

# *The Silver Lining*



*In His Hand are the Deep Places of the Earth...*

January 1996



"Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools."  
Eccles. 7:9

"...let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Ephesians 4:26

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Number 1

## Anger

At the top of our world lies a great volcano. It was active in 1993, but today it is quiet and innocent. Mt. Spur, located just 2,000 miles south of the frigid North Pole, is innocent looking in the cover picture; however, it was a terrible force when it "blew its top"! Mt. Spur is about 20,000 feet above sea level and surrounded by only desolate, barren, and cold waste. Who would ever care if it "blew its top"? However, we know that the red hot amber ash traveled over 100 miles charring cars, planes and homes as the great phenomenon of nature occurred.

A volcano, like a man, has an inner core, which often goes unnoticed by the spectator.

It is well known that in the core of the earth is molten heat which at times blows its way out of core and can destroy anything in its path. Notice the molten path leading away from Mt. Spur. It is a scar that will last for timeless ages.

Anger is very much like the molten core in the earth. It can sometimes boil in us for years and heat up at a moment's notice. People around us may be totally unaware of the seething within and be so taken back when we "blow our top". Who cares if we blow our top? As long as I am not near anyone, who will know? Just remember, that as the molten rock of a volcano travels many miles, so does unbridled anger. Also, God knows.

An amusing story of anger traveling goes like this:

A husband, after a very frustrating day at the office and feeling the wrath of the boss, stormed into the house only to see a terrible mess. When his wife came out of the kitchen to meet him, he yelled, "Do I always have to come home to such a mess?" Hurt and frustrated, the mother turned to the eldest daughter and vented her

anger. "If you would help me just once instead of being glued to that telephone, this place would look a lot better!" The sister then turned to her little brother and blew her top. "Why do you have to throw your toys all over? Because of you I always get yelled at." The little boy of six looked around, bewildered. He stomped out the back door and kicked the dog off the porch. "That will teach you not to get in my way," muttered the little boy.

While the story may be just a little humorous, it is so indicative of how anger can affect our loved ones.

First, when we lose our temper, we subtract years from our lives.

Second, when we are angry, we lose the respect of our loved ones or friends around us.

Third, our own anger may provoke anger in those we love, even our children.

There is no reasoning with an angry person who can rant and rave, even bringing destruction into heart and soul and never once listens to those round about them who are trying to settle them down.

An unkind word from an angry mouth is like lava burning its way down the mountain. It leaves a path of destruction that will last for years.

Just "keeping still" is one of the finest things we can do. It doesn't matter so much what someone says. It is what you say in reply, nine times out of ten, that makes a quarrel.

Beloved, not all anger is wrong. A little anger can hone our senses. It is wrong, however, when it is conceived upon slight and inadequate provocation and when it continues long. "...let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

A great President once lost his temper with a servant and spoke very unkindly to him. The next day he

called his trembling servant into his study. "Here," he said, "take this silver watch and whenever you look at it, remember that your master, in a moment of passion, said to you what he now regrets and that he was not ashamed to confess that he had done so. I am sorry."

Yes, when we find that we are the brunt of anger, we do best to be still until the burning ceases. Then forbearance and forgiveness are the healing balm that can soothe the heart, the mind and the soul.

May God bless 1996 with peace and good will in our faith.



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

## Light From The Word



Writings based  
on God's Word

January 1996

### To Obey is Better Than Sacrifice

We are surrounded every day by individuals and institutions who have a relative outlook on nearly every situation they encounter. God's Holy Word unfailingly holds before our eyes the truth, which sets us free (John 8:32). One of the keystones of our Father's message to us is obedience to His will for our lives. His repeated calls to obedience lamentably are frequently unheeded, and the consequences of the sin of disobedience fill chapter after chapter in God's Word, ever an example for us (1 Cor. 10:11).

One of the most direct accounts of our Father's displeasure when His Word was not obeyed is found in 1 Sam. 15. God had commanded King Saul to destroy the Amalekites, a people who had repeatedly harassed the children of Israel over an extended time period. King Saul had fulfilled much of what God wanted him to be but had not completely carried out God's will. The prophet Samuel was made aware of God's extreme displeasure and was sent to Saul to pronounce judgment. When questioned, Saul maintained he had done God's will. Samuel asked why animals and the Amalekite king still lived. Saul's protestation that he and the people had saved the best as a sacrifice to God was met with the strong question "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22).

We know of God's love for us (1 John 4:16). We know of His wisdom (James 1:17) and when He demands obedience, we know He unquestionably knows best and what He directs is for our good. We remember the apostles' words to the authorities in Acts 5:29 that "we ought to obey God rather than men" and we must unfailingly choose His will. Our Father makes it clear in His Word that often obe-

dience to Him means submission to authorities He has set in place. Whether to parents (Eph. 6:1) or church leaders (Heb. 13:17) or Christian home authority or governmental authority (Titus 3:1), there is eternal wisdom in God's Word that we obey His will.

As believers, we should never view these Godly directives to obedience as burdensome or oppressive; but rather, we should see His wisdom in structuring our lives so that we can most effectively live in harmony and peace with each other throughout the household of faith. In addition, we therein find freedom to better serve Him and carry out the work of His Kingdom here on earth, free from the incessant bickering and fighting brought about by lack of submission to authority and outright disobedience. Indeed, the scriptural concept of obedience rests firmly on our trust in God and our heartfelt belief that He knows best.

In this day of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, we do realize that the exact types of sacrifice that Saul had in mind are no longer a requirement in our worship of God. In Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth, there is the beautiful chapter about charity, or Christian love. In it there are numerous references to the things of sacrificial nature which without love would be hollow and without effect. We similarly need to understand that if we engage in conduct that we feel to be sacrificial in nature that is in disobedience to God or His ordained authority, we miss the mark and cannot rightly expect His blessing.

In order to obey, we need to be still and listen. God's words from Samuel were that "to hearken (listen)" was better "than the fat of rams". As believers, we love God's Word. We believe in the guidance and prompting of His Holy Spirit as we read His Word. Our sincere prayers to Him are answered through His Word and if we truly

listen, the results are rich blessings for us and those we humbly serve.

Certainly, a most sobering aspect of the account of Saul and Samuel is the conclusion Samuel brought relative to the disobedience. Here is portrayed a willful disregard of God's Holy will and direction. Evident in Saul's actions and his stubborn defense of them is the all too human element of pride. In fact, he was so persuaded of the rightness of his action, he seems almost not to have realized he had disregarded God's will. Regardless of what God had said, he had selectively decided to disregard it. This is precisely the sort of deception Satan uses on individuals today. If God and His will are acknowledged at all, it is secondary (or worse) to the wisdom and purposes of men.

God, of course, was emphatic in describing the sin to Saul through Samuel, "For rebellion (disobedience to God's will) is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Sam. 15:23). How sad to be so deceived and face such judgment at the end. The consequences of rebelling against God—whether refusing His loving call in the first place or selectively ignoring His voice throughout our lives—are usually evident in our life but are much worse in eternity. We need only reflect on how abhorrent witchcraft and serving other gods is to our Heavenly Father to realize just how closely we should take His instructions to obey Him in all things. Saul ultimately lost his life and his kingdom, but for years he followed a declining path away from God's will that led him to turn from those who loved him and finally to commit the sin of consulting a witch.

God's Word is so very full of good and wholesome counsel. He promises to reveal His will to us and asks us to follow closely, listening each day as He speaks to us through His Spirit and Word. If we are obedient to His holy will, we will save ourselves much grief and heartache.



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

## Report of Mission Committee Meeting November 14, 1995

The Mission Committee meets four times a year, coming together normally in a hotel near Chicago's O'Hare airport, a central location that is easy to reach. We hope this brief report will be of interest to you.

### Financial Report

For the quarter ended October 31, we received contributions of \$61,072 to the Mission Fund, and \$27,842 to the Bible Fund. The total was about equal to the same period a year ago.

The major expenditure for the period was nearly \$30,000 for Bibles to be used in our distribution program. The Committee approved spending \$2,000 for Bibles in Yugoslavia, \$5,000 for Haitian Bibles in the Creole language to be distributed through Hospital Lumiere, and \$500 for Bibles in the native language of our Mission in India. It was also approved to provide hymn books for mid-week services which have started at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. A contribution of \$20,000 was made to the Nashville congregation to help complete their remodeling project.

### European Church Building Fund

As of October 31, over \$210,000 from 21 congregations and several individuals has been collected for this purpose. The following allocations were made.

1. Paks, Hungary was given \$30,000 for their new church building, planned for construction next year. Due to soaring inflation, it was felt best to purchase materials as soon as possible.

2. \$50,000 was sent to Yugoslavia for remodeling of old churches in need of repair.

3. On the last trip to Romania, it was apparent that there is need for a building to store the food packages coming monthly from our Bluffton Distribution Center. Presently they are stored in an inadequate and very inconvenient garage on the property of Elder Vertaci. His health is not good, which adds to the problem. The Romanians proposed that an old building adjacent to the new Arad church be razed, with new construction accommodating the storage needs. Included in the new building will be a small apartment for a caretaker couple, which is a common practice in Europe. Since the present usage of the church is only one day per week, the Romanian officials have threatened to cut off the gas supply. For this reason in addition to security, it is best to have someone living on the premises on a permanent basis.

After approval of this by the European Board, the

Mission Committee allotted \$30,000 for this project and the World Relief Committee also appropriated \$50,000 for the same purpose. An additional \$50,000 was appropriated for the construction and repair of other Romanian church buildings.

### Pews to Hungary

Our brethren at Tremont, Illinois recently replaced the pews in their church building with new ones. They have decided to send the existing pews to Hungary to be used in one of their churches. Many congregations throughout Eastern Europe use roughly made benches with no backs, sitting through long services on them. There is no question that these pews will be much appreciated. The Mission Committee agreed to cover the costs of transportation to Hungary. The brethren in Breidenbach, Germany did the same with the pews and other furniture from their old church building.

### Vehicles in Eastern Europe

There is a need for several vehicles in East European countries. These are used by elders and ministers who travel to scattered congregations to carry out their duties.



This van, driven by Elder Albert Szabo, is typical of the vehicles furnished our brethren in Eastern Europe.

The vehicles serve to bring people, few of whom have their own transportation, to services. They are also used to distribute medicine and supplies. Approval was given to allocate \$20,000 for vehicles in Yugoslavia and \$10,000 for a vehicle in Ukraine. The World Relief Committee approved matching funds at their last meeting. For further information please contact: Apostolic Christian Mission Committee, 913/681-3796.



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 Can I Be Involved?

### In the USA

Over the years, hundreds of our people, young and old alike, have gone to disaster sites to help rebuild what has been damaged or lost. Projects are ongoing, coordinated by our US Board. We are prepared to respond very quickly, having done so often when storms or floods occurred. On these projects, volunteers can work on a daily basis without having to commit themselves to a week or more away from their own jobs. Often projects involve erecting or repairing buildings, and we try to get the message out in time that one's involvement can be scheduled in advance. Teams have always responded to the call, and your support is greatly appreciated.

A great part in helping the unfortunate is through sewing groups who work at this time of the year preparing varied kits, bandages, gowns, blankets, etc. Soap making groups are also a very important role in assisting the poor in other lands.

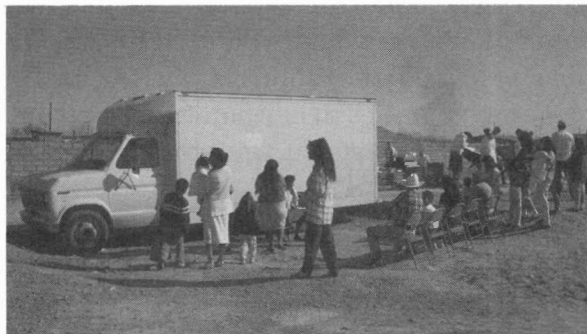
Contact Bro. Arnold Gerst at 217/223-8424 for further information.

### In Mexico

Since 1989, over 150 brethren and friends from 34 congregations have seized the opportunity to be a part of one of twelve medical-dental teams going to this impoverished country. The mission is to give care and education in the name of Christ. Although few know Spanish, many have witnessed joy in faces of those

who have received medical or dental care, supplies, and Bibles. Seeing the white lab jackets on our volunteers often brings people who request Bibles, considering them as important as physical care.

The mobile van with supplies and equipment winds its way over dirt roads past cardboard shacks, and sets up clinics in poor areas. While early teams served around 500 people in one week's time, current teams are now serving that many patients per day. As they work amidst poverty and sickness, each day they can view the skyscrapers of El Paso, Texas, only miles away, yet a world away in their lifestyles and human need.



Mobile van used by Medical/Dental teams to bring care to those in sickness and suffering.

It never fails that volunteers say they find these opportunities rewarding and fulfilling. It is an experience that changes lives and develops perspective for our purpose on earth as believers. We would encourage anyone who is able, to become involved in some program here or elsewhere.

Teams are scheduled for March 20-27 to Jaurez and September 3-11 to Creel, a new venture to serve the Tarahumara Indians. You may contact Bro. Dave Wegman at 708/778-1048 for more information.

Building teams also provide opportunities, and the contact for this work is Bro. Mike Fiechter at 219/597-7330. Openings are available.

### In the Caribbean

Last month we printed the report of an evaluation team who visited Haiti. Hundreds of brethren, friends, families, couples, single persons, retirees, and Bible School Classes have lent their assistance to the many work projects in Haiti and now in Jamaica. Honor is always given to almighty God, yet still He works through people who show their love for mankind through their words and actions. The message from the recipients is that, "Apostolic Christian World Relief is making a difference."

In addition to volunteer labor, we are supplying Bibles through hospitals, schools, and clinics. An extensive program of drilling wells and education about clean water is a very vital part of the work. By the grace of God, we were able to furnish over \$300,000 in pharmaceuticals through another organization at a cost of only \$12,000. The need is immense, and our brothers saw the medicines in place.

Food, clothing, sewing machines, medical equipment, and many other items are shipped through our distribution centers, using volunteer workers there also. Work teams are scheduled to accommodate all ages. Contact Bro. Harold Witzig at 309/266-6263 for more information.

### Monetary Assistance

The World Relief Committee met in Sabetha, Kansas, December 9, and after much consideration, disbursed about \$400,000 in funds donated by our brethren and friends.

Surely benefits accrue not only to those who receive the aid and assistance through World Relief, but also to those who share their material blessings, as well as those who give of their time and energies to help those in need.

## **APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED**

Our Christmas season has been mingled with joy and sadness this year as we said our final farewells to a dear brother, Douglas Clauss, who was a resident in our Hazelwood Home. Doug Clauss was born December 23, 1939, at Ft. Wayne, IN and passed away November 25, 1995, at Methodist Medical Center in Peoria, IL where he had been a patient for ten days. Doug first moved into the care of ACHH in 1974. In 1988, he moved into Oakwood Estate and then to the Hazelwood house in 1990. He has lived at 200 E. Hazelwood for the last five years with five other men. Also for the last five years he worked at Burger King in Morton. It was a job he really enjoyed. He liked to go to work early so he could sit and visit with people. Church was very important to Doug. He was a member of the Morton Apostolic Christian Church, where attending Sundays and at other church functions was just taken for granted. He loved the Lord and enjoyed singing about Him. Doug was full of fun and life. If someone was going shopping, to garage sales, to Bingo or anywhere to visit, Doug was always ready to go along. We extend our sympathy to Doug's family, especially his brother, Ken, as they were very close to each other. Doug will also be missed by the residents and staff. What a blessing and comfort to know that we will meet Doug again, someday, in that beautiful Heavenly Home above!

Yes, we at the Home are caught up in the activity and excitement of the Christmas season, but we need to remember that we are celebrating the birth of our Lord, for

which we rejoice. We are thankful for the caroling groups that have chosen to share their songs with us. Families are brought together, special meals and treats are enjoyed, Christmas cards are exchanged, shopping lists made, tours of the East Peoria Festival of Lights display are taken as well as drives through a live nativity scene in Morton. Also, our Resident Council held their annual Christmas dinner at Doc's Mt. Hawley Inn. The Peoria Apostolic Christian Bible Class held a dinner for over 100 of us. The dinner included a Christmas program and gifts for all. This is an annual "highlight" of the season. Now our residents are eagerly anticipating our own Christmas party where they receive gifts given by various staff members. We appreciate Sis. Edith Getz of Morton, who invites some of the residents who aren't able to spend the holidays with their own families to her home for a wonderful dinner on Christmas Day. May we all worship the One for whom this season exists and realize that it is because of Him that we have Hope, Jesus Christ.

February birthdays at ACHH are: Matt Pumphrey (17); John Kamm (18); Lee Anne McKay (19); Virginia Reece (27); and Guy Masinelli (28). There are no February birthdays at our other facilities.

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

**Tim Sauder**

You may have noticed that we have a different staff member write our column every month. It all started back when Bro. Uriel Gehring retired and the task of writing for the Silver Lining fell on me. I quickly realized that all of

my time was used up trying to figure out how to run such an organization and that even if I did write every month, the style, focus and content would soon get stale.

A sign-up sheet was passed around at a staff meeting and we soon learned that by rotating the assignment amongst the brothers and sisters we not only lifted one another's burdens, but also our readers would get a more comprehensive view of the fabric of our ministry and a more intimate look into the hearts and lives of those staff members who are on the front lines with children where challenges and changes occur.

As in any business, family or church, the principle of the body applies here too. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us..." (Romans 12:5-6). We are different but connected. We have unity but not uniformity. I marvel how our infinitely creative God continues to send just the right person with unique talents and experiences to do just what needs to be done at just the right time. And at this very time, we are trusting God to send a single sister to serve as an Assistant Houseparent. See the ad in this issue.

Christmas vacation, though full of anticipation and activity, can also be a disturbing time for many of our children. Home visits don't always work out, parents don't always show up, family gatherings can explode with conflict and expectations can be dashed as the reality of personal and family dysfunction is brought to the surface. But now we are looking at a whole new year stretched out before us where a little hope can be instilled;

**- 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  
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(309) 448-2416

or

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**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN BIBLE DISTRIBUTION**

Bibles Distributed By Our Churches

Eleven Years — August 1983 thru July 1995 — 321,754

*Bibles Distributed — Twelfth Year*

	<b>MONTH</b>	<b>TO DATE</b>
August 1995 —	3,834	3,834
September 1995 —	1,404	5,238
October 1995 —	1,780	7,018
November 1995 —	3,461	10,479
December 1995 —	3,506	13,985

\*Repaired Bibles - Song Book -Storybook Shipped - 28

\*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.

**CASSETTES FROM EUROPE**

We still have a supply of the cassette tapes produced in Austria containing beloved hymns of our old Heft (Long Book).

All profits from the sale of these tapes go to Europe, where the money is distributed among our very needy brethren in the Eastern European countries of East Germany, Hungary, Romania and others.

The Heft or Long Book tapes were recorded by Bro. Josef Farkasch, who is a music professor near Salzburg, Austria. He plays the classical guitar and many other instruments on three tapes of songs from the Long Book. Some include singing.

The Heft (Long Book) tapes include three volumes. Volume I includes songs 1-11, 13-18; Volume II includes songs 12, 19-31; Volume III includes songs 33-48. Each tape costs \$8.00. For shipping costs on orders of 1-5 tapes, add \$.75 extra for each tape. On orders of 6 tapes or more, add only \$.30 extra for each tape. Make checks for Long Book Tape payable to the Long Book Tape Fund.

Long Book tapes may be ordered from:

Don and Lorna Schrock  
100 Forest View Road  
Morton, IL 61550  
(309) 266-6810

Dennis and Beth Feucht  
317 North Third  
Morton, IL 61550  
(309) 266-9498

not like a heavy dose in one shot, but rather like the slow steady drip of an IV.

Hope does build and grow and so we rejoice that some of our children have made the kind of progress that will allow them to return home at semester break. They include Mary K., Jenny K. and Joel K., a sibling group who have been here for over two years and Tammy R. who will return to her family in Wells County. Please

pray with us that the seeds of hope and faith which have been planted will blossom.

