13.

We are a blessed people to be able to be part of a sharing, caring fellowship and it would be extremely difficult to undertake such a journey without the power of God's Holy Church. We were grateful while waiting for our flight to meet Emanuel and Verona Schneider from Rockville who had come to meet

us with a gift of a quilt the sisters from their church had made for the Hungarian Sister, Edith Funk, who had stayed with them for some time recently and had returned to her home in Szegec.

The weather was clear and our plane left promptly at 5:45 p.m. The scheduled flight time was 9 hours; we were grateful the equipment was new. The Hungarian crew and attendants were all bilingual and the plane was filled to capacity. Modern technology provides that on a continuing basis a map showing our location in route updating periodically with outside temperatures, altitude, air speed, the distance we had traveled and the time and distance yet before us, which was presented in several different languages for the benefit of the passengers. We were surprised that there were many Asians on board and upon inquiry, it was explained that especially from Korea and Japan, many companies have operations in Hungary and they were in route to visit their families located there. World condi-

Sermon continued...

(I John 3:11,12). Cain was not right with God. God was not pleased with him. God would have been just as pleased with Cain as He was with Abel if Cain would have done what he knew was right. I'm sure he knew what was right.

It's the same with us today. We know what we ought to do. We know what we must do. If we don't, God is going to hold us responsible.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." (I John 3:18-21).

The only way we can be of those for our heart to condemn us not is through Jesus Christ. If we can become God's

people and find forgiveness of sin through Him, then our hearts condemn us not.

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." (I John 3:22). We are exhorted here to keep His commandments and to do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

I want to say once more this morning, to carry this out and to accomplish this, we have to go up against our own personal natures. Our own personal nature is going to get us into trouble if we listen to it. We have to put down our own personal nature and let God rule our hearts. Do as God tells us to do.

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment." (I John 3:23). I think we could read in one of these epistles of John that if we say we love the Lord and do not keep His com-

mandments, this then makes us a liar, and the truth is not in us. (See I John 2:4). So it is quite clear, dearly beloved, that those who really love the Lord and believe in Him are the people that serve Him and do His good and Holy will and keep His commandments.

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." (I John 3:24). May it be that God's Holy Spirit can dwell in your heart and mine. Before the Holy Spirit can enter in, the heart has to be cleansed and pure.

There is not room for Satan and the Holy Spirit in the heart of man. This is why it is so important and so vital to have purified and cleansed hearts wherein the Holy Spirit can dwell there. Then It can lead us and guide us. If we will listen to It, It will tell us what we should do and what we should not do. Let's listen to the truth. Let's not listen to a deceiver.

tions have certainly changed. The food was excellent. It was served on china with silverware and we were pleasantly surprised at the whole experience. There is a six hour differential in time and although the seats were comfortable, those of us that are larger would have appreciated just a little more room. We had an opportunity to talk to the Hungarian captain who stated that the aircraft was the finest that he had ever piloted.

Our arrival time was only three minutes different than that which was forecast at the beginning of our flight. The Budapest Airport is comfortable, but older. It did not have the benefit of the elevated gates to the main building so we embarked on stairs and were carried by buses to the terminal. All of our baggage safely arrived and immigration and customs were extremely different than my first visit to Hungary in 1980 when we spent nearly one half a day at the Austrian/Hungarian border with a long line up of automobiles and trucks. We were humbled and pleased to have so many of our Hungarian brethren waiting to meet us at the airport and it was especially nice to have Tom Bako and his cousin, Ginger, from Akron who are now in Hungary as well as our beloved Brenda Orcsik from our Detroit congregation who is also living in Europe at this time.

We were excited but tired, and they transported us to the new Budapest church where there are several apartments - very comfortable where we could unpack and rest for a little while before they shared with us in the church dining room a delicious Hungarian dinner. Their soups are old fashioned homemade and the several course dinner was followed by wonderful Hungarian pastries. We observed throughout our visit that the popular American soft drinks like Pepsi and Coca Cola are readily available as well as Hungarian fruit drinks that are processed from peaches, apricots, apples, cherries, etc. that are outstanding and are exported to other parts of the world, particularly Saudi Arabia.

We had a tour of the Budapest church - the largest in Hungary with

362 members and 180 children. In 1988 the building was just under construction. It is very comfortable and just across the road from the old church that they were able to sell and to use the proceeds to help in the construction of the church at Szeged.

It is somewhat different from our assembly. There are four elder brothers that serve there; Janos Pap is recognized as the lead elder throughout Hungary, which is required by their government, replacing Sandor Albert who passed away in the last year. These elders serve several other congregations where there is no elder as well as assisting in the work in the Ukraine. That evening we had a delicious supper in the home of the Pap's and after a nice visit, returned to the church for a well needed rest.

Saturday, the 5th, the brethren took us on a site-seeing tour of a castle about 40 kilometers from Budapest on the Danube River, the longest in Europe, and as most of those castles had been built throughout Europe on one of the highest points around to help ward off attack and to provide observation for the surrounding country. The Danube that flows through several European countries is rather shallow; they said the deepest part is about 10 meters or approximately 30 feet and is badly polluted. During the Soviet domination, priorities were stressed on manufacturing and productivity; consequently the environment suffered very sadly and it will take years and billions of dollars to correct this problem.

In the afternoon we visited in the home of Edith Piszter. She lived in a building that was over 100 years old that had been the dwelling of a very wealthy family and typically they had divided it into apartments. This multi-story building was very huge. Edith had lived there with her mother and father who had passed away. Here was gathered in a large room, the ceiling perhaps 20 feet high, a large group, approximately 40 of Hungarian brethren and their children to form an orchestra which meets periodically from all over the country. There were violins, cellos, practically all of the string

instruments, flutes, piccolos, oboes and other wind instruments accompanied by a piano and led by Zoltan Szabo, a very talented musician and we were extremely impressed with the talent, particularly from some of the younger boys and girls, probably 12 years old or so. It is very evident that music plays a very high priority in their lives. Most can play some type of instrument and several more than one. Many of the Zion Harp hymns that they played were obviously written for orchestration - it was very inspiring and the afternoon passed entirely too quickly. We returned to the Budapest church for their regular Saturday evening singing and only those of you who have been present and observed their enthusiasm can really appreciate what we are saying. We understand that they usually meet two or three times regularly a week, their singings are well attended, they sing practically all of the songs that we do in America plus many others that would be unknown to us and even the smaller children that join in the singing learn most of the verses by heart. It is customary when announcing a hymn to state which verses they will sing and I would venture that the majority of them did not use song books at all.

Sunday, the 6th of November, we worshipped in the Budapest church. Services start at 9:00 a.m. and generally last 1 1/2 - 2 hours and, of course, because of the translation into Hungarian, it takes a little longer and as we used to do when I was a youngster, the friends are dismissed before announcements are made. The services are well attended. The building with a balcony can well accommodate 500 souls. The Sunday School is in the lower part of the building on the first floor. It is amazing that following their procedure very few, perhaps only visitors, stay for lunch and then reassemble at 4:00 in the afternoon and it appeared that almost everybody returned. Following the afternoon services, they had a break and we were delighted to have the Sunday School children sing to us and it was very

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Hungary/Romania continued...

touching when in excellent English they sang "Jesus Loves Me".

We reassembled in the evening for song service and it had been asked that Wendell particularly address the young people. They were extremely attentive and finally about 9:00 p.m. we bid our farewells. We greatly appreciated the help of the Hunyady's and others who would translate for us to answer many of the questions and to be able to communicate together, but the love of God through the Holy Spirit, transcends all language barriers and there is a joy that really floods the soul.

After a morning breakfast, November 7, at the home of Jozsef and Rose Kovacs (he had been the treasurer of the Budapest church; I've known them for many years), we traveled to Kaposvar. They had done an excellent job of enlarging their building to accommodate their 68 brethren plus friends and children. Our brotherhood had provided \$20,000 to complete the project. It was very modest, neat and orderly and there was just no question that excellent value was received. This church is located in a small village and Geza Csik is the shepherd. I don't want to use the term lunch, because it was more than that at his home with his family, and like all of the dear brethren, they expressed their deep sense of gratitude for the financial and spiritual support they had received. The refurbished church was well done. The pews were simple without backs, but you would never have guessed that addition and enhancement had been accomplished.

We stopped briefly in Pecs (Andy Hunyady attended the church dedication there on September 4, 1977) which was the first church building built after the war, and provided the first opportunity for our brotherhood to assist in the cost for the construction of this edifice where there are 59 brethren. This congregation was the home of the Orcsik family in our Detroit congregation. John Orcsik had introduced me to Hungary on my first visit in 1980 and I deeply appreciate the relationship

and the contacts we've established.