**ALABAMA, ATHENS**

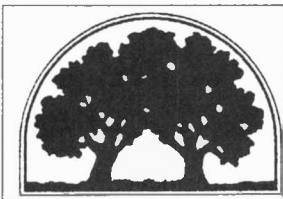
**Pam Moore**

December, as always, has been such a busy month!

On the first day of December, C.D. Haggemaker and Jennifer Widner began their lives together as one. C.D. is the son of Bro. Doug and Sis. Mae Haggemaker

(Decatur, AL) and Jennifer is the daughter of Linda West (Decatur, AL) and Gary Widner (Decatur, AL).

Christy Thomas underwent ear surgery and we were happy to have her back in church the first Sunday in December. She is recuperating well. Bro. George Kelley and Sis. Shirley Haggemaker have also been hospitalized and need our prayers.



## ASSISTANT HOUSEPARENT NEEDED

*When God says Go...  
Don't say No!*

We have an opening for an Assistant Houseparent here at Gateway Woods. If you are a single sister and you are interested in full time service to others, you may be the one God has chosen to come and join our family here at Gateway Woods. The work here is challenging, rewarding, and inspiring. We trust that a mature sister will respond to our need and to the Lord's leading.

Please contact one of the Brothers listed below for more information about qualifications, training, salaries, and benefits for this position.

John Stoller  
Child Care Supervisor  
Gateway Woods  
PO Box 151  
Leo, IN 46765  
219-627-2159

David Bertsch  
Counseling Elder  
11520 Grabill Rd.  
Grabill, IN 46741  
219-627-2923

We had our adult Christmas party at the Fellowship Hall on December 9. We enjoyed the food, fellowship and exchanging Christmas presents.

We've been Christmas caroling on two Wednesday nights. It's a special Christmas tradition that we all enjoy.

We had our elementary Christmas party and program practice on December 16 and the middle school and teenage Christmas

party on December 17. The elementary students' program was titled "Will you share with me today what Christmas really means?" emphasizing the birth of Christ our Saviour as the true meaning of Christmas. A friend of mine at work wears a heart pin that states, "Christ is the Heart of Christmas".

## OPPORTUNITY TO HELP OUR BRETHREN IN HUNGARY



Beautiful singing of praise to our Lord has been put on 5 tapes by our brethren in Hungary. These new tapes are being offered, with glory and honor given to God, to raise money to publish a new hymn book which will be a combination of our Hymns of Zion and The Gospel Hymns.

**Five 60 min. Tapes Available:** *Delivery in September 1995  
From European Churches*

- 1.) Budapest with guests: Dunavecse, Paks, Nagydorog churches
- 2.) Baja and Ersekcsanak churches
- 3.) Oroshaza with guests: Bekescsaba, Bekessamson churches
- 4.) Dunavecse Childrens Chorus
- 5.) Szeged with guests: Hodmezovasarhely churches

**\$10 each or \$45/set, includes shipping, American Funds**

*"These tapes are made only for glory to God. Our wish that sisters and brothers in the States will listen them also for glory to God."  
Elder Bro. Pap Janos*

This project is being overseen by Elder Bro. Ben Maibach and Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman along with the Francesville and Detroit churches.

*To order, contact the following individuals:*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1.) Sis. Dorine Kurkowski<br>3540 Prairie<br>Berkley, MI 48072<br>810/544-2707                    | 4.) Bro. Dennis Virkler<br>Rejoice Records<br>Ringger Ranch Recording<br>RR 1 Box 217B<br>Carlock, IL 61725 |
| 2.) Sis. Holly Barton<br>35502 Woodfield<br>Farmington Hills, MI 48331<br>810/489-1164            | 5.) Sis. Peg Schieler<br>RR 2 Box 50<br>Roanoke, IL 61561<br>309/923-7513                                   |
| 3.) Sis Harriet Orcsik<br>2670-5 Meadowbrooke Lane<br>Windsor, ONT, CANADA N8T2Y4<br>519/945-9964 | 6.) Bro. Roger Ward<br>RR 2 Box 74a<br>Francesville, IN 47946<br>219/567-2687                               |

**Send U.S. Funds With Orders**

## ARIZONA, PHOENIX Ron and Ev Hoerr

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

*John 1:1*

As we begin a new year, let us take time for and with God. Life is so much better for all of us if we each act like His child!

On Sunday night, December 10,



one momentarily could have been in Bethlehem—the singing was so beautiful before and during our Sunday School Christmas program. Parents and grandparents are very grateful to all the brothers and sisters who teach our precious future church. You will be blessed.

We are thankful for visiting ministers, Bros. Todd Zollinger (Silverton, OR), Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL), and Todd Feller (LaCrosse, IN).

Bro. Jerome and Sis. Mary Witzig showed World Relief slides on the Galilean Children's Home and work also done in Haiti. What a great way to keep our focus on God — doing something useful for World Relief projects, keeping in mind the town or city you live in is part of the world.

A real need for 1996 is sharing God's love. Because He gives so generously to each of us, there's plenty to go around; share and you'll feel wonderful.

Our World Relief Committee served a delicious brunch to some of us who need a helping hand to get around. The choir sang several songs which we enjoyed. Thank you very much for a lovely holiday event.

December was unusually warm and it warmed our hearts to see Bro. Ted Knochel, Lex Beris, Sis. Carol Doolittle, and Sis. Ella Harmon in church.

We have many to pray for who are unable to "come and go", including Millie Stickling, who is in the Care Center at Glencraft Retirement Center.

Surgical patients were Sis. Jan Elsasser (foot), Jim Laukhuf and Robin Lemons.

To be part of a church, loving the people who come, makes for a

family type situation. You pray for, care, share, do for, love, and encourage. Though gone to the Kiowa church only a week, we pray the Lord to be near Sis. Helen Huette. Sis. Helen has been a loving generous sister in faith here for years. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." You are missed, but surely not forgotten.

Make me, dear Lord, polite and kind to everyone, I pray. (J. Tabb)

### ARIZONA, TUCSON

#### Lisa Knapp

We are still enjoying beautiful weather with the high today, December 12, in the lower 70's and the sun shining brightly.

It is with great joy that I can report that Doug Bauer has found the grace necessary to repent and make a new beginning in his life. Doug (Bro. Don and Sis. Gloria) is a senior in high school. We pray the Lord will watch over and guide Doug as he starts his life in the Lord.

Our Sis. Martha Blessman is still absent from our little congregation. We plan to carol for her this Friday; it will be good to see her again. We will keep you in our prayers, Sis. Martha.

Although our number is very small this holiday season, we plan to continue with our traditions of caroling and our annual Christmas program which we always look forward to. We can especially appreciate the passage in the Bible that talks about two or three being assembled.

We recently gathered to bake pumpkin bread for a homeless shelter in Tucson. Young and old alike came together to bake bread, but we also got a healthy helping of fellowship and food. Thanks to

all who worked so hard to make Thanksgiving a little nicer for some homeless people.

### CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

#### Joy Nenadov

More holiness give me, more striving within;  
 More patience in suffering, more sorrow for sin;  
 More faith in my Saviour, more sense of His care;  
 More joy in His service, more purpose in prayer.  
 More gratitude give me, more trust in the Lord;  
 More pride in His glory, more hope in His word;  
 More tears for His sorrows, more pain at His grief;  
 More meekness in trial, more praise for relief.  
 More purity give me, more strength to o'ercome;  
 More freedom from earthstains, more longings for home;  
 More fit for His kingdom, more used would I be;  
 More blessed and holy, more, Saviour, like Thee.  
*Hymns of Zion #101*

Greetings to all!

As we end yet another year, it is a good time to stop and reflect back on our walk with the Lord in 1995. Even as my company and most any company will be taking inventory at this time, may we take inventory of our spiritual lives and how we stand before God. Have we remained focused on God's Word and will or have we wandered a little from the fold? If we have, let us renew our desire to remain focused on the Word of God in this coming year. Several ways to remain focused is to do as in II Timothy 2:15: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman

that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Also, in I Timothy 4:13,15: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." And finally, in Romans 12:2: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Studying, constant meditating in God's Word every day, even in the midst of a busy schedule, and having a renewed mind can help us to stay and draw nearer to our Lord and help us to keep on the straight and narrow pathway that leads to our eternal rest for our souls. May God give each of us strength to walk a more holy and faithful life for Him, as the above hymn states.

We're thankful that our Elder Bro. John and Sis. Lois Klotzle have returned safely back to us after having visited Japan and India. May God bless them in their labor for the Lord.

Our little congregation here in Altadena was blessed in 1995 with three precious babies born and two dear souls baptized. We're thankful to God for His wonderful love and care.

"He holds the key to all unknown, and I am glad..." (Gospel Hymns #399). May we let Christ Jesus go before us in this new year and may we walk in His precious footsteps and be the example He showed for us to be.

Closing thought: Yesterday is history, Tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a gift, that's why it's called "The Present".

### **CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO Marian Petrovic**

Many blessings were ours during the month of December. We were privileged to hear the glorious Christmas story in the meditation of the Holy Word by our faithful ministers, in the Sunday School lessons, in the inspiring recitations of the children at the Christmas program, and singing carols at church and at the nursing homes.

What a joy to share the beautiful hymns of Christmas with the elderly and shut-in and see their smiles and waves. May the love of God fill our hearts to overflowing with peace and joy so that we may share the love of Christ with those around us in the new year and by doing so truly celebrate Christmas all year long.

Our love and prayers were with Bro. Joe Kaplar as he had minor surgery earlier this month. We're thankful to hear he is recovering and that he will be able to assemble with us very soon.

### **ONTARIO, KITCHENER CANADA Laura Baxter**

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

*Genesis 2:18*

We rejoice with Sis. Maggie Fortenbacher as she feels led of the Lord to announce her engagement to Bro. Clint Schmidt (Winthrop, MN). Sis. Maggie's parents are Bro. Walter and Sis. Margaret Fortenbacher.

We thank each one of our visitors for coming this past month, especially ministering brothers, E-

lder Bro. Henry Dotterer (Rittman, OH) and Bro. Ron Palitto (Akron, OH). It is wonderful to be able to fellowship with brethren freely across the borders of our countries.

We welcome all visitors. If anyone is planning to visit our congregation, please contact Bro. Walter Fortenbacher (519) 699-4133 or Bro. Jim Baxter (519) 699-5081 for directions.

### **COLORADO, DENVER Chuck and Naomi Wiegand**

Greetings across the many miles! We are pleased to announce the birth of Cassidy Ann on November 23. First-time parents, Duane and Ann Wulf, certainly have much to be thankful for. Grandparents are Bro. Leonard and Sis. Violet Wulf (Morris, MN) and Jon and Peggy Gunderson (Lake Park, IA).

We are pleased to have had Sis. Missy Larson with us for the past month. We will continue to enjoy her as she plans to work here until the end of January.

We were thankful to have Bro. Tom Schambach visiting with us. We wish the Lord's blessings on him and his family.

As a hart for water panteth  
So my soul cries, Lord to thee!  
Lord, that which can bring me  
comfort

Can I find alone in Thee.  
In Thee is the living water;  
Thirsty cries to Thee I utter;  
Oh when shall I by Thy grace  
See Thee, Saviour, face to face?

*Zion's Harp #157*

As we laid our dear Sis. Sharon Braun to rest with the words to the song that provoked her repentance many years ago, we trust that she

is indeed seeing the Saviour face to face. Sis. Sharon passed away November 28 after a battle with liver cancer. She left behind four sons and four daughters: Sis. BethAnn (Bro. Mike) Martin, Kevin (Pam), Kent, Sis. Debi and Kristopher, all of Aurora, CO; Sis. Naomi (Bro. Chuck) Wiegand of Greeley, CO; Karl (Mitzi) of Union, IL; and Sarah (Paul) Lasnier of Marengo, IL.

*Note of Thanks:*

We would like to express deep appreciation for all of the kind deeds, sympathetic thoughts, and sincere prayers. We certainly have felt the love and support that all have given since Sis. Sharon's death.

*Sis. Sharon Braun's family*

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**CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE**  
**Dawn Winans - Peggy Bahler**

Lee and Joanne Luginbuhl were blessed with a son, Cody Lee. His brother, Christian, welcomes him home. His grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Kay Luginbuhl.

On December 11, Bro. Ronald and Sis. Bonnie Bahler were also blessed with a son, Benjamin Kenneth. Marcy, Seth and Nathan welcome him home. His grandparents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Aline Bahler and Bro. Wilbur and Sis. Marge Schneider.

Even the angels rejoice over one soul that repents. Four dear souls were added to the fold. Bro. Bob Balf, Bro. Pete and Sis. Delores Skipper and Sis. Sarah Lanz (Bro. Sherman and Sis. Joanne) gave their testimonies on November 18 and were baptized on November 19. We trust that God will guide these souls along the road of life and provide for them each day. Elder Bros. Ed Aeschleman (Phila-

delphia, PA) and Art Nohl (Morris, MN) were here to assist Elder Bro. Kevin. We wish them God's blessings for their labor of love.

On December 9, Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO) was here to assist Elder Bro. Kevin in reading the Memorandum. May we take heed to the warnings and concerns that our Elders have laid to our hearts, through much prayer and meditation.

We are thankful our hospital patients are recovering. They are Sis. Phyliss Gerber (Bro. Everett) and Logan Garrow (Bro. Ed and Sis. Cindy). We pray that God will be with them.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Kay Ruetter (Bro. Duane) in the passing of her grandmother, and also to Sis. Linda Lanz (Greg) in the passing of her uncle. May God comfort these loved ones in their time of sorrow.

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**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**WASHINGTON**  
**Henrietta Meyer**

We trust everyone had a blessed holiday season. As we begin the new year, may we all be even more committed to following our Lord and Saviour.

Our ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Ray Sinn (Latty, OH) and Bro. David Graf (Akron, OH). We thank these brothers, their families and others who traveled with them to serve and worship with us. Other visitors this month were from Columbus, OH and Philadelphia, PA. Reviewing our guest book shows we had ministers and other visitors from 38 of our churches. We are truly blessed to be a part of a fellowship where we can travel and meet others of like faith. We, of the Washington, DC church, are very thankful for

all who have come to visit.

We have had the opportunity to listen to the tapes from the annual Brotherhood Conference. We don't have to worry about our power source failing if we are in true fellowship with the Lord.

Services are usually held the first, third and fourth Sundays of the month at Tysons Westpark Hotel, located about one mile west of the Beltway (I-495) on Route 7. Services are at 10:30 and 12:30. Some from the area meet in the hotel dining room for breakfast at 9:00. If there is an interest expressed by our visitors, we gather Saturday evening for fellowship and/or singing. We did gather for a singing the Saturday evening our visitors from Latty were here.

For more information, assistance, or just to let us know you are in the area, please call Bro. Matt Fetter (703) 860-5947 or Bro. Ken Martin (703) 444-9085.

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**FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE**  
**Mary Ann Klaus**

The second annual overnight campout for fathers and sons was held on the December 8-9 weekend. A pig roast with all the trimmings was highlight of the festivities.

Our Sunday School Christmas program was held on December 17. As we relived Christ's birth through songs and story, we drew closer to God and the true meaning of Christmas. Even Joshua, the crippled lamb, had a special story to tell. Much time and effort was expended in preparation for the telling of Christ's birth. May those who diligently worked directly with the children and those who did the unending list of other jobs, i.e., the hours of sewing, practicing songs and speaking parts,

preparing the lunch after the program, etc. be richly blessed!

Once again, we are involved with many activities; caroling to the shut-ins, participation in the Angel Tree Program, and ringing the bell for the Salvation Army, all bring special blessings in this busy season. Even though many of us associate cold weather and snow with the Christmas season, the warm weather that we have reminds us of the warmth of the Holy Spirit and God's unconditional love. What a blessed people we are!

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### **FLORIDA, NORTH FT. MYERS** **Kay Eisenmann**

We want to thank our Lord for answered prayers, as Sis. Maria and Paul Blough have returned safely from their trip to Maria's home in the Philippines, "Cagayan De Oro City". It took them about 41 hours to get there! The typhoon that hit missed where they were, but many lost their lives. The country is a poor country as it is. Sis. Maria shared with us of some of the changes there since she came to America in 1992. There was a population of about 260,000 people. Three years later there is over 600,000 as many have moved from the mountains and surrounding areas looking for an easier life. Yet, she senses that by the serious and unhappy expressions on most faces that these people are living under a lot of stress. As we all know, it isn't what we have in this life that gives us that very special "peace"! But Satan is going to try to deceive all he can. Isn't it wonderful to know that "Greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world!" We are so thankful for a never-changing God! Oh, if we but give this won-

derful "peace" to all! But we must have faith that He who called me, will call all. We need to answer — what is your answer?

We also have a very special couple who have been such "pilgrims" here in our Ft. Myer's church; they have served here in so many ways! We just want to say a very big "thank you" to Bro. Roland and Sis. Viola Keller for all of their deeds of dedication and very good examples; they took care of the church for seven plus years! They have now celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary and have been blessed with four children: Wallase, Bro. Arthur, Eileen and Dewayne. They also have six grandchildren.

Sis. Viola's parents were Bro. Jeff and Sis. Margret Springer. She was born in Danvers, IL and they moved to Congerville, IL. She had two sisters and five brothers. She repented in 1940. Her father was a farmer.

Bro. Roland was born in Peoria, IL to Ed and Helen Keller. He has one sister. His father was a molder and a painter. Bro. Roland repented in 1957.

So we know that when God is in our lives, we are truly blessed! Thanks once again, Bro. Roland and Sis. Viola; may God continue to bless you and yours!

God has sent a very special little "Shelby Leigh" to Bro. Rob and Sis. Angie Baum. Happy grandparents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Jody Baum, Morton, IL and Victor Heindol of Kouts, IN and Sheryl Heindol of IN. We wish Bro. Rob and Sis. Angie all the blessings of being parents. May God guide them in raising their little girl in the years ahead. Babies are such special gifts from God!

We also want to say a very spe-

cial "thank you" to Bro. Marvin and Sis. Rhea Steffen for their years of reporting the news for Silver Lining, for it takes the effort of many to make this wonderful publication that we are so blessed to have. It keeps us close where miles separate us. It is so wonderful to read the "good news", as our hometown papers seem to hold nothing but bad news.

We are also thankful our winter families are starting to come back; it is always so very special to have them with us. Welcome back!

We had our Christmas program this Sunday. It was small but very special, as it puts Christmas where it belongs—with our Saviour!

Now we have a very special plea for a young family who maybe is planning to make a move to please think of our little congregation in Ft. Myers! If you are a superintendent, can read blueprints and have had three years in the construction field, there is a good chance that there could be a good job for you here. Call Bro. Dave Eisenmann at (941) 763-8138. He will help all he can.

Visiting ministers have been Elder Bros. Ben Maibach, Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL) and Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) and their wives. We are always thankful for their visits.

We will be starting a new year; let us all make it better than the last, with thankful hearts for such a loving God and faith!

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### **FLORIDA, SARASOTA** **Vera and Mary Martin**

As the new year begins, it is a time for new beginnings and a reflection on where we can improve on our walk with our Lord. It is a time to accept new challenges and set new goals as we strive upward

toward our heavenly goal. There will be changes this year; many good and a few that will weight us down, but God promises if we follow His leading and His teachings, we will have peace and joy overflowing.

*I Will Do More*

I will do more than belong - I will participate.  
 I will do more than care - I will help.  
 I will do more than believe - I will practice.  
 I will do more than be fair - I will be kind.  
 I will do more than forgive - I will love.  
 I will do more than earn - I will enrich.  
 I will do more than teach - I will serve.  
 I will do more than live - I will grow.  
 I will do more than be friendly - I will be a friend.

Our prayers have been with Sis. Helen Laparo as she recovers from recent illness and hope that God's healing touch will be with her throughout her days of convalescence.

We want to thank Bro. Bill Gerst (Alto, MI) for sharing God's Word with us while visiting Florida.

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**GEORGIA, ATLANTA**  
**Peggy Camp**

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

May we all draw closer to the Lord and serve Him more faithfully in the new year.

On December 3, we enjoyed an afternoon of Christmas caroling at two nursing homes. We were then served a chili supper at the home of Bro. Tom and Sis. Sue Waldbeiser's.

Our Sunday School students presented their Christmas program on December 17. What a blessing to hear the true story of Christmas through verse and song. May God bless the efforts of them and their teachers.

We were thankful for several visiting ministers this past month. They were Elder Bro. Charles Sauder (Tremont, IL), and Bros. Dennis Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL) and Glenn Price (Sarasota, FL).

If you are in Atlanta over a weekend, please stop in to worship with us. We meet every Sunday at 10:20 at the Renaissance Hotel. The hotel is located on I-85 at the Riverdale Rd. exit. Please contact Bro. Linn Stoller (770) 631-4554, Bro. John Brewer (770) 502-8629 or Bro. Don Sellers (770) 381-1395 for further information.

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**ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE**  
**Millie Jepson**

In the four years since the Belvidere church has been organized, there have been a number of single brothers, sisters and couples moving in and then away from the area of our church. Last month, it was very different to bid farewell to the precious little foster children of Bro. Dean and Sis. Carol Steffen. They had been a part of our congregation and the Steffen home for seven months and we will really miss them. With their captivating personalities, they won the hearts of us all. Our sincere prayers go with them and with Bro. Dean and Sis. Carol dur-

ing this adjustment in their home. We are thankful Bro. Dean and Sis. Carol will still be able to have contact with the children and we pray that God will bless those little ones and keep them in His care.

"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence."

*Matthew 19:13-15*

Our special thanks to Bro. Gary Endress (Sis. Evelyn, Bradford, IL) and Bro. Gary Anliker (Sis. Edie, Elgin, IL) for helping Bro. Dean in bringing us God's Word this past month. We also appreciate the group of brothers and sisters who came from Bradford to support our small congregation. They were a real blessing to us!

As we begin this new year of 1996, we have been reminded of the brevity of life and the promise of the Lord's coming again. It has been impressed upon us how much we need to keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus and our sights on things above. We do not know what year will be our last year, and each year the message in Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 becomes more meaningful.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

As we start this new year, our prayer is that we may ever "watch and pray" as the Lord commanded us; leaving the past to the mercy of God, the present to the love of God, and the future to the providence of God.

### ILLINOIS, BRADFORD

#### Brad & Cheryl Kupferschmid

New Year's Eve...to the world it is a time for a party; for drunkenness, noise, and confusion. To the children of God, it is a time to go into the quietness and peace of His house, to thank Him for His goodness in the past year, and to implore Him for His grace to better serve Him in the year to come. Let us in the new year ask Him to help us to stay focused on our Heavenly goal by having His Holy Word written in our hearts. May we then use this Word in our hearts to keep our minds focused on the Heavenly things and not on earthly things. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:2)

It is so uplifting to the members of our church when we see God still softening hearts and causing souls to turn to Him in repentance. Shannon Pyles and Rachel Knobloch have started repenting this month. Parents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Becky Pyles and Bro. Marvin and Sis. Diane Knobloch. It is our prayer that the Lord will work within their hearts and help them to build a firm foundation of faith in Him. It is also our hope that many more could come to Him in repentance while the day of grace is still with us.

Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL). We would ask God to bless him as we have been blessed to have him with us, and

invite him to come back soon.

Our all-church Christmas caroling was held December 2. We pray that the listeners received as much of a blessing as we, the singers, did.

### ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN Samuel and Pamela Furrer

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."  
*II Corinthians 4:6*

This past month has been a busy one for the teachers and the 16 students in our Sunday School. Although they are a small group, they do a great job involving themselves in projects and presenting programs for the church for the glorification of God. On November 18, they gathered at the church to prepare food baskets for needy people in our community. While the older children went shopping at the grocery store, the younger students worked hard decorating the boxes that groceries and Bibles would be put into for delivery. Each child enjoyed these activities, as well as making the deliveries and having lunch together at church. A few weeks later, they presented the annual Christmas program. Our programs always have a theme relating to the particular holiday being observed. This year's program focused on "The Everlasting Light". We were reminded of where light dwells (Rev. 4-5), the dawn of first light (Genesis 1:1-5), reflection of light (Matthew 5:14-16), the light of men (John 1:1-9), the birth (Luke 2) and the everlasting light (Rev. 21:9-11, 22-27). It was pointed out that while Christ was sent to be

the light of the world, it is our charge to be a reflector of that light as the moon reflects the sun. Following the afternoon program, the children and adults went caroling at a children's home and two homes for older folks. A chili supper and fellowship followed.

Visiting ministers were scarce in Champaign this past month, but we did appreciate Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL) coming to lead mid-week services the end of November. Bless you, Bro. Marvin. We are thankful that the Lord allowed our Elder Bro. Dave and Sis. Ethel Wiegand to attend a church dedication in Tengelic, Hungary in mid-November.

It is not often that we lose a member of our congregation as they go Home to be with the Lord and His angels, but the angels did come to carry Bro. Conrad W. Kaufman Home on November 27. As the most elder person in our church at age 85, Bro. Conrad was a man of a quiet nature. Born in Chicago, he had lived and worked in Peoria before moving to Champaign to retire near his son, Howard. Conrad was always well aware of what was going on in the news and was ready with current events at lunch table conversations. He had enjoyed gardening when his health allowed it, and shared the fruits of his tillage with the residents of his apartment complex. Those who knew Bro. Conrad and his gentle manner will miss him, but will frequently be reminded of him as we reach to take out songbooks and Bibles that he had repaired for the church over the years and inscribed with the date of his work. Services and burial were held in Peoria.

As the Shepherd took one of the older sheep from our flock, it was

announced that another will be added to it. Doug Mangers (Bro. Dennie and Sis. Cheryl (Schlatter) Mangers) has been announced to give his testimony of God's change in his life and be baptized on the weekend of January 13 and 14. Doug is a graduate student here at the University of Illinois. We ask for God's ever-present watch over Doug as he approaches this weekend. Our hearts are always warmed in a special way when our young people who have grown up here in our church turn their lives to the Lord. What a wonderful way for Doug to start his new year! Let us each pray for God's Spirit to reveal the need for conversion to more of those in need of it.

In summing up our Christmas season and the start of 1996, I feel that the "Light Poem" recited by our three-year-old son, Joel, and his two classmates at their first Sunday School program is especially fitting.

I have a little light  
It shines within my heart  
But if I keep it hidden,  
The world becomes so dark.  
I have a little light  
I want to let it glow  
The love of God is in me  
And I want my friends to know.

As we make our resolutions to do better in the new year, what better way than making a fresh start with the Saviour whose birth we have just celebrated and reflecting His light in our lives?

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## ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

**Kathy Schlatter**

What do you see when you look around your house? I see so much, and from folktales to thimbles, I believe my whole house is a collec-

tion. So, what are we collecting then? Sometimes I am afraid I am collecting aches and pains, excuses, and "If only's...". It would be so much better if I paid attention and collected blessings and possibilities, reasons for helping, and needs I can help fill. I have a purpose—that's why I'm still here in 1996. I had better start collecting what I need to fulfill His purpose through me.

Visitors are from God's Spirit to renew us, for we are sometimes better listeners for them. Bros. Howard Plattner (Alto, MI), Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), and Tom Luginbuhl and Fred Witzig (Altadena, CA) have been with us most recently, and we appreciate their work in the Lord. May He reward them for their zeal and willingness to be His mouthpiece.

We are also grateful to our Altadena brothers for their contribution to our church building project. As well, there are so many to commend for their work; those working with our contractor, our building committee overseers, and other volunteers who have made our worship and Sunday School assemblies workable. May the Lord give them a rich reward later and enough energy now.

Just after Thanksgiving, our Sunday School superintendent asked about what we had to be thankful for and one young lad said, "Our new baby." Nelson Earl was born November 22 to Bro. Brad and Sis. Cindy Eisenmann. He has been welcomed home by big brothers, Greg and Ryan, and sister, Julie. His grandparents have opened their hearts to him, of course, they being Bro. Harry and Sis. Bertha Jean Herrmann (Princeville, IL) and Elder Bro. Dale and Sis. Judy Eisen-

mann. He even has great-grandparents to pray for him and delight in him: Sis. Lucille Feller, Sis. Lydia Eisenmann (Fairbury, IL), and Bro. Sam and Sis. Lucille Kieser (Princeville, IL). Shortly, we as a church can give him a new baby room, but more importantly, may we all pray and support his parents as they begin to rear him in the fear and nurture of the Lord.

At this season of the year, we think of Jesus coming as a baby to dwell among us—Immanuel. Our children put on a wonderful program, with the help of several adults, including teachers and parents, in our own version of "rustic" surroundings this year with our ongoing construction. The message was brought out in so many ways, but one song put it to us pointedly: "Were you there...? Did you see...? Did you hear...? Did you know it was God's own Son, the salvation of the world begun? Did you know it was love that was sent from above to the earth?" Well, did we? In what way do our actions prove that we have again journeyed to Bethlehem, and remember His mission, fulfilled at Easter? May the words of our children lift us up and help us to be the Christian models they need to see.

In this new year, I think I must begin to be more thankful, not just inside, but aloud, spoken or written, so that people know what they mean to me, what they have done and been. I need also to be more joyous, ever rejoicing, so that all who meet me also know what Christ means to me, what He has done and been, what He is ever doing and being in my life.

I just saw an analogy, done for children, which humbles me. A teacher was speaking to her children about being gone from them

for a time. She said to remember that Jesus would always be with them. To make concrete the difference, she took off a child's mitten and showed it empty, without Christ. Then she put it on and showed that with Christ, each of us is full—and then we can be up and doing.

When He shall come with trumpet  
sound,  
Oh, may I then in Him be found;  
Dressed in His righteousness  
alone,  
Faultless to stand before the  
throne.

*Hymns of Zion #99*

### ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

**Joyce Bauer**

**Anna Marie Reutter**

The prophets were right when many years ago the birth of our Saviour was foretold. He has come in the fullness of time and we have just celebrated His birth. Now we have joy in our hearts because of the relationship we have with the Father through Jesus, His Son. This gives us hope to press into the year ahead. In the hymn "My Faith Looks up to Thee", it reads:

While life's dark maze I tread,  
And griefs around me spread,  
Be Thou my Guide.  
Bid darkness turn to day,  
Wipe sorrow's tears away,  
Nor let me ever stray from Thee  
aside.

We have a deep sense of feeling for those who have experienced grief during this season. Sis. Eldora Bonges mourns the loss of a sister whom she helped care for. She was Sis. Anna Schneider of the Remington, IN congregation.

Bro. Ed Alt and his family have experienced grief over the loss of

his sister who passed away November 21. She was Sis. Margaret Honegger Schumacher, 83, of Eureka, formerly of Peoria.

Sis. Kathryn Farney, age 94, quietly left us on December 5. Sisters, Loretta Baumgartner, Laverne Farney, Twylla Beer, Myra Farney, Nancy Hauptli, and Bro. Genny Farney mourn the loss of their dear mother. These loved ones who have gone on before us have now spent their first Christmas in Heaven.

We rejoice with Bro. Gib and Sis. Kathy Stock that on December 3, they were privileged to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. On the same Sunday, the engagement of their daughter, Sis. Danell Stock, was announced to Bro. Scott Meiss of Peoria. His parents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Doris Meiss. May God's blessings and direction be on each of these couples.

Our visiting ministers this past month have been Elder Bro. Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL), and Bros. Dennis Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL) and Frederick Knapp (Congerville, IL).

Recent surgical patients have been Sis. Verena Knapp, Jim Hofbauer, and Bro. Kenneth Bauer. Sis. Martha Brenner was hospitalized for tests and is currently at Heartland Health Care in Paxton. Sis. Elsie Bauer is hospitalized due to a heart attack.

All-church Christmas caroling for our congregation was December 14. We divided up into groups and sang at various nursing homes in our area, as well as to those who are shut in. It was a time of blessing for the giver and receiver.

Our Christmas program is scheduled for December 21, when our children will bring to us the Christmas story. We thank our

teachers and students for their willingness.

#### *Notes of Thanks:*

Sis. Eulalia Eisenmann wants to express her sincere thanks for all the beautiful cards, gifts, flowers, visits and prayers after her back injury in April. Also, for the many lovely cards that she received on her June birthday. All was greatly appreciated. May God bless you all.

The family of the late Bro. Melvin Knapp wish to express their sincere thanks for the love and prayers in their behalf, during the loss of their dear husband, dad, and grandpa.

*Reminder: Please remember to pay your Silver Lining dues.*

As we go into this new year, here are my feelings from the songwriter:

Let us then be true and faithful,  
Trusting, serving every day.  
Just one glimpse of Him in glory  
Will the toils of life repay.

—E.E. Hewitt

### ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

**Linda Knobloch**

**Arlene Banwart**

Our dear Sis. Lillian Schrock, age 100, died November 17. Bro. Jim Hoerr (Peoria, IL) conducted her funeral service here. Her husband, Bro. Jesse, our former minister, survives and resides at the Peoria Apostolic Christian Home. Our sympathy is extended to him and their sons, Bro. Roy (Sis. Polly) of Congerville, Bro. Don (Sis. Lorna) of Morton, and Bro. Melvin of Elgin.

November 18 marked the wed-



ding of Sara Knapp (Bro. Rick and Sis. Kathy) to Will Good of Eureka. His job has taken them to North Carolina. Our prayers go with them.

We thank our visiting ministers, Elder Bros. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) and Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL), and Bros. Bill Dotterer (Phoenix, AZ), Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL) and Tim Zimmerman (Lamont-Gridley, KS).

On November 26 we witnessed the marriage of Bro. Matt Rocke (Bro. Merle and Sis. Bev) of Denver and Sis. Nancy Dotterer (Bro. Bill and Sis. Sharon). Sis. Nancy had only been assembling with us for about six months and now their new home is in Denver, CO. We wish them God's blessings wherever God may lead them in His service.

Bro. Allen Schrock has had more eye surgery. His dad, Bro. Alvin Schrock, had been hospitalized a few days and is back at the Apostolic Christian Home in Eureka. At the time of this writing, Bro. Duane Steffen is in grave condition after a 20-foot fall from a grain bin. Our prayers are with this dear soul.

We are rejoicing in that another soul is repenting—Josh Knapp (Bro. Rick and Sis. Kathy).

Graduating from college are Bro. Doug (Sis. Lynnette) Knepp in Computer Science, Bro. Dale (Sis. Missy) Banwart in Finance, and Sis. Carla (Bro. Brad) Walder in Education. May they use their talents to God's glory.

We were encouraged to write on "How can I use God's Word to develop a New Year focus?" In the new year, I'd like to work on thinking more like Christ. Philippians 4:8 says, "Finally, brethren, what-

soever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." A friend gave me an inspiring book in which I was encouraged to begin thinking and speaking as they do in Heaven. There, they don't dwell on the faults and failures of other people. They speak as in Philippians 4:8. We can't feed ourselves a diet of things we disapprove of or cause one to feel anger or irritation. Love your enemies. Forgive whatever they do. Unceasingly treat them good. "...if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink..." (Romans 12:20). In the new year I hope to focus more on Christ in reading His Word and in my thoughts. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..." (Proverbs 23:7).

### ILLINOIS, ELGIN

#### Renee Anliker - Debbie Sauder

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

*Isaiah 12:2-3*

We're thankful that several souls have found, as we, that God truly is our salvation. We rejoice with Jolene Schambach (Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie) and Sarah (Paul) Lasnier who have made a beginning in repentance. May they find that the Lord is their strength and song and will reward their obedience and trust with full salvation.

Our friends, Shaena Schambach (Bro. Don and Sis. Leann), Stacia Schambach (Bro. Bob and Sis. Jeanne) and Merrilee Johnston testify of the joy and peace that comes from drinking at the wells of salvation. We look forward to their testimonies in the coming weeks.

Several from our congregation have recently been hospitalized: Greg Anliker (Bro. Gary and Sis. Edie), Sis. Ann Anliker (Bro. Rod), Bro. Dick Klopfenstein (Sis. Judy), and Eva Schambach. We are thankful they have been restored to a fair measure of health and trust God will continue to heal according to His will.

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

*Deuteronomy 18:18*

We recently enjoyed visits from brethren who grew up in our congregation and God has used as vessels in the ministry. Bros. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) and Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR) willingly shared with us all the words the Lord gave unto them. May their faithful labors be richly rewarded.

Tony Martin (Bro. Dave and Sis. Jean) and Kenda Pfaffinger (Dick and Pat, Marengo, IL) have recently announced their engagement. May God direct them as they plan for their future days together.

Someone will enter the pearly gate,

By and by...

Taste of the glories that there await,

Shall you? shall I?

*Hymns of Zion #86*

We often find life to make us anxious, fretful and at times overwhelmed. But once our eye of faith is again affixed on the pearly gate, awaiting our arrival on yonder shore, how quickly the cares of this life diminish as we continue our climb towards that heavenly rest. Sis. Sharon (Herman) Braun's final days were quickly completed on November 28 when God took her Home to taste of the glories awaiting the true and faithful. We offer our love, prayers and support during this difficult time to Herman and her dear children, as well as others in the family. Her children include: Karl (Mitzi, Union, IL); Kevin (Pam), Kent, Sis. Debi, Kristopher and Sis. BethAnn (Bro. Mike) Martin, all of Aurora, CO; Sis. Naomi (Bro. Chuck) Wiegand of Greeley, CO; and Sarah (Paul) Lasnier of our Elgin congregation.

Our Bro. Mel Schrock also bid a final farewell to his mother this month. May each one be comforted to know that someday we also may pass through that pearly gate, taste of the glories that there await, if we are found faithful. We do not have a promise for tomorrow but must always be ready if the next call that comes is for us.

Amid the rush of the season, it was a blessing to quietly sit and listen to our Sunday School children relate "The Story that Never Grows Old". If only we could keep that spirit of Christmas alive in our hearts each day of the new year. None of us know what lies ahead during the remainder of this day, let alone the coming year, but one thing we do know--God is faithful and will provide if we but ask.

## ILLINOIS, EUREKA

### Dori Blunier

We rejoice with Bro. Matt Rocke (Bro. Merle and Sis. Bev) and Sis. Nancy Dotterer (Bro. Bill and Sis. Sharon of Phoenix, AZ) who were joined in marriage on November 26 in Congerville. As Bro. Matt and Sis. Nancy begin their life together, may God bless them and be unto them a Shepherd. They are currently living in the Denver area and will soon be moving to Florida and making Fort Lauderdale their church.

The weekend of December 2 and 3 we were thankful to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of Cindy Stoller (Bro. Stan and Sis. Lola) and Maury Crawford (Sis. Joyce). We were all renewed in our faith as we listened to the work of the Lord, and certainly pray that God will give them the grace and faith to stay true to the vows which they have made.

Bro. Dale and Sis. Lavonne Schumacher are happy for the birth of a daughter on December 6. Brooke Lavonne is welcomed home by her brother, Seth, and grandparents, Bro. Bob and Sis. Charlene and Bro. Larry and Sis. Becki Endress of Bradford.

Kyle David was born to first-time parents, Bro. Matt and Sis. Sara Zimmerman, on December 11. Kyle's grandparents are Bro. Leland and Sis. Laurene and Bro. Bill and Sis. Karen Ringger of Bradford. May these couples be blessed with godly wisdom as they love and teach their children.

On Thanksgiving day we were glad for the ministry of Bro. Trent Meiss (Iowa City, IA), Bro. Floyd Frieden (Elgin, IA), and Bro. Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO). On the Sunday of the baptisms, Elder Bro. Wes Knapp (Goodfield, IL), Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Con-

gerville, IL), Bro. Art Baurer (Princeville, IL), and Bro. Bob Stoller (Lamar, MO) were with us to share in the services. We are grateful for each one's willingness to serve as God has asked them to do.