We traveled on through Southern Hungary to Pogany for evening church services. This small church congregation built a new building costing \$40,000 with seating for 70. The Mission Committee had provided them with \$15,000 and we were surprised when they received more help locally than they had anticipated and they forwarded the funds to the large building at Szeged. The elder, Istvan Szemmelroth, is one of the senior elders in Hungary and met with John Bahler and Rudolph Graf on their visit to Hungary which was really historical in March of 1975. There are 21 brethren in the community, but herein lies a typical situation, not unlike the pattern in the United States. There are few opportunities for young people in the smaller villages and consequently many of them go to the larger cities like Budapest or Szeged, or if the opportunity is provided, leave the country which is rather difficult now with Canada firming up on its immigration regulations. The brethren said that at one time in the Hungarian/Austrian empire there were 50,000 members and there are now less than 2,000 in approximately 40 churches. Prior to World War I, there were about 230+ congregations in Hungary with about 3 or 4 in Austria with an estimated membership of 64,000. Hungary was divided by the Treaty of Versailles into todays Hungary, Czechoslovakia, part of Ukraine, two-thirds part of todays Romania, and a greater part of todays Yugoslavia. This is why we have churches in the various countries today. However, we were very gratified to see so many young people everywhere we went and that Sunday School is an integral part of their worship services, which at one time was not the situation.

The order of worship follows ours in the States and although an organ is often used in the church for their song service, it is never used during worship services which is entirely accapella. The following morning we left for Baja where to our surprise a nice group of brethren had assembled for worship

services. This congregation is noted for exceptional beautiful singing and is made up of 195 brethren with over 100 youngsters. Several of the brethren from the congregation are employed in the Hungarian school for mentally retarded or handicapped persons for the ages of 5-18. The building is very modern - completed a few years ago and in addition to schooling in the 3 R's, is also very proficient in vocational training for these young people. We had an excellent lunch served by some of the students from the school of over 300, of which approximately half live there during their schooling years and the other half return weekends to their various homes if they're not too far distant from the school. Both girls and boys are instructed in the various arts: cooking, sewing, woodworking, metalworking, etc. The grounds were very orderly and a wonderful attitude prevailed. A lot of enthusiasm.

There was a plea on the part of the brethren for us to visit a site on the edge of the town where formerly the government had a forest and wood preservation camp, which is now occupied by a mill and a carpenter shop and is available for sale for \$44,000 including some of the equipment. The project is under consideration by the Hungarian elders, but at this time there is a lack of direction. It would be their desire to use these facilities to provide employment for some of the handicapped graduate students and perhaps for some of the brethren utilizing the buildings and some of the equipment that is available for the manufacturing of millwork, doors, cupboards, etc. which seems to have merit, but a conclusion is not available at this time.

We proceeded to Ersekcsanad for evening services. This new sanctuary to house the 173 members and over 100 children was quite modern. Adjacent property was purchased in July 1993; an old house was torn down to make way for parking lot room. Both of these funds were supplied by us. It does not seem to matter what time of the day it is, the services are well attended and again we are encouraged to see so many young people. They seem to be quite

well dressed and everything is very clean and orderly. The hospitality is loving and kind and the building is a tremendous improvement over the previous sanctuary which was an old building that had been condemned by the Hungarian government.

On Wednesday following, we viewed the church at Nagydorog. This fellowship of 59 members is served by a deacon and five ministering brothers. It seemed rather unusual to us that many of the smaller congregations had more ministers accordingly than we would have and actually throughout all of Hungary, there are only ten fully active elders. They are very careful in their selection of ordination, and as we understand it, it is a requisite that a brother first serve as a deacon and although he is not ordained by the laying on of hands, he generally follows the same responsibilities as our ordained deacons do in the U.S. There are 14 deacons active in the labors in Hungary at this time and generally speaking, an elder serves as long as he is able. I feel we are wise to follow the present procedure we have in our faith in the U.S. In route we stopped very briefly at Paks, a congregation of 57 brethren in a building over 100 years old that some years ago had been remodeled. The building material then was dirt bricks, about 8 x 12 inches and about 4 inches thick bound together with straw and not baked. They are piled one on top of another and then stucco or plastered inside and out. It is amazing this material, something like that used by the children of Israel and Egypt, is able to stand as well as it does. But the building is in need of more than repair, possibly of being replaced, and they are going to determine in the not too distant future whether they can sell the property that is located across the road from a hospital and possibly move to newer, cheaper grounds, but there is a problem that most of the people do not have automobiles and require ground transportation or bicycles to attend church.