Our prayers are with Bro. Sam Leman (Sis. Aldine) as he fell and broke his hip. He is now spending time in the nursing home recuperating. May God continue to heal.

"...as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage:..."

*Joshua 1:5,6*

These promises that the Lord spoke to Joshua can also be ours to embrace as we begin a new year.

## ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

### Sally Fehr - Thelma Slagel

#### *For The Year Ahead*

And I said to the man who  
stood at the gate of the year:  
Give me a light that I may  
tread safely into the unknown!

And he replied,  
Go out into the darkness  
and put thine hand into  
the Hand of God.

That shall be to thee better  
than light and safer than  
a known way.

—*M. Louise Haskins*

The beginning of a new year marks another milestone. We tend to dwell more on the future at this time and we may become a bit apprehensive. What will 1996 hold for us? I was reminded of this recently when reading the following Scripture: "It is of the Lord's mer-

cies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23) The beginning of a new year means nothing to God. Every morning is a new beginning for His compassion, His faithfulness and His grace. Let us focus on this in this new year, trusting in His Hand and His Word to guide us day by day.

Bro. Vernon and Sis. Pat Hartman observed their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house hosted by their children, Bro. John and Sis. Rosemary and Sis. Donna and Bro. Dale Banwart, on November 25. May God bless them for their example to all of us in their years of faithfulness to one another.

Bro. Reuben and Sis. Marie Huber are grandparents of a little girl, Sarah Ann, born November 7 to Ray and Julie Huber. Sarah has two brothers, Michael, 6, and Robert, 3.

Send, Lord, Thy holy teaching  
To us in humble preaching,  
Yet in the Spirit's pow'r,  
That we, a new creation,  
In love and true devotion  
May bear our burden ev'ry hour.

*Zion's Harp #207*

How thankful we are for those humble servants who are willing to minister the Word of Life to us. May God richly reward Bro. Marvin Schmidgall (Eureka, IL), Bro. Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), Bro. Earl Gerber (Forrest, IL) and Bro. Ralph Garber (Morton, IL) who visited us this month, as well as our home ministers. We don't often write about it, but we are very thankful for them also.

"For this cause shall a man

leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;"

*Mark 10:7*

We were thankful to hear of the engagement of Eric Platz (Delmar and Glenda) to Jeannie Mueller (Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida, Forrest). They are planning a February 4 wedding.

Think ye the near approach of  
death  
Can make our hearts feel sadly?  
Ah, no, when "Come" the Father  
saith,  
We'll travel homeward gladly.  
Far better 'twere  
That we were there!  
"Oh, would that He would call us!"  
We sigh when grief befalls us.  
*Zion's Harp #206*

Sis. Donna Schieler was called Home on November 19. She was 48. May God comfort her mother, Sis. Sally; sisters, Sis. Sandra Stoller (Bro. Dale), Sis. Marlene Kupferschmid, Forrest (Bro. Orville); and brothers, Bro. Harvey (Sis. Janice) and her twin, Duane (Diane). We will miss Sis. Donna's presence and her quiet light.

Our prayers are with Sis. Marie Kilgus who met with accident and has been in the hospital.

*Notes of Thanks:*

We sincerely thank everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy during our time of sorrow. All your love, thoughtfulness and prayers are greatly appreciated. May God bless you.

*The family of Sis. Donna Schieler*

A sincere and heartfelt thanks to each and every one for their love and prayers and many kind deeds shown to us during the sudden loss

of our dear loved one. May God bless you.

*Joan Gaston and family*

Bro. Reuben Bach has been doing some research on the whereabouts of two brothers who preached the Word many years ago in our area and later moved away. He shared with us the following impressive account told to him by Bro. Emil Hess of Kansas:

"This all took place in Europe when Bro. Hess was a young man. Their way of travel was by walking, even to church. These humble, plain Apostolic people caused a certain man whose house they passed to become hateful, having a cold heart with no love.

One Sunday he told them, 'If you pass here again, I will shoot you.'

There was a fork in the road just before this man's house. When the next Sunday came, they stopped at this fork and debated which way to go. If they had gone the other way, they would have had to walk much farther to get to church. So they decided to go past his house.

When they came to his house, sure enough, he came out with a gun in his hand. Our Heavenly Father was looking down from above. The gun in his hand meant nothing. The strength in his arms was taken. He stood there and they walked on to church.

It wasn't long that this hateful man began walking to church with them. Still much better, some time later, he became a brother in our church."

—Humbly submitted by Bro. Reuben Bach

**ILLINOIS, FORREST**  
**Marlene Walter -**  
**Mary Bachtold**

The following poem was written for our Christmas program and conveys our feelings as we see work progressing on our new church building and our times to assemble in the present church drawing to a close.

*The Haven*

We've gathered here this evening  
 To reflect on Jesus' birth,  
 To hear the blessed story  
 Of Christ's short time on earth.

Christ's followers were faithful  
 When He to Heaven ascended.  
 They carried forth His doctrine  
 And to the church attended.

Now many years have passed  
 But the church remains sincere.  
 And it is up to you and I  
 To keep this faith so dear.

For many years we've gathered  
 And felt His Holy nearness  
 In this edifice on James Street  
 Where the Truth is preached in  
 clearness.

In Sunday School the children  
 Learn of Jesus' love  
 And of the narrow pathway  
 That leads to Heaven above.

Here many a soul gave testimony  
 Of salvation wrought in their life  
 Here many a soul was baptized  
 And began their new walk of life.

And as North and South merged  
 To form this congregation,  
 So many a wife and husband  
 Have vowed their adoration.

Some who once assembled here  
 Have left their mortal shell,  
 Yet their souls live on and on  
 And in eternity now dwell.

And so this building's shell  
 Is drawing to a close.  
 The Lord has richly blessed us  
 The hallway overflows.

'Tis not the manger, but the cross  
 That sets the spirit free.  
 'Tis not the building, but His spirit  
 That lets us worship Thee.

God has led us to a new site  
 To meet and worship Him.  
 As we ponder on the memories  
 here  
 Our eyes with tears grow dim.

Yet no matter where we gather  
 May we strive to do Thy will  
 To carry forth Thy doctrine  
 And remain a haven still.

May God richly reward Bros.  
 John Stoller (Leo, IN), Virgil  
 Metzger (Chicago, IL), Trent  
 Meiss (Iowa City, IA) and Jim  
 Plattner (Princeville, IL) for shar-  
 ing His Word with us this past  
 month.

As the angels in Heaven rejoice  
 over one sinner that repents, so we  
 are rejoicing with Tim Mueller  
 (Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida) and Am-  
 ber Adams (Sis. Sharon). We pray  
 that God will grant them the  
 needed grace to completely sur-  
 render their lives to Him.

Gretchen Ebach (Bro. Lyle and  
 Gloria) and James Sitman (James  
 and Nancy, Wheeling, IL) were  
 united in marriage on September  
 30. We wish them God's blessings  
 as they walk together as husband  
 and wife.

Wedding plans are in the future  
 for three young couples as they  
 have announced their engage-  
 ments. A February 4 wedding is  
 being planned by Jeannie Beth  
 Mueller (Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida)  
 and Eric Platz (Delmar and  
 Glenda, Fairbury, IL). Also plan-  
 ning a February wedding are Eric

Schaffer (Bro. John and Sis. Sally)  
 and Michelle Bahler (Carlos and  
 Marty, Fairbury, IL). Abby Nuss-  
 baum (Bro. Terry and Sis. Deb)  
 and Brian Rinkenberger (Jack and  
 Carolyn Rinkenberger, Fairbury,  
 IL and Les and Barb Bauman, El  
 Paso, IL) have set March 9 as their  
 wedding day. May God lead and  
 guide them as they make plans to  
 take this important step.

Our hospital patients this  
 month were Vicki Schaffer, Wil-  
 liam Fehr and Reuben Stork. It is  
 our prayer that God will restore  
 health and strength to them.

We extend sympathy to Sis.  
 Marlene Kupferschmid (Bro.  
 Orville) in the death of her sister,  
 Sis. Donna Schieler (Fairbury, IL),  
 and Henry Friedman (Sis. Marge)  
 in the passing of his brother,  
 Harold, of Fairbury. May God  
 comfort them in this time of sor-  
 row.

**ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD**  
**Barb Brim**

"Because thou hast been my  
 help, therefore in the shadow of  
 thy wings will I rejoice. My soul  
 followeth hard after thee: thy right  
 hand upholdeth me."

*Psalms 63:7-8*

As this new year begins, let us  
 all with anticipation and much re-  
 joicing look out from beneath the  
 shadow of His wing and look up,  
 confident that we are another year  
 closer to joining the angelic chorus  
 at Heaven's gates. May we give  
 thanks and praise continually to  
 our great God!

Our Goodfield congregation is  
 very thankful for the three new  
 souls added to our church family  
 this month. We extend love and  
 congratulations to Bros. Luke

Rocke (Bro. Mark and Sis. Connie) and Jim Washer, and our new sister, Michelle Knapp (Sis. Judy and Stan Knapp), and pray that their new lives in the Lord will be blessed by His hand.

Our congregation was also increased by the addition of a new little baby girl born to our friends, Mike and Michelle Ott. Micah Leigh was born November 1 and is welcomed home by Megan and Morgan and her grandparents, Bro. Don and Sis. Carolyn Ott and Annette Morman, Normal, and Curt Morman, Morton. What a wonderful Christmas blessing! May the Lord be at her side always.

Our Christmas program was enjoyed by all as we heard of our Saviour's birth through the songs and words of the Sunday School children. It is always an uplifting experience to witness. We are thankful for all the teachers and helpers who work so diligently with our most precious of the Lord's blessings.

We extend love and prayers of comfort to our dear Sis. Nancy Whitaker, and Bro. Delton, upon the passing of Sis. Nancy's brother. God keep you in the palm of His hand and sustain you through this time of sorrow.

We give thanks to our visiting ministers and their wives who shared with us this month. Thank you, Elder Bro. Charles Sinn (Sis. Karen, Ft. Scott, KS), Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Sis. Shirley, Morton, IL), Bro. Doyle Frauhiger (Sis. Jane, Bluffton North, IN), Bro. Brian Huber (Sis. Jacki, Francesville, IN), and Bro. Steve Martin (Sis. Vicki, Eureka, IL) for your generosity of spirit.

### ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY Perry A. Klopfenstein

"I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys."

*Song of Sol. 2:1*

One recent Sunday we sang the beautiful hymn, "Jesus, Rose of Sharon". (*Hymns of Zion #285*)

Jesus, Rose of Sharon, bloom  
within my heart;  
Beauties of Thy truth and holiness  
impart,  
That where'er I go my life may  
shed abroad  
Fragrance of the knowledge of the  
love of God.

Jesus, Rose of Sharon, sweeter far  
to see  
Than the fairest flowers of earth  
could ever be.  
Fill my life completely, adding  
more each day  
Of Thy grace divine and purity, I  
pray.

Sharon was a plain with very rich soil capable of producing a magnificent crop of beautiful, wild flowers. The "rose" was a striking and sweet-scented plant reflecting great beauty.

The "rose" of Sharon is a symbol of the aura of beauty exemplified by the holiness and divinity of Christ. May our lives be full of God's grace so we may reflect this great beauty each day.

On December 2, two dear souls were taken into the church. Our two new loved ones in faith are Bros. Brian Stoller (Bro. Larry and Sis. Ardean, and the late Sis. Carol) and Bro. James Funk, son of Bro. Virgil and Sis. Shirley Funk of Congerville.

Also, on December 2, we rejoiced on hearing the marriage engage-

ment of Bro. Roger Funk to Sis. Bonnie Maubach, both of our Gridley congregation. Her parents are Harold and Teresa Maubach of Henry, IL. His parents are Bro. Virgil and Sis. Shirley Funk.

On Sunday, December 16, our Sunday School children held their annual Christmas program. We appreciate their efforts, and also wish to thank their teachers.

We appreciated the visits of ministering Bros. John Steiner (Oakville, IA on December 2), Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL, Thanksgiving Day), and Brace Wieland (Leo, IN on Dec. 17). May God add the increase to their labors.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

We wish to express our appreciation and thanks to all who so kindly shared in remembering our 50th wedding anniversary. Our thanks go to all who attended from near and far. Also, for the many cards, gifts, best wishes, and love. A special thanks to our children, grandchildren, and others who helped plan and host this joyous occasion. God bless each of you!

*Bro. Elmer and Sis. Marjorie Witzig*

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### ILLINOIS, MORTON Phyllis Farney Cheryl Wuthrich

Bro. Douglas Clauss was called to his eternal reward quite suddenly. His funeral was November 27. May our Heavenly Father comfort and bless his two brothers, Stanley of Fort Wayne and Bro. Ken of Morton; his sister, Connie Moreno, of Fort Wayne; and his other relatives and friends. The Home for the Handicapped community as well as all the Morton congregation will miss him.

Bro. Keith and Sis. Janice

Schick welcomed into their hearts and home Justin Keith. Justin was born November 25. His big sister is Kelly and his grandparents are Bro. Ted and Sis. Mary Staker and Bro. Randy and Sis. Jane Schick, all of Morton.

Our prayers were answered and we are so thankful that our Elder Bro. Joe and Sis. Shirley Braker arrived home safely from India. Bro. Bob and Sis. Ellie Pflederer have arrived home safely from visiting in Albania. Praise God for His traveling mercies.

The Morton congregation again held its traditional Christmas activities. On December 10, the Sunday School presented their Christmas program. We never tire of hearing our young people present the Christmas story in verse and hymn. December 17 was our all-church Christmas caroling. We were able to sing to our many loved ones who are shut-in and/or in ill health. What a blessing the carolers receive!

We wish to thank Bro. Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL) for ministering God's Holy Word to our congregation. It is always good to have the Rassis "home" to Morton.

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## ILLINOIS, PEORIA

### Cara Nussbaum

As we look to 1996, let it be our desire to live each day as if it were our last. We are reminded in II Peter 3:10-14, "...the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and

godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." If we live with this expectation, I believe we will each strive harder to be more obedient to God and more loving to those around us.

I once heard one of our ministers say, "As the world grows darker, our lights will be brighter."

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

*Matthew 5:16*

A precious baby girl, Kaitlyn Nicole, was born to Dave and Cheryl Byrne on November 7. Grandparents are Bro. Wayne and Sis. Pearl Miller (Bern, KS) and George and Alice Trakas and Robert Byrne of Niantic, CT.

We were saddened last month by the deaths of Sis. Louise Koehl and Sis. Margaret Schumacher. May God comfort and bless their families.

We extend our thanks to Bro. Gerald Sutter (Taylor, MO) for his labors of love.

We pray for God's healing hand upon Sis. Clara Veatch, Sis. Lucy Endress and Bro. Floren Stoller, all who were hospitalized recently.

A very blessed New Year to everyone.

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## ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

### Joanna Herrmann

January, the time of new beginnings, "...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14)

Lord, I am fondly, earnestly  
longing  
Into Thy holy likeness to grow;  
Thirsting for more and deeper  
communion,  
Yearning Thy love more fully to  
know.  
Open the wells of grace and  
salvation,  
Pour the rich streams deep into  
my heart;  
Cleanse and refine my tho't and  
affection,  
Seal me and make me pure as  
Thou art.

*Hymns of Zion #171*

On December 4, Whitney Rose was born to Bro. Doug and Sis. Cindy Streitmatter. She was welcomed home by older siblings, Rachel and Chelsea. Her grandparents are Bro. Alfred and Sis. Virginia Streitmatter and Bro. Ken and Sis. Edith Plattner of Peoria.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Richard Stahl at the passing of his sister, Sis. Anna Stahl. May he feel God's nearness, for "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." (Psalm 147:3). Sis. Anna passed away December 14 at Parkhill Medical Complex where she had been a patient since July.

"...What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

*Matthew 19:6*

On December 17, the engagement of Sis. Robin Steiner to Bro. Darwin Stahl (Bradford, IL) was announced. Sis. Robin is the daughter of Bro. Harold and Sis. Karen and Bro. Darwin is the son of Dean and Sis. Charlotte Stahl of Bradford.

We were privileged to hear again the miraculous story of Jesus' birth. The Sunday School Christmas program was December 17. I am guilty of not fully appreciating the humble beginning of our Lord and the great miracle of His birth. It is so good to hear and to visualize it through a child's eyes. God bless the dear children!

*Note of Thanks:*

We sincerely want to thank everyone who so kindly remembered us during our loved one's short illness and sudden passing. The many kind expressions of love, the cards, gifts, and memorials; also the visits and prayers have all meant so very much, and were truly a part of God's comfort. May He richly bless you for caring and sharing.

*The family of Bro. Daniel Feucht*

**ILLINOIS, ROANOKE****Annie Leman - Jana Gastman**

December 10 was a blessed day for our congregation as our Sunday School students proclaimed the Lord's birth through song. May God bless these precious souls for their efforts.

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

*Matthew 10:7*

We are thankful for our visiting ministers who shared the Word with us this month: Elder Bro. Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL), and Bros. Don Braker (Kansas City, MO) and Jon Schmidgall (Oakville, IA).

Nate and Chris Fehr are the happy parents of Joshua Ryan, born December 5. Joshua has a big brother, Nicholas. Grandparents are Bro. Ben and Sis. Helen Fehr and Roger and Sandy Herbst, all of Roanoke.

Brienna and Trent Moore have a new baby sister, Kalla Nicole, born December 7 to Brian and Kris Moore. Grandparents are Bro. Lyle and Sis. MaryLou Martin of Roanoke and Michael and Helen Moore of Morton.

May the Lord be near our hospital patients this month: Sis. Clara Fischer, Sis. Bev Luginbuhl (Bro. Scott), and Brad Sauder (Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan).

*Note of Thanks:*

We want to express our deep appreciation for your love, prayers, cards, memorials, food, and expressions of sympathy at the passing of our dear husband, father, and grandfather, Ervan Rokey. May God bless each and every one of you for giving of yourself.

*The family of Ervan Rokey*

**ILLINOIS, TREMONT**  
**Barb Dill - Barb Kaeb**

"...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."

*Philippians 3:13*

The dawning of a new year provides an excellent opportunity to

wipe the slate clean and make a fresh start. Those who know the Lord are able to do this in a way that has special meaning. Having confessed their sin (forgetting what is behind), they can face the future (reaching to the things that are before), determined to attain new heights of spiritual victory. Remembering God's faithfulness and forgetting past mistakes can make entering the new year a time of joyous anticipation.

—*Our Daily Bread*

On November 30, a daughter was born to Joe and Tina Reinbeck. She is their first child. They named her Ashley Lynn. Happy and thankful grandparents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Barbara Reinbeck and Bob and Carla Jones.

Bro. Arnold Rassi (Sis. Lydia) was a surgical patient recently. We are happy to report that he is now home recuperating.

**ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON****Denise Romersberger**  
**Sue Ruppert**

It's hard to believe that another month of blessings has come and gone so very quickly. We have so much to be thankful for! One thing that we appreciate is when ministering brothers come to visit and share God's Word with us. This month Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL) and Bros. Walt Herrmann (Princeville, IL) and Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL) came to be with us. Thank you for all of your efforts.

Bro. Marshall and Sis. Jan Heindl were again home for a few weeks from Mexico. They both have many stories to tell of the needs that they see around them every day. They have seen the Lord working in the hearts of the

people, and are thankful for the love, prayers, and support that flows from "up north". They encourage anyone who wants to visit to contact them. They love to have people come see them.

December has been a busy month with many activities surrounding the Christmas season. These activities have included singing Christmas carols at nearby prisons (in Spanish, no less!), assisting with meal preparation at Faith, Hope and Love in Peoria, Christmas caroling to people who are homebound, as well as to others, and the Sunday School Christmas program. I am sure there are other activities that have taken place that this writer is unaware of. We all receive a blessing when we give of ourselves in these ways. May God be glorified in all that we do.

We are glad that Bro. Tim and Sis. Julie Walder have begun attending services with us. Job opportunities brought them here from the Fairbury area. Welcome to Washington, and welcome to the family!

God often opens doors for us as He leads us through life. We just need to be willing to go through those doors when the Spirit gives us a nudge. I look at my own experience in the work world and know that job changes came suddenly, without much contemplation. In fact, it has always been somewhat of a surprise to find myself in a new position. It has never been a case of being particularly unhappy or dissatisfied with where I was at, but I would find myself doing something different within a matter of weeks after off-handedly applying for an open position that I heard about, or saw on the job board. When I would stop and

think about it, I would wonder "How did that happen?" I am thankful to say that all of the job changes I have experienced have been good for me, and I know that it was my Heavenly Father directing me to where He wanted me at that time. If I would have resisted the gentle urges, I would have missed out on many blessings. Thank you, Lord, for going before me. What would we do without the love of an all-seeing, all-knowing God?

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

*Proverbs 3:5,6*

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**INDIANA, BLUFFTON**  
**Jaci Gerber - Brenda Bertsch**

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

*Galatians 5:1*

We rejoice with our new converts, Doug Swisher (Julie) and Elizabeth Aschliman (Bro. Darryl and Sis. Peg). We wish them God's grace and His abundant mercy in this new walk.

We wish God's blessings to Bro. Dan and Sis. Trisha Tucker who were united as one on November 26. They will be making their home in Athens, AL.

Two couples have recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversaries. They are Bro. Bill and Sis. Marge Ringger, and Bro. Bill and Sis. Mildred Neuenschwander.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those spending time in the

hospital. They are: Bro. Paul Gerber (Sis. Mary Jo), Bro. Russell Moser (Sis. Dorothy), Catherine Neuenschwander (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Mary Jo), Sis. Naomi Ringger (Bro. Orville), Bro. Dan Habegger, Sis. Jeni Schwartz (Elder Bro. Ed Jr.), Bro. Kenneth Schaefer (Sis. Alice), Sis. Mildred Neuenschwander (Bro. Bill), Sis. Glenda Meyer (Bro. Dale), Bro. Russell Steffen (Sis. Alice), and Sis. Barbara Pfister (Bro. Tom).

Bro. Stacey and Sis. Gwen Stucky welcomed a new son on November 22. Brier Richard joins big sister, Breann, at home. Grandparents are Bro. Rick and Sis. Cathy Stucky and Bro. Ken and Sis. Judy Kipfer.

A new daughter joins Bro. Denny and Sis. Kathy Meyer's home. Jenna Nicole is welcomed by Alyssa and Paige and also by grandparents, Bro. Harold and Sis. Violet Meyer and Bro. Don and Sis. Vyra Stoller (Gridley, IL).

In closing, we want to thank Elder Bro. Everett Hari (Bloomington, IL) for sharing the Word with us recently.

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**INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH**  
**Susan Harris - Kay Steffen**

We thank and appreciate our visiting ministers, Bros. Ben Mantz (Junction, OH) and William Dotterer (Phoenix, AZ) for bringing the message to us. God bless them for their efforts.

We rejoice with our newest convert, Mike Lehman, who has surrendered in repentance. May God grant grace that more may come and taste of His goodness.

November 19 was the wedding of Bro. Obed Gerber and Sis. Henrietta (Mantz) Gerber (Junction, OH). May God richly bless them with many years together.



Joe and Michelle Barger have been blessed with the birth of their daughter, Hailey Jo, on November 12. Grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Carol Lane and Jennifer Barger. How precious is this gift of life from God. Our prayers will be with little Hailey and her family, for she came very early.

There are those who have suffered the loss of loved ones. We sympathize with Bro. Jerry and Cary Gerber in the loss of their mother, Melvena Gerber, on November 25. Bro. Dave Mueller's mother, Doris Mueller (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), passed away on November 26. God be with Bro. Dave and his three brothers and one sister. Also, Sis. Dula Gilliom went on to be with her Lord on November 26. She will be greatly missed by her sisters, Sis. Nora Gilliom, Sis. Vi Isch and Elva Blocker.

Chad Aeschliman (Bro. Alan and Sis. Debbie) spent a brief time in the hospital this month. Also, let's keep Daniel Shorb and his family in our thoughts and prayers.

We had two couples celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary: Bro. Robert and Sis. Bonnie Gerber on December 2 and Bro. Wendel and Sis. Wanda Gerber on December 16. We rejoice with them.

As the New Year begins, may we always "strive aright" to live a life pleasing and acceptable to our Father in Heaven.

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**INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE**  
**Val Gutwein**

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

*John 6:63*

What a beautiful verse to think about as a new year is dawning and we strive in our daily lives to walk in step with the Saviour. Life today is so busy and so stressful that we need to make ourselves slow down and let the Word of Life truly live in us. Keeping our thoughts, intentions, and plans under the obedience of Christ is a starting point. With renewed zeal for the Word, and a letting go of the world, may we find life abundant in the One who came to give His all for us.

We had a beautiful time of renewing the spiritual man recently as we shared Communion together as a body of believers. Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) was here to assist Elder Bro. Wendell in this important work. What a blessing to remember that someday the true Bride of Christ will sup with Him in heavenly places. Praise be to God our Saviour.

With love in their hearts for one another, Phyllis Cox and Irvin Knapp were united in marriage on November 25. We pray that God will bless their love for each other and may His guiding hand direct them as they walk the pathway of life together now.

We wish to express our sympathy to Sis. Darlene Pfladderer (Bro. Larry) at the loss of her grandmother, Sis. Melvena Gerber (Bluffton North, IN), and to Sis. Mary Ann Gutwein (Bro. Glen) at the passing of her stepmother, Sis. Emma Haab (Milford, IN). It is hard to say goodbye to those who are so dear to us and with whom we have fond memories. May God fill the voids that those that lose a loved one feel and may His grace be sufficient in the time of sorrow and heartache.

We heard the Christmas story

told again by our Sunday School children on December 17. It was a nice remembrance of the true meaning of Christmas. Later that same evening we were able to divide into groups and shower the community with the sounds of the glorious songs telling of the birth of our Saviour. What a blessed time of year.

Thanks to the brothers who came and helped share the life-giving Word this past month: Bros. Neal Widmer (Wolcott, IN), Dan Kilgus (Remington, IN) and Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN). We trust God to reward their efforts spent on our behalf.

In closing, we at Francesville would like to express what a joy and privilege it is to have the opportunity to host the winter Elder Conference and what blessings we are receiving as we plan and prepare for this event. The Conference will take place, Lord willing, on February 15, 16 and 17. We extend a warm invitation to the Elders and their wives, and we ask for the prayers of all the churches as the time draws near. We trust that the Lord will bless the meeting of these dear brothers as they seek the Lord's will in the strengthening of the many congregations across the country. May God's protection be upon them as they travel and may each one of us take the time to pray for His perfect will to be done.

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**INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS**  
**Sandy Lichtle**  
**Lauretta Schafer**

On November 18 and 19, Sarah Bollier (Bro. Ron and Sis. Edie) gave her testimony and was baptized before a cloud of witnesses. We welcome her as our sister in faith. Sarah is the granddaughter

of Bro. Jack and Sis. Velma Bollier (Leo, IN) and Bro. Elmer and Sis. Marge Witzig (Gridley, IL). Elder Bros. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL), Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Mark Gerber (Bluffton, IN) and their wives were with us for Sarah's special weekend.

On December 2, we had the precious opportunity to hear the Memorandum of our general church Conference. Elder Bros. Andy Virkler (Bay City, MI) and Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) and their wives were with us for this uplifting and encouraging evening.

Other visiting ministers and their wives were Bros. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL), Jon Zeller (Morton, IL) and Brian Huber (Francesville, IN). We appreciate the spiritual food and thank you for serving us.

Aaron Zeller (Bro. Eric and Sis. Ginny) is seeking his soul's salvation. Also, Joy Perl (wife of Jim Perl) is committing her life to the Lord. May we pray for all our "babes in Christ" as they put off the old man and learn to walk in the newness of life patterned after Christ.

If you made New Year's resolutions, are you keeping them? As Christians, we should make our resolutions daily 365 days a year for the rest of our lives to walk as God would want us to walk for that day. Are you daily taking the time to let God speak to you through His Word? Just as we daily use soap to cleanse our physical bodies, may we daily use God's Word to cleanse our spiritual lives. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3) If you let God speak to you daily, the pruning of your life through spiritual convic-

tion should allow you to bring forth more fruit. Why does God want that? "...that your joy might be full." (John 15:11) God wants us to live with joy and peace in our hearts. Jesus said, "...I am the way, the truth, and the life..." (John 14:6) Jesus came that we might have life and have life more abundantly. If we daily have the cleansing of the Word, we will live abundantly in joy and peace.

### INDIANA, LACROSSE

#### Judy Gudeman

Greetings of love in this New Year! May God bless each of you with health and happiness.

We had four visiting ministers this past month: Bros. Gene Lehman (Wolcott, IN) and Larry Wenninger (Latty, OH), and Elder Bros. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) and Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL). We are grateful for their efforts, as we are for our home ministers throughout the year. Elder Bro. Dale assisted Elder Bro. Curt in reading the Memorandum. It's always good to be reminded of our duties and responsibilities, as well as blessings, for children of God.

Our young people treated us with a beautiful Christmas program this year. Thanks to all of you teachers, too! For the last Christmas hymn, the teachers, young group, and entire Sunday School were joined by the preschoolers in singing "Silent Night". It was touching to think of that first Silent Night—with a huge choir of angels singing "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" May we live each day in this new year in such a way that we may sing in the heavenly choir at the end of our lives!

We have a lost item to be

claimed: A child's pair of gold wire-rimmed glasses with tortise-shell stems. Hopefully, one of our visiting Sunday School students is looking for them.

### INDIANA, LEO

#### Ethelyn Schlatter

We were grateful to have visitors on December 6. They were Elder Bro. Phil Stettner, Bros. Robert Meyer, Sr., Robert Meyer, Jr. and their wives from Bluffton North. Bro. Robert Meyer, Jr. brought us the message from God's Word at our mid-week service. He was one of our volunteers during construction, and this is the first time he had the opportunity to see the finished product.

The Sunday School children presented the Christmas program on December 10, which was followed by a dinner at the church. Our prayer is that the messages will not only stir our hearts, but bear fruit in the hearts of our precious children. The children adopted two families for Christmas and brought canned and packaged food that day to be packed later with clothing and toys.

Andrew Bertsch, who had been a resident of The Cedars, quietly passed on to his eternal rest in the hospital on December 9. His funeral was December 12 at the church. He would have been 93 on December 31. Nieces and nephews survive him.

How can I use God's Word to develop a New Year's focus? The thought came to me, how nice to find the answer in the messages of our brothers who minister here. After reviewing sermon tapes, I gleaned these thoughts:

Totally submitted to God's Word.

In prayer and supplication to

the Lord, let these teachings be part of our life.

The Lord expects us to witness, be "Salt and Light", remembering that we are a part of the Body of Christ. If we go beyond the guidelines of the Word, we not only bring reproach to ourselves, but to the Body of Christ.

If we truly have the mind of Christ, we care enough to remove our will out of the picture and let Him do what He wants in our life.

The Word doesn't bind us up, it allows us to use our gifts.

When we approach God, do we believe that He has the answer? Are we willing to take His answer, whatever His answer might be, and have that apply to our life?

"...let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." (James 1:6-7)

The real answer is knowing the One we are coming to when we read God's Word.

Let us be sensitive to when we feel that stirring within us, that we "quench not the Spirit" (I Thess. 5:19).

On December 16, Bro. Steve and Sis. Marsha Scheitlin became the happy parents of Jacob Albert. His grandparents are Bro. Al and Sis. Joan Scheitlin (Elgin, IL) and Bro. Darl and Sis. Iva Stoller (Latty, OH). He is a special blessing to all of them. On December 19, a large group met at the fellowship center to go Christmas caroling. After dividing into four groups, we visited the shut-ins at The Cedars, the elderly and lonely.

God's blessings in this new year.

**INDIANA, MILFORD**  
**Marguerite Hoerr**  
**Judy Longcor**

"Thank ye the Lord! Give thanks to the Lord." (Hymns of Zion #245). Sunday, November 19, was our Thanksgiving program and we were reminded over and over in the program through songs and Bible verses of how blessed people we are. May we always appreciate the faith of our fathers.

Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL) assisted Elder Bro. Jesse Beer in the provings and baptisms of our four new lambs added to the fold. Our new brothers and sisters in Christ are Barry Beer, Marc Beer, Holly Beer and Rachel Beer. When we hear of their experiences of their conversion, it makes us think back of how it was for us. We just pray for them each day that they may live true and faithful so that their covenant will not be broken. We truly have a duty to pray for one another, as we all are striving for that one common goal.

Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) was with us on Saturday evening, December 2, to assist Elder Bro. Jesse Beer with the reading of the Memorandum. It was a blessing to be able to sit and hear of the concerns our Elders have for the flock and also the words of encouragement to us. For me, it's a time to examine my life and see if I'm following as close as I really should be. May God grant us the grace daily to walk a closer walk with Him.

We also want to thank Elder Bro. Ray Sinn (Latty, OH) and Bro. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH) for bringing forth God's Word to us. It was truly a day of blessing hearing His teachings. That Sunday was the Haab and Beer Christmas

gatherings, so it brought many visitors, which we were thankful to have among us.

This past month we laid to rest a faithful sister; Sis. Emma Haab (late Oliver) went to meet her Maker. She spent the past five years in the nursing home and was cared for so faithfully by her family whom she loved dearly. We want to extend our sympathy to her son, Bro. Alvin (Sis. Carol), and grandchildren, Matt and Kelly. Also, Sis. Mary Ann Gutwein (Bro. Glen), Francesville. Bro. Oliver and Sis. Emma cared for Sis. Mary Ann as a young girl and through her life as one of their own. Love in action. Parting with our loved ones is difficult and we miss them so much, but we're so thankful they have entered into a new land, where we want to meet them where parting will be no more.

We also want to extend our sympathy to Sis. Emma Rock in the passing of her brother, George Armstrong. May God comfort each of these families.

Bro. John and Sis. Dorothy Martin celebrated 66 years of being together this past week. May God continue to bless their lives as he has in the past.

Our church family all joined together this past week for Christmas caroling and a time of fellowship. The evening was enjoyed by the littlest to the oldest. May we always keep Christ in Christmas.

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."

*John 12:46*

Sunday, December 17, was our Christmas program, and we were

reminded of the greatest gift of all, a gift of love, Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Bro. Theo Beer continues to be confined to his home. His health continues to deteriorate, and he misses his faithful companion. May we all lift Bro. Theo up in prayer so his faith will sustain him.

As we enter a new year, may we each dedicate our lives to a closer walk with the Lord.

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**INDIANA, REMINGTON**  
**Amelia Schini**

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths."

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

I tried to think of a good Bible quotation for starting the new year. Finally, I decided this was a good one. Along with this, I wish all a blessed and healthy 1996.

We rejoiced to have Bro. Marshall Heinold and Sis. Jan visit us on Sunday, December 3. We appreciated your services, Bro. Marshall, and welcome you whenever you come to visit your daughter, son-in-law and four sweet grandchildren, the Tim Bahler family.

Our Christmas program was last Sunday, December 17. All the children did well. The singing was all so beautiful. As I sat back and listened, I thought, "Heaven is supposed to be more beautiful than this?" It is hard to comprehend "How beautiful Heaven must be."

This is the last time I will be writing for the Silver Lining. I have enjoyed this very much and thank all of you for your love and

kindness and patience with me.

Albert and I both felt led recently to make a tough decision. At our age, we felt the need to "move on". It has been comforting to know how God showed both of us at about the same time that the place for us to go is to a duplex near our nursing home (Parkview Haven) at Francesville. This move will not be until middle summer but, the Lord tarry, that time will be here sooner than we think. It isn't easy to leave the church one has attended all our life and the loved ones here. But we hope the miles between us will not truly separate our love for one another. I do not know yet who my successor will be. I bid all of you farewell in the Lord. May "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee." (Numbers 6:24)

*Note of Thanks:*

We want to express our deepest appreciation for all the love and attention given to our mother through your special visits, cards, food, tapes, prayers and beautiful music shared with her to lift her spirit and help her feel loved. God bless each one of you who participated in her life. Thank you also for your special support and kind expressions of sympathy to all of us when she passed away. We miss her very much.

*The family of Sis. Anna Schneider*

*Safely Home*

I am home in Heaven, dear ones;  
Oh, so happy and so bright!  
There is perfect joy and beauty  
In this everlasting light.

All the pain and grief is over,  
Every restless tossing passed;  
I am now at peace forever,  
Safely home in Heaven at last.

Did you wonder I so calmly  
Trode the valley of the shade?  
Oh! but Jesus' love illumined  
Every dark and fearful glade.

And He came Himself to meet me  
In that way so hard to tread;  
And with Jesus' arm to lean on,  
Could I have one doubt or dread?

Then you must not grieve so  
sorely,  
For I love you dearly still;  
Try to look beyond earth's  
shadows,  
Pray to trust our Father's will.

There is work still waiting for you,  
So you must not idly stand;  
Do it now, while life remaineth—  
You shall rest in Jesus' land.

When that work is all completed,  
He will gently call you Home;  
Oh, the rapture of that meeting,  
Oh, the joy to see you come!

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**INDIANA, SOUTH BEND**  
**Carolyn Frank - Gigi Schafer**

We wish to express thanks to Bro. Wayne and Sis. Shirley Lehman for arranging our annual Christmas supper invitation. This Amish meal was enjoyed along with guest ministers, Bro. Doyle and Sis. Jane Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN) and Bro. Gary and Sis. Diann Tonner (Bluffton, IN). We were also fortunate to have as our guests, Sis. Linda Joos and Sis. Marjean Lehman from the Princeville, IL congregation; Bro. Charles and Sis. Martha Rinkenger, Congerville, IL; and Bro. Ed and Sis. Lucille Gramm, Gridley, IL. This evening of fellowship concluded with a singing of Christmas hymns.

On Saturday, December 16, our church group sang Christmas car-

ols to residents at two nearby health care facilities. On the same day, prior to caroling, Bro. Dean and Sis. Mary Lehman assisted the junior high Sunday School on a shopping trip for needy families. We thank them for this worthwhile endeavor.

The Sunday School children presented our traditional Christmas program on December 17. Through recitations and songs, we were vividly reminded of the significance of this Holy season.

Included in the program were these two poems written by two of our Sunday School students, Ila Langhofer and Caleb Schafer.

The stores are filled  
With signs of the season  
Does anyone know  
Can they tell me the reason,  
That we decorate trees  
With boxes of balls  
Wreaths on the doors  
And holly in halls?  
Why do we rush about  
Wrapping and sending  
Worried about cards  
And things that need tending?  
Why is it we feel  
Great joy when we give  
Why is that day  
Such a good one to live?  
Can someone explain  
The peace that is found  
When love and life  
And joy is abound?  
What's that I hear?  
What did you say?  
We celebrate His birth  
On that day.  
Now I see!  
I understand!  
Though His love  
I can't comprehend,  
Christmas is this  
Joyous season  
The birth of Christ  
Is the reason.

—Ila Langhofer

'Twas the month before Christmas  
And all through the land,  
All the people were paying  
Their taxes by hand.  
They came from all cities  
They came from afar,  
Three wise men were coming  
They followed a star.  
They came with the idea  
To see the new king,  
On the camels' backs  
Rich gifts they did bring.

For Mary on the donkey  
And Joseph right beside,  
Were coming to pay taxes  
That the Romans had applied.  
While they were traveling  
With Mary in travail,  
At this important time  
She really was quite frail.  
She needed some rest  
So they looked for an inn,  
She gave birth to the Babe  
That saved us from sin.