We traveled on to Dunavecse for evening services and I visited with an old elder brother, Gyula Kovacs Sr., that I

had met many years ago. He is widowed, has a real father image and is no longer active and unable to serve as a shepherd, but when we asked him what advice he would give to those of us that are younger, he humbly stated that he regrets that he did not devote more time and enthusiasm in his commitment to the Lord and the faith. We were grateful that he was able to worship with us that evening; his home is not very far from the assembly. I remember on my previous visit to this community that we were told that during World War II a bomb had been dropped by the German Air Force that had hit part of the building and penetrated the roof, but did not explode. This church, like so many others in Hungary, has been somewhat remodeled, painted, and is very much evidence that it is a growing thriving congregation. Their 78 members is exceeded by the number of children in the Sunday School and at the evening service the building was completely filled. It brought back a lot of memories of my first visit to Hungary 14 years ago. The Fulop's, who are a part of our fellowship in Florida, Detroit and California, originate from this area. To our delight, after the regular services, the young people sang for us at our request a couple of beautiful hymns more than what was customary and about 10:00 p.m. before we went to bed, Kovacs Jr. had a full meal for us. All of the courses are with delightful desserts.

In the morning we traveled on the Nagykoros and here again at 10:00 a.m. a nice group was gathered together for services. Here we made a new experience, as following the regular services well attended where there are 24 brethren, a friend (as they refer to their converts using John's gospel "ye are my friend if ye keep my commandments) shared her testimony, not for baptism at the present time, but for the future. She was an older lady that had been away from the fellowship for many years, but found her way back to the faith of her parents by visiting a Bible book store and inquiring whether they knew that in the general area if there was a fellowship, and in this

store one of the clerks identified some of our sisters as possibly having roots because of their modest appearance and head coverings and from this event, this dear soul found her way back to the closest assembly. She was very sincere, very committed, very dedicated and very humble. With the congregation's approval in the not too distant future, she will have an opportunity provided for her to come again before the church trusting the way will be open for baptism at that time. This is the home congregation of the Toth family. Their father, Laszlo, is one of the ministers and the two daughters, Valerie and Sarah, have extremely beautiful voices and play the organ with a lot of talent. After a delicious meal at their home, they sang for us bringing tears to our eyes.

As we had a heavy program, we continued on to Oroshaza, at one time the largest church in Hungary, and as practically all of the church buildings, it had been confiscated by the government and used as a storehouse and stable. But already on our visit years ago, it had been restored and now we found that a nice addition had been added to provide necessary space for the large Sunday School for this congregation of 164 members. The father of our Detroit brother, Frank Denes, is a retired elder from this congregation and on our previous trip, we were greatly inspired and impressed with the most beautiful singing. Ferenc Kovacs is the elder and there is a deacon plus six ministers in this fellowship. When we visited in the old folks home on the church property, one aged sister in her 90's was thrilled to see us and through an interpreter said that she did not know the language of English but she did know the language of love and it was most evident in her spirit that prevailed. The home is quite crowded and no doubt will get some relief now that the Szegeged old folks home is operational.

Hungary/Romania 1994 will be continued in next issue of Silver Lining.



Several historical forces occurred in Europe (and in Switzerland) during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries that helped pave the way for a new church that would eventually be established in the 1830's. Samuel Froehlich, by the grace of God, would lead this awakening, assisted by a host of fervent brothers and sisters who had also experienced the Bible's pattern of repentance and conversion.

By the early portion of the 16th century, European society was predominated both by religious waywardness of church leaders and a spiritual thirst by the general masses. The Reformation of 1517 and the radical reformation a few years later helped to partially address this situation.

Both political and religious power was rigid across the continent. but a gradual softening of this power was hastened by the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. Yet, much improvement in the proper living out of Christianity was needed.

By the beginning of the 1800's, the religious climate in Switzerland was dominated by Calvinism. Two prominent doctrines were infant baptism and eternal security. The Heidelberg Catechism (1563) and the Belgic Confession (1561) exerted a strong "Calvinistic" influence across Europe, including the cantons of Switzerland. Also, the Helvetic Confession, which ran counter to Anabaptist beliefs, included both infant baptism and the bearing of arms for warfare. A general lukewarmness took root.

The Froehlich family had lived in Switzerland for several generations (having come from France) when young

Samuel Heinrich Froelich was born on July 4, 1803 in Brugg (canton Aargau). The population of this small town was 1,200 at the time of his birth.

The village of Brugg was noted at that time for its hospital, its schools, its flourishing industry, and its beautiful geographic setting. This tranquil area was conducive for the raising of a family, and Samuel Froehlich benefitted by his upbringing.

The devout Froehlichs were members of the protestant state church in Switzerland. The father of Samuel Froehlich was a sexton of the church (i.e., an underofficer who takes care of church property, rings the church bells, and sometimes digs graves for burial). The Froehlichs observed daily prayers and attended Sunday worship each week. Before serious meetings and at family get-togethers, prayers were offered.