The shepherds were watching  
Their flocks by the night,  
All of a sudden  
They saw a great light.  
They looked in the heavens  
And there to behold,  
Were multitudes of angels  
Bringing tidings of gold.  
The shepherds were listening  
As the angels were saying,  
In a manger full of hay  
The new king is laying.

So when you wake up  
On that Christmas morn,  
Don't you forget  
The Babe that was born.  
That Babe grew up  
To become Christ the man,  
He hung on the cross  
With nails through his hands.  
They put Him in the grave  
And then He arose,  
He went up to Heaven  
With victory over His foes.

—Caleb Schafer

## INDIANA, VALPARAISO Ken and Cindy Susdorf

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

*Luke 2:11*

Our Sunday School expressed the meaning of Christmas in thought and songs this last Sunday. We are thankful for each child and also the teachers giving of themselves.

As this new year begins, we want to thank our dear brethren for their labors in this past year: Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) and Bros. Andy and Garry. You and your families all give so much to our church family and we thank you for your love, patience, and understanding. Also, thanks for letting the Spirit work so freely in you. The Lord watch over all of you.

Visiting ministers since the last reading were Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN), and Bros. Fred Knapp (Congerville, IL), Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL) and Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO). Thank you all for coming and sharing God's Word with us. May God watch over and bless you and your families.

In a recent morning service, Colossians 3 was read and expounded to us. It seems as if this chapter is so complete in its message. Take time to read and meditate over these words. As we make our resolutions for this new year, let's make them based on things above and not on this world's standards.

We love you all and pray that God will use us all mightily in these remaining days.

**INDIANA, WOLCOTT**  
**Jody Bahler - Sheri Bahler**

Prove ye, prove ye every spirit,  
 As the Master did command it;  
 Know their works, not words  
 alone,  
 Men, as trees, by fruits are known.  
*Zion's Harp #127*

We were thankful to have Bro. John Laukhuf (Latty, OH) here for our topical Bible study on the seven churches in Revelations. It concerns us to think of what Jesus would say about our church today, but in reality, He is speaking to us when He speaks to those churches. May we ever be more willing to listen to the warnings and instructions that He gives.

Other visiting ministers this past month were Bros. Brian Huber (Francesville, IN) and Vernon Wettstein (Congerville, IL). We are grateful for their service and pray God's blessings upon them.

Sis. Emma Furrer has recently been hospitalized with a broken hip. She is now back at the nursing home in Francesville and is recuperating nicely. May we remember her in our prayers.

Thankful parents of a new baby daughter are Bro. Mike and Sis. Jody Bahler. Amber Lynn was born December 12. Grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Jane Isch (Lamont-Gridley, KS) and Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karla Bahler.

**IOWA, BURLINGTON**  
**Lorna Knapp**  
**Monica Eisenmann**

Our thoughts go out to Bro. Marvin Woodward, Sis. Edith Massner, and Sis. Sarah Miller who had special medical needs this

past month. May God's will be done in each of our lives as we daily depend on Him.

Once again, Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA) lent himself in God's service as he ministered to us. He also spoke a few words to our congregation after our Sunday School Christmas program on December 10. May God richly bless him for all his efforts on our behalf.

Let us always look to God and His Word as we get ready to start a new year of service in His name.

**IOWA, ELGIN**  
**Gloria Frieden**

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

*Isaiah 41:10*

As we come to the close of another year and step into the unknown of the new year, we can find courage by reading God's Word and knowing that His promises are sure. What a comfort to remember that God is always with us and will strengthen us and help us in every need.

We are thankful to have Laverne Schneider (Kathryn) and Bro. Bert Butikofer (Sis. Beulah) back with us after spending time in the hospital.

Many of us were able to attend the wedding of Sis. Leona Schmidt and Bro. Scott Fehr in Winthrop on December 10. We wish them God's blessings as they are presently making their home here in Elgin.

Our thanks to Bro. Trent Meiss (Iowa City, IA) who willingly came and served God's Word to those

who remained in Elgin the weekend of the wedding.

*Notice: The Elgin, IA Silver Lining dues of \$9.00 are due by February 1, 1996.*

**IOWA, GARDEN GROVE**  
**Laura Funk**

We want to thank our visiting ministers who lent themselves in God's service, including Bros. Charles Marti (Lamar, MO), Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL), Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN) and Ron Joos (Pulaski, IA).

How pleasant it is to sit and listen to the children recite in song and verse about the birth of Christ, during their Sunday School Christmas program. We were reminded of the true meaning of Christmas and not the commercial aspect of it. May this wonderful gift from God be instilled in their lives throughout the years.

Welcoming a precious bundle from Heaven are Bro. Brad and Sis. Laura Funk. Jaelah Marie arrived December 11. Grandparents are Bro. Joel and Sis. Shirley Wuthrich, Pulaski, IA.

**IOWA, IOWA CITY**  
**Janette Schulz**

Greetings to all! As we approach a new "year of our Lord," may we entrust it to Him. Surely the promises He has given us are many. If we can keep our focus on Him and our promised Home, it will be a blessed year no matter what happens in the world around us.

We were blessed with many visitors this month, including ministering Bro. Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT). May God bless all who traveled to be with us to share God's Word or to share God's love in

fellowship.

Our Sunday School children shared the message of hope in their Christmas program, "Jesus is the Light". May they and all who listened recognize and follow the Light as it shines through the darkness of this world, and leads to the glory awaiting us in Heaven.

We rejoice that Jeanette Moser (Bro. Bill and Sis. Joyce, Morris, MN) has opened her heart to the Light and has found peace with God. We look forward, Lord willing, to hearing her testimony January 20.

Our December graduates are Bro. Christopher Eland, graduating from UNI with a degree in education, and Sis. Wendy Eland, graduating from the University of Iowa with a similar degree (Bro. Brad and Sis. Joyce). We pray for God's direction and blessing as they seek out His will for the next step in their lives.

We were greatly touched and humbled by the expressions of thankfulness shown by those to whom we caroled this month. With our small congregation having no older members to whom to sing, we carol to people not of our faith. The words of praise and tears of joy in response to our reverent hymns and four-part harmony reminded us what a blessing we have—one that we often take for granted. May the words of hope and melodies of joy deeply touch our hearts as well. May we really hear the words, and may the songs we sing be raised in heartfelt thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father, for truly He has blessed us!

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### IOWA, LESTER

**Sue Warner - Cindy Leuthold**

Greetings to all as we begin a new year in the Lord. Let us all

take time to reflect on the past twelve months and determine if we have grown stronger in the Spirit of Christ. Perhaps we all can strive a little harder with His grace to do better serving Him and doing His will.

Ministering brethren who have visited us recently were: Bros. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR), Rex Frieden (Lamar, MO) and Kent Mogler (Minneapolis, MN). A special thank you to these brothers and their wives for coming to share God's Word so willingly with us.

December 10 was the day that Benjamin August Feucht was born to his parents, Bro. Roy and Sis. Melisa Feucht. This sweet little boy joins his big sister, Ruth, and brother, Philip. Happy grandparents are Sis. Martha Feucht and Bro. Ray and Sis. Barb Moser (Silverton, OR).

Several of our converts have found the wonderful gift of Peace that only God can provide. Those awaiting baptism are Merlin and Marilyn Meyer, Jon and Tricia Blomgren, and Tina Knoblock. Truly God will stand by these precious souls and guide them daily.

Believing that God has drawn their lives together, the announcement was made known of the engagement of Sis. Joy Feucht to Bro. Steven Sinn of Latty, OH. Parents are Bro. Alfred and Sis. Marie Feucht and Elder Bro. Ray and Sis. Ann Sinn. We pray God will continue to bless them as they make upcoming wedding plans.

Those known surgical patients have been Sis. Paulina Knobloch, Bro. Arthur Knobloch and Bro. Alfred Feucht. May they feel God's wonderful healing power as they recover.

Deepest and most sincere sym-

pathy is extended to the family of Bro. Joe Messner of Winthrop who was called Home to be with the Lord. Bro. Joe and Sis. Kim visited us often as Sis. Kim was originally from Lester. We also want to remember Dick and Leah Doorneweerd, Sis. Kim's parents, as they bear the loss of their son-in-law. May we take comfort in knowing that someday we will understand God's perfect and Holy will.

### *Note of Thanks:*

I would like to thank each one that remembered me while I was in the hospital with my recent surgery and since I've returned home. Thanks for the cards, gifts, visits and food during this time. But most of all, thanks for the prayers. May God richly bless each of you.

*In humble love, Sis. Zelma Knoblock*

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### IOWA, OAKVILLE Debbie Wagenbach Melody Steiner

The Lord once again has touched the hearts and lives of two precious souls in our congregation. Sis. Karen Steiner (Bro. Tom and Sis. JoAnn) was recently announced to Bro. Brent Eberhardt (Bro. Joe and Sis. Ruby). May the Lord bless these two as they will soon be united as one.

We are very thankful for our visiting ministers this month. They include: Bros. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA), Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT), Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA), Mark Kiefer (Denver, CO) and Garry Bucher (Valparaiso, IN). Our hearts have been blessed by the Holy Spirit speaking through them.

### *Note of Thanks:*

We would like to send a loving and heartfelt thank you to all our dear families and many friends that remembered us on our 60th anniversary with cards, gifts and loving surprises. We pray God will richly bless each one.

*Lovingly, Dick and Luella Anliker*

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### IOWA, PULASKI Carol Wettstein

Did you remember to include Jesus in your Christmas plans this year? This was part of one of the children's poems that was read during our Christmas program last evening. How uplifting it was to see how eager the children were once again to recite their poems and songs.

We enjoyed having ministering Bro. Fred Knapp (Congerville, IL) assemble with us. May God bless the efforts he and his wife put forth to travel to be with us.

We are glad to have Sis. Karoline Wuthrich (Bro. Russell) assembling with us again, as she spent a few days in the hospital. May God continue to grant her His healing powers.

As 1995 draws to a close, we certainly have a lot of joys, sorrows and tests of life to reflect upon. Hopefully, we have all grown in the Lord:

through trials our faith grew;  
through mistakes we have learned;

through joyful times we have appreciated.

We wish everyone God's blessings and nearness in the new year.

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### IOWA, WEST BEND Eunice Fehr - Lela Banwart

We were blessed with these visiting ministers the past month: E-

lder Bro. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN), Bros. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR), Dale Moore (Elgin, IA) and Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN). We are thankful to them and to God that they and their wives were willing to travel to be with us.

On December 10, many from our congregation traveled to the Winthrop, MN church to witness the wedding of Bro. Scott Fehr and Sis. Leona Schmidt. We wish Bro. Scott and Sis. Leona God's blessings as they begin a Christian home. Parents of this couple are Bro. Melvin and Sis. Glenagene Fehr and Gene and Sis. Ella Mae Schmidt (Winthrop, MN).

Best wishes and congratulations go out to Denton and Rose Knobloch as they became first-time parents of a precious baby girl, Calla Rose. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Melvin and Sis. Wilma Knobloch (Lester, IA) and Bro. Martin and Sis. Doris Zaugg. Great-grandparents are Bro. Elmer and Sis. Matilda Fehr and Sis. Frances Zaugg.

At our annual meeting we selected brothers and sisters to assume the duties of those whose terms have expired. May God's grace and our support be with these brothers and sisters: Bro. David Bruellman (church trustee), Bro. Dwaine Schmidt (Fellowship Center trustee), Bro. Dave Gerber (usher), Bro. Cory Fehr (parking attendant), Bro. Darren Fehr (building assistance), Bro. Jordon Grimm (personal property), Bros. Dave Zaugg and Dave Gerber (hail assistance), Sis. Marilyn Banwart (World Relief), and Sis. Polly Zaugg (cleaning committee). Sisters filling vacancies on cooking committees of our three serving groups are: Sisters Marlene Banwart, Teresa Bruellman, and Beth

Mogler. We are grateful to those who have served in these duties in the past, and pray God's blessings on them for their willing service.

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

*Romans 12:15*

Looking over the past year, we have had occasions to rejoice and occasions to weep with loved ones. In all cases, we could feel the love and presence of God and our Lord Jesus Christ among us. We thank God for His Comforting Spirit. May He continue to be with us as we enter a New Year. Whatever may come our way, of joy or sorrow, may we, by His grace, be faithful stewards in His service.

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### KANSAS, BERN Donna Edelman Lori Baumgartner

"Have you prayed about it?" a dear friend sincerely asked me recently. Her question took me off guard as I realized, "Why, what a simple solution! I never even thought of praying about it." How quickly I felt a renewed sense of hope. The concern I had shared with my friend no longer seemed as overwhelming, just knowing that I could pray about it.

As we enter this new year with all of its uncertainties, let us each remember that communication with our God is of utmost importance in overcoming all of the challenges we will meet in 1996. May we all press forward with renewed zeal and dedication in our prayer life and in our reading of God's Word.

"...but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are be-



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

*Philippians 3:13-14*

We have so many things to be thankful for in our faith. One of these is that we have ministers who are willing to be of service in sharing God's Word with us Sunday after Sunday. We appreciate the labors of both our local and visiting ministers. May we each remember to uphold them in prayer throughout this year. Our visiting ministers this month were Bros. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS), Don Braker (Kansas City, MO), Jeff Bahr (Kiowa, KS), Don Wagenbach (Washington, IL), Glen Funk (Wichita, KS) and Elder Bros. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix, AZ) and John Klotzle (Altadena, CA).

Many prayers have been offered on behalf of Alice Wittmer (Harlan) who suffered a massive stroke on November 25. She is still hospitalized at this time. Her husband, Harlan, is now residing in an apartment at our nursing home.

We wish to congratulate Bro. Chris Hartter (Sis. Jill) who graduated from Kansas State University in Manhattan in December. We are thankful that Bro. Chris and Sis. Jill have felt directed to accept employment in the Bern area. We gladly welcome them.

Bro. Paul and Sis. Katie Grimm recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. May God's blessings continue to be with them.

Our annual Sunday School Christmas program was held December 17. How refreshing it is to

see our youth stand up and sing songs that tell of our Saviour's birth. May we each remember that these children are our future church, and that they, too, need our daily prayers.

### KANSAS, FORT SCOTT

**Joleen Sinn**

We had two visiting ministers this month: Bros. Jeff Streitmatter III (Atlanta, GA) and Kenny Knapp (Taylor, MO). We want to thank these dear brothers and their wives for coming and sharing with us.

Our prayers are with Bro. Wayne Sinn and his wife, Sis. Juanita, as his brother, Dean, passed away suddenly this month. God's time is not always what we think is best, but we can trust that our Heavenly Father knows all and through that knowledge we know that His timing is best.

We all gathered together for the Sunday School's annual Christmas program. It is such a blessing to see the joy and love on the faces of the little ones, and we remember that Christ tells us "...Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:16)

We, like many others, traveled over Christmas. While talking with a young sister, I learned of some changes being made with a group that has been around for a long time. They have decided instead of spending all their time in fellowship and giving to each other, that they would, as a group, spend their energies on helping those in need. May God bless them in their efforts, and may He use them as an example to all of us. I have to ask myself, what does God want of me? A new year is

before me—am I going to go on living as I did last year, or is there something else that God has planned for me? Is He asking me to do something for Him and I am just too busy to listen? May God be with all of you in this new year.

### KANSAS, KIOWA

**Janice Bahr - Darcy Kisling**

When days are rosy and things go right

What a joy to have Jesus to share our delight.

When misery strikes and troubles appear,

What a comfort His help can silence each fear.

In good times and bad He is there by our side

A help in our need, our friend and our guide.

—Ruth W. Scarbrough

As we begin a brand new year, what a joy to be able to begin it with God. It brings to mind the time of our repentance and conversion; we started over—the slate was made clean and we felt "new" and "happy" and at "peace" with our God and our fellow man. Old things were forgotten and forgiven, and we looked forward to our new walk. In this new year we are facing, may we forget and forgive the injuries of this past year. May we make the slate clean, and walk in peace with our fellow men, and prayerfully keep God by our side as our friend and our guide.

This past month has been so busy for all of us, but our remembrance of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ (the most precious gift God ever sent to this earth) through special services, Christmas programs, caroling, and family gatherings filled with love made

it a very blessed month.

There is a lot of illness in our area, and though few have been hospitalized, we hope that those who have been unable to worship with us will be able to be in our midst again soon.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

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### **KANSAS, LAMONT-GRIDLEY Julie Bahr**

A brand new year dawns and with it we are so happy to report we have a tender young soul seeking to serve her Creator and Saviour. Ester Knoblock (Bro. Tom and Sis. Jeri) has chosen to begin a new walk with God. We ask that God will strengthen her and hold her dear to His heart.

Our visiting minister this past month was Bro. Kenneth Knapp (Taylor, MO). We are so thankful for our visiting brethren. Each one of us gain a special message of hope each time God's Word is ministered. A special thanks to each one who comes our way.

"Footprints" - This poem hangs on one of the hospital walls where our beloved Sis. Doris Bahr remains confined as she undergoes her chemotherapy treatment for acute leukemia. A portion of it reads, "My precious, precious child, I love you and would never leave you during your times of trial and suffering; when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I was carrying you!" Sis. Doris has commented several times that even though the poem has been around for quite some time, the comfort it brings to her heart during this time of personal

need truly is a gift from God. The prayerful support from loved ones has been like God's angels carrying her along. Unknowingly, I failed to report our Sis. Hulda Jacobs was also hospitalized recently. We often miss Sis. Hulda, as her health doesn't always permit her to attend church. We ask God's presence upon all those who suffer from afflictions.

Our congratulations to first-time grandparents, Bro. Ron and Sis. Jane Isch. A little girl, Amber Lynn, was born on December 12 to Bro. Mike and Sis. Jody Bahler of Wolcott, IN. Paternal grandparents are Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karla Bahler.

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### **KANSAS, SABETHA Mary Kay Wenger**

The weekend of December 2 and 3 the World Relief committee meeting met here in Sabetha. We enjoyed the many visitors to our area, including the following ministering brothers: Elder Bros. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO), Ed Schwartz (Bluffton, IN), Jon Kokanovich

(Phoenix, AZ), John Klotzle (Altadena, CA), Lawrence Luthi (Lamar, MO) and Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL), and Bros. James Hoerr (Peoria, IL) and Arnold Gerst (Taylor, MO). Others visiting us this month were Elder Bros. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) and Eugene Marti (Kansas City, MO) and Bro. Douglas Schock (Pulaski, IA).

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

*Micah 6:8*

Hospital patients were Sis. Alma Aberle and Sis. Leota Grimm. May God be with them and grant them a return of good health.

Our Sunday School Christmas program was held December 17. It is always a time of special joy to hear the blessed Christmas story presented to us in verse and in song. We appreciate the efforts of the children and teachers in preparing the program for us.

We extend congratulations and best wishes to the following graduates: On December 9, Troy Strahm (Bro. Carl and Sis. Sharon) received an agriculture degree and Bro. Ken Beyer (Bro. Martin and Sis. Karen) received an engineering degree from Kansas State University; and on December 17, Trisha Kellenberger (Bro. Jay and Sis. Marilyn) received a nursing degree from Baker University.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

Heartfelt thanks to all who remembered me with words of encouragement and expressions of concern while I was ill. Your prayers, cards and letters were deeply appreciated.

*Sis. Alma Aberle*

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### **KANSAS, WICHITA Emma Miller**

We are grateful to report that Jim Bowers is progressing as he undergoes rehabilitation therapy at the Wesley Rehabilitation Center. This will be an extended process. May the merciful God in whom we trust be ever near him and his family.

Bro. Patrick Funk has completed requirements for graduation from Kansas State University at Manhattan at the end of the first semester. We trust

that God will further direct him in the decisions he makes for the future.

Bro. Doug Grimm (Bern, KS) spent Wednesday evening, December 9, with us. We thank him for showing the World Relief slides.

The Sunday School children presented a Christmas program on Sunday evening, December 17. As they sang the familiar carols and told of the true meaning of Christmas, we were blessed by their sincerity and talent. May they ever use that talent to God's praise.

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### KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON

#### Doug and Rebecca Germann

A special thanks to our visitors this past month, including Elder Bros. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) and Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) and their wives who came to share Communion with us. We were reminded of the price that was paid on our behalf.

On December 24, Elder Bro. Kenneth Sauder (Mansfield, OH) came to share with us. A special thanks to you, Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Suzanne. Several went caroling that Saturday evening.

*Reminder: We are now meeting at the Comfort Inn off I-75 and Rt. 60 for church services. A blessed New Year for all.*

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### MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

#### Marlene Mosher Rhonda Knochel

Sis. Emma Waibel and Bob Stange, who cared for Sis. Joanne Stange during her illness, wish to thank everyone for their gifts of love, cards, flowers, food and especially their prayers. We wish our Lord's blessings and comfort to them who are left behind to cope

with their worldly pain and loss.

Gary and Melissa Meylan have welcomed a son, Conner, to join his sister, Shelby, in their home. We wish this little family God's love and love for each other. Grandparents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Marilyn Meylan.

We were saddened at the passing of Alphaeus Knochel. We wish our Lord's comfort to his family who are left behind: Sis. Alvina Wackerle, Sis. Laura Knapp, Bro. Norman, Bro. Ted, Bro. Floyd, Bro. Victor, Bro. Herb and Fred.

Hospitalized were Sis. Betty Schlatter and Sis. Lois Wieland (Bro. Jerry). We wish the finger of healing on these our loved ones and any others who may be hurting in body, soul or mind.

We wish the best to a couple who have been joined as one: Alan Schlatter and Vickie Walezak. We hope and pray they will put their Lord at the head of their household and wish them the best in their new life together.

We wish God's blessings and healing powers to Jim and Marsha Bowers of Wichita, KS. They are in our prayers each and every day.

We were blessed to have with us Bro. Hartzell Kaisner (Sis. Mary) and their family (Detroit, MI). Bro. Hartzell ministered to us through the power of God's Word and guidance.

We had our Christmas program with our Sunday School students singing and quoting Bible verses. Of course, our little ones stole our hearts.

"...Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

*Matthew 19:14*

The following was a favorite

story of our deceased Sis. Joanne Stang.

#### *"Oh, Mr. Tentmaker"*

It was nice living in this tent when it was strong and secure and the sun was shining and the air was warm.

But, Mr. Tentmaker, it's scary now.

My tent is acting like it's not going to hold together. The poles seem weak and they shift with the wind. A couple of the stakes have wiggled loose from the sand, and worst of all, the canvas has a rip. It no longer protects me from beating rain or stinging flies.

It's scary in here, Mr. Tentmaker. Last week I was sent to the repair shop and some repairmen tried to patch the rip in my canvas. It didn't help much though, because the patch pulled away from the edges and now the tear is worse.

What troubled me most, Mr. Tentmaker, is that the repairmen didn't seem to notice I was still in the tent. They just worked on the canvas while I shivered inside. I cried out once, but no one heard me.

I guess my first real question is, why did you give me such a flimsy tent? I can see by looking around the campground that some of the tents are much stronger and more stable than mine. Why, Mr. Tentmaker, did you pick a tent of such poor quality for me and even more important, what do you intend to do about it?

Oh, little tent dweller, as the Creator and Provider of tents, I know all about you and your tent and I love you both.

I made a tent for myself once and lived in it on your campground. My tent was vulnerable,

too, and some vicious attackers ripped it to pieces while I was still in it. It was a terrible experience but you'll be glad to know they couldn't hurt me. In fact, the whole occurrence was a tremendous advantage because it is this very victory over my enemy that frees me to be of present help to you.

Little tent dweller, I am now prepared to come and live in your tent with you, if you will invite me. You will learn, as we dwell together, that real security comes from my being in your tent with you. When the storms come, you can huddle in my arms and I'll hold you. When the canvas rips, we'll go to the repair shop together.

Someday, little tent dweller, your tent will collapse (for I've only designed it for temporary use). When it does, you and I will leave together. (I promise not to leave before you do.) Then, free of all that would hinder or restrict, we will move to our permanent home and together, forever rejoice and be glad.

—by *Roselyn Aronson*

## MICHIGAN, DETROIT

**Holly Barton  
Lynette Moser**

As we start a new year, we should reflect on how much the Lord has given us to be thankful for.

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

*1 Thess. 5:18*

It seems to come easily to make "resolutions" at the beginning of each year. We see 1996 as a clean page, but God grants to us each new day to be dedicated to Him.

"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."

*Lamentations 3:22-23*

December has been a busy month here in Detroit, as it is everywhere, with everyone making their preparations for Christmas. It is important to all of us to carry out the traditions that go along with our celebration of Christ's birth. We always enjoy the Christmas program where we are blessed by the joy the children show. We are also blessed in our efforts to bless others as we go Christmas caroling, and deliver food baskets and other gifts to those who are less fortunate.

We rejoice with Sis. Maggie Fortenbacher (Bro. Wladimir and Sis. Margaret) and Bro. Clint Schmidt (Winthrop, MN) as they announce their engagement. We pray that they have many years of happiness together just as Bro. Ben and Sis. Lois Belsley who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

We have had many opportunities to earnestly beseech God's mercy and healing touch. In the hospital this month were Sis. Martha Szilagyi who had a stroke, Bro. Jim Barton who underwent surgery, and John Reardon who was injured in a work related accident. They are all home now and recovering well. Our prayers are also with Sis. Ann Tachar whose son was hospitalized and Sis. Dorine Kurkowski whose aunt passed away.

We have been privileged to have many visitors as families reunited for the holidays. At Woodhaven,

we had Elder Bro. Andy Virkler (Bay City, MI) for church services and the Windsor Apostolic Christian Men's Choir for a Christmas concert.

May we be stewards of every day as our time is a gift from God which we can return by living each moment for Him.

## MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS Perry Virkler

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

### A NEW YEAR'S PROMISE

Another year I enter,  
Its history unknown;  
Oh, how my feet would tremble  
To tread its path alone!  
What will the new year bring me  
I may not, must not, know;  
Will it be love and rapture,  
Or loneliness and woe?  
But I have heard God's whisper,  
I know I shall be blest;  
"My presence shall go with thee  
And I will give thee rest."  
Hush! Hush! I hear His whisper;  
I surely shall be blest;  
"My presence shall go with thee,  
And I will give thee rest!"

—*Author Unknown*

Our visiting minister this past month was Bro. Dwight Stoller (Latty, OH). We thank him for his visit and inspiring message.

We congratulate Linus and Sis. Esther Lienemann on 60 years of marriage. A reception for them was held at the nursing home where Linus resides. We wish them as many more years as God's will would provide.

Sis. Vera Schmidt was hospitalized as a surgical patient. We pray that the Lord will restore her to good health.

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces..."

*Isaiah 25:8*

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Sis. Nancy Messner and Sis. Kelly Schmidt (Bro. Ted) on the passing of their brother, Bro. Joe Messner (Winthrop, MN). May God comfort them and all his family.

There's One who knows why you are sad,

There's One who cares for you  
Just look to Him, and trust in

Him,

And He will see you through.

He knows your loss and sorrow,

He hears your prayer above

Each day He freely gives to you

The strength of His great love.

—*J. Harold Gwynne*

We enjoyed a most blessed day on December 17 when the children of our Sunday School presented the annual Christmas program. It was a joy to listen to the recitations, scripture readings, and beautiful songs of praises telling of our dear Saviour's birth. A special thanks to the children and teachers for all their efforts.

Each of us have the same number of hours per day and most of us can't find enough time to do all the things we deem as important. Periodically, we must re-evaluate our priorities to make certain that we are spending our time doing the things that the Lord Jesus told us to do. Two examples: Parable of the good Samaritan, Luke 10:29-37 (helping others in need) and James 1:27 (visiting the fatherless and widows). In addition, we are to visit the sick and lonely. As we ap-

proach the new year, may we each reevaluate our priorities.

*Note of Thanks:*

We want to thank everyone who shared and remembered our 60th Wedding Anniversary and for the many cards, gifts, and best wishes. A special thanks to those who planned and hosted our special day. Also, we wish to express our sincere thanks for the visits, phone calls, cards, gifts, food and most of all your prayers since Linus has been in the Maplewood Care Center. May God richly bless you all!

*Linus and Sis. Esther Liene-mann*

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### MINNESOTA, MORRIS

**Maxine Sauder**

**Linda Schmidgall**

As another year is dawning, may we each strive to uphold the faith and precious Word. We are so thankful for the blessings God has provided in the past year.

A potluck supper and singing was enjoyed at our Fellowship Center as we bid Bro. Don Jones, his wife, Susan, and children, Emily and Collin, a fond farewell. They are relocating in Illinois. May God be with them and bless them.

We also bid a farewell to Bro. Jeff Sabo as he moves back to Florida to further his education. We will miss your presence in our church family, Bro. Jeff, and pray God will bless you in your new endeavor.

We know God was with our Elder Bro. Art Nohl as he baptized Ruby Luthi at the Nursing Home. We welcome Sis. Ruby into our faith and pray God will grant her the needed grace to endure her afflictions.

Our prayers are with Sis. Ruth

Nohl (Sis. Sophia) who was in the hospital this past month.

We appreciated visiting minister, Bro. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR), as he spoke God's Word to us. May God bless him for being a willing servant.

We were blessed on December 17, as our Sunday School children presented a program of Jesus and the Christmas story. It is our prayer that in time each child may turn their heart to the Lord in repentance.

Wayne Moser (Bro. Chris and Sis. Marion) and Cynthia Peske (Gerald and Vivian Peske, Hinckley, MN) were united in marriage on September 9. They are making their home in Minneapolis, MN. May God bless this couple as they begin their life together.

*Note of Thanks:*

We would like to thank everyone for their prayers, phone calls, cards, gifts, and visits while in the hospital, and since returning home. May God bless you for your kindness and thoughtfulness.

*Bro. Chris and Sis. Marion Moser*

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### MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

**Becky Braulick - Jan Messner**

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

*Eccles. 3:1*

This past month we have had several reasons to celebrate and rejoice. On November 19, McKenzie Julia was delivered to Bro. John and Sis. Joleen Elder. Grandparents of this bundle of joy is Sis. Julia Messner and George and Charlotte Elder. Then on November 20, Logan Scott was

brought home to Kendell and Lori Messner. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Marlyn and Sis. Lois Messner and Myron and Mary Nelson. On December 6, Dwayne and Dawn Van Deest brought home their precious little boy, Logan Nicholas. He was welcomed home by his brother, Justin. Grandparents are Dick and Sis. Nancy Van Deest and Robert and Dorothy Weller. We pray that they will continually look to the Lord in the raising up of their children.

Believing the Lord has directed their lives, the engagement of Bro. Clint Schmidt (Bro. Dick and Sis. Mary Lou) to Sis. Maggie Fortenbacher (Bro. Wladimir and Sis. Margaret) of Kitchener, Canada was recently announced. Our love and support go out to them and we pray they will continue placing their trust in the Lord.

On December 10, Sis. Leona Schmidt and Bro. Scott Fehr were united in marriage. The parents of the couple are Gene and Sis. Ella Mae Schmidt and Bro. Melvin and Sis. Glenna Jean Fehr. May their lives together be blessed as they continue on in the Lord. Visiting ministers for the wedding were Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (Sis. Kathy) and Bro. Pat Zaugg (Sis. Julie) of West Bend, IA; and Elder Bro. Paul Butikofer (Sis. Mildred) and Bro. Floyd Frieden (Sis. Jan) of Elgin, IA. We thank these brothers and their families for coming and sharing this time and the Word with us.

Beyond the sunset, O blissful morning,  
When with our Saviour heav'n is begun.  
Earth's toiling ended, O glorious dawning;  
Beyond the sunset, when day is

done.  
Beyond the sunset, no clouds will gather,  
No storms will threaten, no fear annoy;  
O day of gladness, O day unending,  
Beyond the sunset, eternal joy!

Beyond the sunset a hand will guide me  
To God, the Father, whom I adore;  
His glorious presence, His words of welcome,  
Will be my portion on that fair shore.

Beyond the sunset, O glad reunion,  
With our dear loved ones who've gone before;  
In that fair homeland we'll know no parting,  
Beyond the sunset for ever more!  
*Hymns of Zion #172*

There is also a time for sorrow. On December 10, our dear Bro. Joe Messner (Sis. Kim) was called to his Heavenly Home. Our hearts are heavy laden and our sympathy and prayers continue to go out to Sis. Kim and her children, Kylee, Cody and Lincoln. We pray also for his parents, Bro. Marlyn and Sis. Lois Messner and their family in their time of sorrow. We so appreciate the efforts of visiting ministers, Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam, Washington, IL), Bro. Don Miller (Sis. Bernadine, Minneapolis, MN) and Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Sis. Sandy, Morris, MN), as they brought forth the comfort of God's Word.

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained."

*I Timothy 4:6*

Having labored so many years for the Lord, Bro. Elmer Schmidt has retired from the ministry. We thank him and pray that the Lord will richly bless him for all his labors, love and compassion.

Our surgical patient this month was Elder Bro. Leroy Messner. May God's healing hand continue to rest upon him.

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### MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY Joan Fehr - Jamie Marti

On Sunday, December 3, we said farewell to our dear Sis. Cora Rogers. She has moved to an apartment in Eureka, IL. Sis. Cora was one of the original members of our congregation and her kind quiet nature will be missed by all. May God be with you in your new home.

Sunday, December 10, was our annual Sunday School Christmas program. Many thanks to the students and teachers for telling us the story about Jesus' birth through verse and song. May we always remember that "Tis not the manger, but the cross, That sets the spirit free." (Hymns of Zion #36)

May God bless Bro. Gene Lehman (Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Carl Wyss (Washington, IL) for sharing God's Word with us this past month.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

As we start the new year, may we strive to walk closer with the Lord.

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**MISSOURI, LAMAR**

**Carolyn Banwart  
Becky Marti**

We were thankful to have Bro. Kenneth Knapp and his wife, Sis. Phyllis (Taylor, MO), spend a Sunday with us. May he be blessed for expounding God's Word.

Bro. Leonard Braker (Sis. Bonnie) was in the hospital but we are thankful he is doing better and trust he will continue to improve.

As we start the New Year of 1996, may we rely upon God to lead us each step of the way so we will be found worthy of someday entering those eternal realms.

**MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS**

**Thadd Walter**

We were pleased to have Elder Bro. Charles Sauder (Tremont, IL) and Bro. Wayne Laubscher (Cissna Park, IL) visit our little congregation. May God bless them for their labor and for lovingly sharing the Word with us.

As time on this earth progresses and we enter a new year, let us remain focused on the Word of God to guide us through the changes. We know of a surety that the Lord will come again and gather His loved ones, so let us wait with patience for that time. It is profitable for us to pass this time on earth studying the Word of God. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (II Timothy 2:15). Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, instructed us to do this also, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39).

We are always in need of God's guidance, and His Word gives us

instructions on how to live righteously (II Timothy 3:16) from this time until the end of our time on earth.

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

*Revelation 1:3*

**MISSOURI, TAYLOR**

**Rusty and Amy Adrian**

As the year of 1995 has quickly passed and we are already into 1996, swiftly this scripture comes to mind:

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

*James 4:14*

Compared to eternity, our life here on earth is not very long at all. As we have the opportunity to begin each and every day afresh, may we strive to show God's love to each and every one we come in contact with so that peace and harmony may abound in this new year.

Our congregation was truly blessed as another dear soul was welcomed into the fold. Saturday, November 25, we heard the testimony of Shannon Haerr (Marci) and witnessed his baptism the following Sunday afternoon. What an encouragement it is to be able to witness the grace that God gives each of us to change through repentance and conversion when we seek out our precious Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

December 10 we enjoyed spreading God's Word through

song as we had an all-church caroling at Palmyra and Canton nursing homes. Upon returning back to the fellowship center after caroling, we enjoyed a spaghetti supper. Sometimes we wonder if the effort we put forth in singing to other people is worthwhile or not. As we were singing at one of the nursing homes, a lady approached one of our sisters and shared with her about how the songs that were being sung had touched someone's life. There was a dear older lady who hadn't said a word or expressed herself for years. All she could do is just sit and stare. As we were singing those precious Christmas carols, this older lady's eyes opened up and her face shined as if the Lord had touched her heart. Even though she couldn't say anything, her expressions said it all. May we all make the extra effort to do those small deeds in trying to encourage those who are less fortunate.

We rejoice with Bro. Eric and Sis. Penny Knochel as they were able to adopt little Annalyne into their family. She will now have three older brothers to look up to as she grows up. They are Bro. Ben, Joseph and Rick Knochel.

Our prayers have been with Ted Hoerr (Bro. Robert and Sis. Emma Dee) who was involved in a car accident this past month and also Shane Sutter (Bro. Jim and Sis. Kris) who was involved in a sledding accident. May God's healing hand be upon them both.

December 17 was our annual Sunday School Christmas program. It was truly a blessing as we could see the excitement on the children's faces as they brought us the story of our precious Saviour's birth. May we all keep our focus on

the real meaning of Christmas so that our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified.

Visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Everett Hari (Bloomington, IL), and Bros. Art Baurer (Princeville, IL), Lenny Meyer and Gregg Rassi (Chicago, IL), Ben Wysong (Sabetha, KS) and Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL). May God bless each of you for your willingness to be with us.

*Notice: As of January 8, 1996, our area code phone numbers have been changed from 314 to 573!*

*Silver lining dues are \$9.00 and are due in February.*

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

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 have begun the year of 1996, we look forward to serving our Master in Heaven whether we are on earth or have passed from this life.

Bro. Raymond Stockberger was taken from this life on Sunday morning, December 10, at the age of 89 years. He is survived by his brother, Gordon, and sister, Elizabeth, of Castorland. May God grant them both strength and grace to continue in this lifetime until He calls them Home. Bro. Raymond has been unable to be in our assembly for several months and is missed by young and old alike.

The Word of God was brought

to us on December 17 by Bro. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR). We thank him for his service to God. It is refreshing to have a visiting minister with us in this winter time of the year when we have already experienced several snow storms with many inches on the ground as of this writing.

Our Sunday School children presented their program on Sunday afternoon, December 17, telling us in word and song of what they have learned of the birth of our Saviour. May the seeds sown by faithful teachers remain in their hearts and spring forth in the proper time.

Loved ones who have been hospitalized were Jim Virkler (Bro. Clyde and Sis. Lois) who had complications following an accident in the woods, Sis. Anna Melnitz and Sis. Julia (Urban) Karcher. We are thankful for God's healing power that each of them could again return to their homes. At this writing, Norman Schulz (Mary) is hospitalized following hip surgery. It is our prayer that he can assemble with us again soon.

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**OHIO, AKRON**

**Diane Jarrett - Joyce Gasser**

Bro. Sandor and Sis. Gyongyi Hegedus have become a new mother and dad with the birth of their baby boy, Reuben. Grandparents are Bro. and Sis. Sandor Bako.

Bro. Paul Gangel has returned to the nursing home after having a knee replacement. Sis. Elizabeth Heib is in the Hospice of Western Reserve.

Our Sunday School children presented the Christmas story in a nice program with very good attendance at church, followed by

refreshments.

In our congregation this year we were blessed with 6 new babies, 3 baptisms, 1 marriage; and there were 3 funerals.

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**OHIO, COLUMBUS**

**Nancy Banks**

December is a very busy month for our Sunday School children in Columbus. One Saturday was set aside for their annual Christmas shopping trip for an under-privileged family. Such a busy afternoon as each group of children take their shopping lists and select clothes and a toy for the child on their list. We're not sure who enjoys this day more...the Sunday School children who take so much time and effort to choose just the right items for the child on their list or the attending adults who are trying to translate size and age charts and keep track of all the shopping carts. What a joy to watch our children immerse themselves into caring for others less fortunate and digging a little deeper into their pockets to make someone else's holiday special. The following day was our Sunday School program and the children told the beautiful story of the Christ child's birth. Our hearts were warmed by the small classes' enthusiasm as they sang their songs and the older children's participation as they read of the Babe of Bethlehem.