Samuel Froehlich had many brothers and sisters, but only one sister, Catherine Froehlich, followed his faith and supported his eventual ministry.

As a young boy, he enjoyed the stability of good family life and he loved to roam in the hills, mountains and valleys near Brugg. It was here that he would ponder mystical thoughts as a growing boy. He attended the school of his village and was unusually responsive to learning. He had a virtual unceasing thirst for knowledge. Added to this was the gift of creativity.

At that time in Switzerland the religious character of education was strongly re-enforced. The prayers, ceremonies, and hymns of the state church were taught in school. Also, the Bible and its commentaries were part of the everyday curriculum. Interest-

ingly, during Froehlich's early education, the heroes of the Reformation were at the same time the heroes of the nation in Switzerland, and young children were taught to respect and admire people like Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, and John Calvin, who had led various aspects of the protestant Reformation.

Notable in Froehlich's early development was his propensity to understand religious concepts and to grasp foreign languages. At home he spoke German and French. Eventually, he came to learn Dutch and English. As an adult he could read the Scriptures in Greek and Hebrew, and he wrote and spoke Latin fluently.

It was his parents' wish that one of their sons devote himself to the state church ministry. Very likely, because of Samuel's grasp of religious concepts and his overall talent in learning, he was the son chosen to fulfill the family ideal.

Froehlich writes in his *Individual Letters and Meditations* that he never considered any other "career". He was minded to fulfill his parents' wish. He writes he didn't feel, even in the slightest degree, "the great importance and responsibility of preaching. Much rather, I was to learn it as a trade, instead of a profession."

The spirit of rationalism was exerting influence all across Europe. In religious circles, such an influence was undermining the authority of God's infallible Word. Samuel Froehlich would encounter this force when he left Brugg for his formal education.

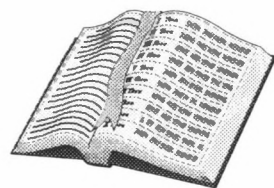
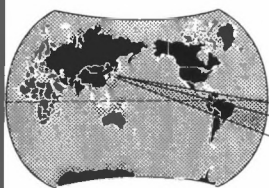
By Bro. Perry Klopfenstein

Next Issue: More on Froehlich

The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

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"PRAYER IN 1995"

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

Is it possible to pray too much? I have heard that during the Middle Ages, monks isolated themselves in monasteries to pray and meditate. This is an instance of much prayer. They came out of the world and were separate, so separate that they were not touching other lives. It may be that they misinterpreted II Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate." The emphasis here is to be separate from those things in the world which are unclean. Jesus ate with sinners to help them. "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Luke 15:2.

Even though they were mistaken about isolating themselves, I don't believe the monks prayed too much. They could have prayed just as much out in society, and they would have had more things to pray about. The only danger is, prayer while working might cause an accident, although we could at least be in a prayerful mood.

As a young person on a farm in Illinois, I had a problem. I was an incurable dreamer and failed to keep my mind on what I was doing. I got the farm machinery

caught on the gate posts, ran over an auxiliary plowshare and punctured one of the big rubber tires on the tractor, and I also let Pa Ehnle's tractor get away from me on a cold winter day (I was pounding my legs to keep my hands warm) and went down over an embankment and rolled the tractor over on its side. It was before I had surrendered to the Lord in repentance but I did bow my head and thank the Lord very sincerely that I was not under that tractor. The same day that I upset the tractor, I also failed to tie up a team of horses, hitched to a wagon, which I had been driving, so they moved over and ate the paint off my brother's newly simonized car. By the time I went to bed that night, I was crushed.

We all have our prayer time on our knees each morning when we arise and in the evening before we go to bed. But what about through the day? What should be our policy in 1995? The Bible does say "Pray without ceasing." I Thess. 5:17.

Automobile accidents are a concern to me. Would this be something to pray about? Are we doing everything we know to do to pre-

vent accidents? What about our health? Are we doing everything we know to do to maintain our health? Is this something to pray about and put into practice? "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." I Corinthians 6:19. What about courtesy? Should we pray for more courtesy toward everyone?

When you back your car out of the garage, ask our great God to help you drive safely and ask for His protection. When you plan your meals and exercise program, ask our great God to help you have good health, if it is His will. Also, it is a good idea to ask God to help us be more courteous and respectful toward everyone. Jesus did say, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matthew 7:12.

Let us conclude that you can't pray too much, providing it doesn't interfere with what else you are doing. Prayer will help us to do our work better and prayer itself is work. It is a work that everyone can engage in and it should be enjoyable. Is it possible to pray too much? Try it in 1995 and see.

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