Our visiting ministers for the month of December were Elder Bro. Ken Sauder (Mansfield, OH) on a Wednesday evening; and Bros. Sam Schlatter (Junction, OH), Carroll Gerber and Steve Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN). We are thankful for these brothers who have so unselfishly lent themselves in sharing God's Word and



we invite them and their families to visit us again soon.

Our prayers for recovery are with Sis. Theresa Hunyady (Bro. Andy) as she prepares to undergo additional eye surgery for a lens implant. May God grant Sis. Theresa the necessary strength to overcome the many physical impairments she has experienced in the last few months. We look forward to the day when she will be able to worship with us again. Our prayers are also with Joe Sauder (Bro. Bill and Sis. Becky) who will undergo orthoscopic surgery on his knee.

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### OHIO, JUNCTION Sandra Manz

School is canceled due to bad weather. One child heads for the woods and brings back a load of firewood for the woodstove. The other children quickly unload the wood into the basement; all this without being asked or told. One child explains to his parent, "It was fun because you didn't tell us to do it." There is a mutual warm feeling in their hearts. Does it likewise warm the Father heart when we, His children below, are obedient in those areas which are not specifically "spelled out" in the Bible? Our 1995 Brotherhood Conference conclusions included a list of ten items we were to consider (see Nov. issue). We appreciate the plain exhortations brought to us by our Elder Bro. Bill and Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) as they discussed the Memorandum with our members and converts. We thank Elder Bro. Phil and also Bro. Carroll Gerber (Bluffton North, IN) who accompanied him that evening. May each of us press onward with new zeal in our hearts to

serve the Lord better in the fresh new year which awaits us.

Most of us haven't seen little newborn Kelsie Leigh Manz (Bro. Lester and Sis. Karen) who arrived about seven weeks earlier than expected on December 6. As she grows and matures a little more in the hospital, she receives frequent visits by older brothers and sisters, Chad, Kari, Kevin, Tami, Mitchell, and Staci. Our prayer is for Kelsie to be brought up in a loving and faith-filled home.

Our thanks once again to Bro. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR) for his service from the pulpit on December 10. May God bless him and Sis. Betty.

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### OHIO, LATTY Kathy Sinn

I trust Him through faith,  
By faith hold His hand,  
And sometimes my faith is weak,  
And then when I ask Him to take  
command,  
It seems that I hear Him speak,  
He whispers sweet peace to me,  
He whispers sweet peace to me,  
When I am cast down in spirit and  
soul,  
He whispers sweet peace to me.  
*Gospel Hymns #780*

Our congregation was thankful to hear that Bob and Sheila Sinn (Bro. Walt and Sis. Renee) and Erika Wenninger (Bro. Larry and Sis. Joyce) feel at peace with God and man. May they feel God's guiding hand as they look forward to giving a testimony of their faith.

Visiting ministers to our congregation this month include Bros. Walter Steffen (Milford, IN) and Earl Beery (Rittman, OH).

Call and cry, ye watchmen, boldly;  
Call aloud and spare them not!  
Jesus wants a faithful witness;  
Teachers not confessing Jesus  
Have stern judgment as their lot.  
Call and cry, ye watchmen, boldly;  
Call aloud and spare them not.

*Zion's Harp #112*

God has called another soul Home to be with Him. Sis. Christine Stoller has been called to her Eternal reward. May God's comforting hand be ever near her family which include Bro. Wayne (Sis. Dorothy), Bro. Darl (Sis. Iva), and Bro. Gale (Sis. Janet).

Bro. Steve Sinn (Elder Bro. Ray and Sis. Ann) and Sis. Joy Feucht (Bro. Alfred and Sis. Marie) have announced their wedding engagement. We realize Sis. Joy will be leaving the Lester, IA congregation, but we are thankful for God's guidance and direction and welcome her to Latty. May Bro. Steve and Sis. Joy feel God's continued presence as they plan their future together.

Bro. Ken Laukhuf (Sis. Marge) has been hospitalized during the past month. May God's presence be felt in his life and in the healing of his body.

We pray God's protecting hand will go with our brethren as they travel to the south for the winter months. May the Lord watch between us until we meet again.

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### OHIO, MANSFIELD Cari Mann

"And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are

therein:"

*Acts 14:15*

We have been abundantly blessed with brethren exhorting us to turn aside from the vanities of the world and to turn to the living God. They include Bros. Don Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN) and Art Ingold (Rittman, OH) and Elder Bros. Doug Sabo (Sarasota, FL), Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI) and Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH). May each of these brethren be blessed with our prayers of support. We sincerely thank them for their efforts in our behalf.

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

*I Tim. 6:11-12*

Chad Keever (Bro. Clair and Sis. Bev) professed his faith on November 25 when we heard his testimony. Many witnesses then gathered on Sunday for his baptism. As we welcome this new brother, we pray that he will always strive to attain the virtues mentioned above.

We also wish to extend a warm welcome to Bro. Chip and Sis. Seda Hill and Bro. Philip and Sis. Teresa Keiper who are now assembling with us. May they feel a part of our church family.

"With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:"

*Ephesians 6:7*

December 3 was the date of our

annual meeting. We wish to express our thanks to those who have served and offer our support to those who will be serving. Bro. Dale Gabor has finished his term as trustee and Bro. Dan Sauder was elected to a five year term. Sis. Barb Tucker will be joining the kitchen committee as Sis. Bev Keever has completed her term. Sis. Connie Domka was elected to the World Relief Sewing Committee. Sis. Judy Dawson has completed a three year term. Bro. Ron Rufener was elected to replace Bro. Marvin Beer as our church treasurer. Bro. Lonny Moser was re-elected as assistant treasurer. Bro. Wayne Rufener was elected to another term as our representative to the Home in Rittman.

As the old year has drawn to a close and the new year is before us, let us each strive to forget the things of the past and look for new ways to love and support our Elders, ministers, fellow brethren, family and friends. It is with prayerful hearts, we wish each of you a blessed and joyful new year.

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#### OHIO, RITTMAN

##### **Marsha Rufener - Linda Schar**

November 19 was the wedding day of Bro. Milan Baltic and Sis. Amy Ingold. We wish them God's richest blessings in the days ahead. Their parents are Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty Baltic and Bro. Art and Sis. Bonnie Ingold. Also in our midst on this day were visiting ministers, Bros. Glenn Riggenschach (Smithville, OH), Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH) and Ron Palitto (Akron, OH).

What wonderful news it is when souls turn to the Lord. Heather Pelfrey (Bro. Dale and Sis. Beth) and Laura Ramsier (Bro. Steven and Sis. Karen) have turned their

backs on the world and are seeking salvation. May God be with them in this new walk of life.

Sis. Joanne Stoller (Bro. Robin) and Sis. Emily Greenbank (Bro. Gordon) were recently hospitalized. We pray for God's healing hand on all those who are suffering.

Several new babies have been born in the past month. Bro. Michael and Sis. Carol Miller welcomed Brittney Joy on November 17. Big sister, Amanda, and grandparents, Bro. Michael and Sis. Norene Miller and Bro. Ron and Sis. Joann Christian, also anxiously awaited Brittney's arrival.

Cynthia Ann was born on November 21 to Bro. Gary, Sis. Sandy, Kent and Kevin Dotterer. Cynthia's grandparents are Elder Bro. Henry and Sis. Martha Dotterer and Bro. Roy and Sis. Mabel Maibach.

Jordon, Jeran, and Javan Stoller received a new brother, Joel Eric, on November 28. Joel's parents are Bro. Eric and Sis. Melanie. Bro. Everett and Sis. Marjorie Stoller and Bro. Galen and Sis. Cheryl Indermuhle are happy for another grandson.

Bro. Fred Marty passed away on November 28. May his loving wife, Sis. Erma, and daughter, Sis. Margaret, feel our love and support.

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#### OHIO, SARDIS

##### **Renee Miller**

Ben Zollinger and Sheryl Modra were united in marriage on November 25. Their parents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry Zollinger and John and Pat Modra of Powhatan Point, OH. We pray that God will bless their union. Our prayers are also with Ben as he will be spending some time in Haiti in the serv-

ice.

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."

*Colossians 4:5*

I don't know how much time you and I have on earth. The concept of time reminds me of this year's caroling experience at the New Martinsville Health Care Center. We were all surprised to see Jerry in the hall, although we've seen him there for a couple of years sitting in that same wheelchair, but he was minus one leg. It wouldn't be much time until the other leg would go, he said. The songs we sang meant more to him than ever. "Aunt Dorie" turned the corners of our mouths in the opposite direction—up instead of down. She was reliving the time of her childhood and because health was good, was feeling quite chipper. Let's redeem the time God gives us in 1996.

"But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

*I Thessalonians 5:1-2*

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**OHIO, SMITHVILLE**  
**Margaret Blough**  
**Edith Miller**

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

*Hebrews 11:1*

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

*Romans 10:17*

On Sunday evening, December 10, our annual Sunday School Christmas program was held. This always brings our Sunday School year to a close. Elder Bro. Andy Stoller reminded us, in quoting the above verses, that our purpose in Sunday School is to help our young people learn of faith. "We can't show them God, but we can show them evidence that God exists and show them what He's done for us. The only way they can learn is if they can hear about Him and see the evidence in our lives that there is a very powerful God that is available for them." Our children and young people then presented the Christmas story with many meaningful songs.

We are sorry to report our Sis. Emily Greenbank (Bro. Gordon) fell and broke her hip. After spending some time in the hospital, she is now recovering in her home. May God grant her a good recovery.

On December 2, Bro. Scott and Patty Indermuhle were blessed with the arrival of their first child, Natalie Marie. Even though she came earlier than they had planned, she was permitted to go along home with her mother, since Patty is a nurse. Happy grandparents are James Crist, and Bro. Darrell and Sis. Janet Indermuhle.

Our thanks to Bro. Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH) for spending a recent Sunday with us. May God bless him for lending himself to preach God's Word.

We extend our love and sympathy to Sis. Margaret Marty in the passing of her father, Bro. Fred Marty (Rittman, OH).

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**OHIO, TOLEDO**  
**Rebecca Beard - Edie Fetter**

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

*Colossians 3:16*

We were happy to obey this command of the Lord when we were blessed with a large group of visitors at a recent mid-week service. Among them were ministering Bros. John Laukhuf (Latty, OH) and Neil Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) who fed us from the Word.

Whatever our physical needs may be, we can always depend on the Lord's help. Bro. Walt Rager recently had outpatient surgery and Sisters Colette Harmon and Clara Beard have also had need of His healing touch.

*Reminder: Subscriptions are due for Toledo during the month of January.*

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**OREGON, PORTLAND**  
**Louisa Gallup - Mary Berg**

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

*Psalms 51:10-12*

Another year has come and gone and as we begin 1996, let us pray for a renewed spirit and a clean heart, that we will renew our promises to the Lord Jesus Christ and that we will live the next 365

days for Him.

Our Sunday School children had a busy weekend on December 16 and 17 as they joined as a group, along with several adults to collect newspapers from neighbors and then turn them into a recycling center for money. This money, along with donations from the congregation, was used to purchase gifts and food for a local family through Adopt a Family Program. These gifts were then distributed by the children and members of the congregation after church on Sunday. What a blessing to know that the children's hard work was so appreciated by a family with material needs. Tears came to my eyes as we sang Christmas carols together. I wondered why it was that God placed me where He did with the family that He did, and here was a family that seemed to need so much. Although I really knew very little about them, my heart just ached for them. I guess God has given us so much that we may share with others. I only hope that this can be instilled in our children. Following, we shared a potluck dinner at church and then the Sunday School program. Our small group of children did such a good job in singing and reciting their verses to share the Christmas story with us. We were reminded of the great impact that the life of One Solitary Man, our Lord and Saviour, has had on the world. Our thanks to the Sunday School teachers for their efforts in putting this all together.

Our thanks to Elder Bro. Art Metz (Silverton, OR) for sharing the Word with us and ministering to the needs of the church.

## OREGON, SILVERTON

### Peggy Schulz

As we begin a new year, may we reflect upon the many blessings we have received in 1995. May we look forward in anticipation to the Lord's nearness and guidance in 1996.

On December 10, we were touched in heart as the Sunday School presented to us the story of Christ's birth. We were reminded that it was not the manger but the cross that sets the spirit free.

We are thankful that little Logan Kuenzi (Bro. Harvey and Sis. Jennifer) after a brief stay in the hospital, is home again and in good health.

We were reminded so vividly of God's almighty power recently as we experienced very high winds, resulting in trees being blown over and a loss of electricity. This same God is our Heavenly Father, who loves and cares for us. How wonderful to know we can trust in Him.

## PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA

### Franz Soni

"For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name."

*Psalm 33:21*

We thank Elder Bro. David Wiegand (Champaign, IL) for assisting Elder Bro. Ed Aeschleman in reading the Brotherhood Conference Memorandum.

John and Sis. Kathy Clough and their daughters, Faith and Hope, returned safely from Mexico as the Lord answered the prayers of many. While in Mexico, they did volunteer work on a World Relief project.

Tyler Lanz (Bro. John and Sis. Kay) needed stitches for a cut above his left eye. We are thankful that all is well.

The whole church is praying for little Isaac Isch (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Linda) who will undergo heart surgery in the next few days. May God watch over him.

Our Sunday School held its Christmas program on December 10. We thank the Sunday School teachers and their students for the clear message they delivered. May we always focus on our Saviour Jesus Christ at Christmas.

## TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE

### Gwen Leuthold

This past week as I was thinking about the gifts I was planning to give to various people, the thought suddenly struck me, "What gift are you going to give baby Jesus?" I was taken aback and thought about the wise men and their gifts. Suddenly it occurred to me—my heart! As we begin the new year, may we all renew our commitment to serve Jesus Christ!

Ministering brothers this past month have been Bros. John Reinhard (Bluffton, IN) and John Steiner (Oakville, IA). We thank you brothers for your willingness to labor among us. Approximately 35 visitors from various churches worshipped with us on December 3. Again, we thank all of you for your fellowship and traveling efforts.

Our church re-roofing project was finished on November 29. Our sincere thanks is extended to the following nine brothers: Dan Beer, Jesse Beer, Walt Steffen (Milford, IN), Wayne Lehman (South Bend, IN), Elmer Steffen, Dean Tonner, Doug, Dave and Rick Feichter (Bluffton, IN). We have now pur-

chased the brick to finish the outside and hope, Lord willing, to get started soon in 1996.

If you are traveling in the Nashville area, please stop and worship with us. Upcoming services are scheduled on February 4 (Leo, IN); and February 18 (Phoenix, AZ). Contact Bro. Don and Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928; Bro. Don and Sis. Enid Miller (615) 384-8761; or Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 352-3940.

**TEXAS, DALLAS & CENTRAL**  
**Christine Kaiser**  
**Kim Kaiser**

Recently ministering God's Word to us in Dallas were: Bro. Nelson Beer (Milford, IN) and Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA). May our Lord bless them, their wives (Sis. Shelby and Sis.

Esther), and Nelson's daughter for visiting us and sharing their Christian love.

Those who gathered in Round Top heard Bro. Richard Aberle (Atadena, CA) bring forth God's message. We thank him for his kind efforts and trust that God will bless him also for his faithfulness.

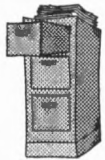
Bro. Daren Metz (Forrest, IL) just graduated from Texas A&M University's Ag-economics Masters program. We pray that God will continue to guide and bless his life as he moves on. Thank you so much, Bro. Daren, for regularly blessing our small Texas gatherings during the past year and a half. We'll miss you.

**ATTENTION:** Beginning in January 1996, services in central Texas will be on the second,

fourth, and fifth Sundays of the month at 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. The services will be held in the homes of four families who attend and support central Texas gatherings. The rotation of central Texas services will be in Round Top, Smithville, Austin, and San Antonio. Bro. Bill Zeltwanger is the primary contact for the central TX schedule. Give him a call at (409) 249-5102 if you need more information.

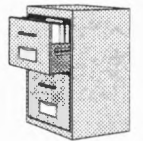
Dallas church services are held on the first and third Sundays of each month at the Holiday Inn in DeSoto, TX. Service times are 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Contact Bro. Howard and Sis. Dolores Rapp (214) 867-4074 or Bro. Greg and Sis. Christine Kaiser (214) 335-0105 for more information.

# Silver Threads



## The File Room

*Submitted by Bro. Kurt Bahler, Wolcott, IN*



In that place between wakefulness and dreams, I found myself in a room. There were no distinguishing features save for the one wall covered with small index card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly endlessly in either direction, had very different headings. As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read "Friends I Have Made". I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to realize that I

recognized the names written on each one. And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was.

This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalog system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match. A sense of wonder and curiosity, coupled with horror, stirred within me as I began randomly opening files and exploring their content. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching. The file

named "Friends I Have Made" was next to one marked "Friends I Have Betrayed". The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird. "Books I Have Read", "Lies I Have Told", "Comfort I Have Given", "Jokes I Have Laughed At". Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: "Things I've Yelled at My Brothers." Others I couldn't laugh at: "Things I Have Done in My Anger", "Things I Have Muttered Under My Breath at My Parents".

I never ceased to be surprised by the contents. Often there were many more cards than I expected. Some-

*continued next page...*

# Silver Threads

... *The File Room continued*

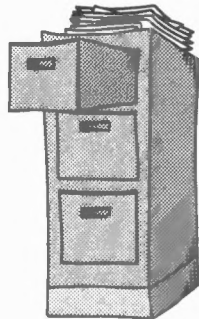
times fewer than I hoped. I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my 17 years to write each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each signed with my signature.

When I pulled out the file marked "Songs I Have Listened To", I realized the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed tightly, and yet after two or three yards, I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it, shamed, not so much by the quality of music, but more by the vast amount of time I knew that file represented. When I came to a file marked "Lustful Thoughts", I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size, and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded.

An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my mind: "No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!" In an insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it. Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long,

self-pitying sigh.

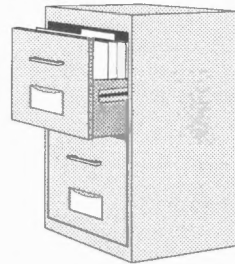
And then I saw it. The title bore "People I Have Shared the Gospel With". The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand. And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that the hurt started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key.



But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him. No, please not Him. Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus. I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one? Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me.

He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He

just cried with me. Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card. "No!" I shouted rushing to Him. All I could find to say was "No, no," as I pulled the card from Him.



His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive. The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood. He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards.

I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side. He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, "It is finished."

I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written...

***Until the whole world hears...***

"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*

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." *Psalm 100:4-5*

## “MAKE HEAVEN YOUR GOAL”

*Sermon by Bro. Mark Ramsier of Sardis, OH*

Acts 15:1-31

When Jesus Christ walked upon the earth, when the disciples had a question, they just asked, didn't they? They could just say, "Master, what about this?" and He could answer them.

There are a lot of times we long for that same privilege, don't we? Whenever some question comes up, and I believe they come to all of us, and we want an answer, we wish we could just say, "Lord, what about this?" He could just tell us plainly how to handle this situation or what to do or what the right decision is.

But somehow, it hasn't been in His will to make things quite like that for us. We are creatures of choice, we are creatures of minds and creatures that if we seek God's will, we could achieve wisdom and we could make decisions. God asks that we seek Him, and we will find. If we knock, it will be opened, but it takes a little effort on our part.

It seems that Paul, Peter, Barnabas, these men should have had all the answers, but there should not have been questions. But it wasn't so even in that first century church. But every question that came up could be answered. God gave a method to reveal to them of how they could get together and they could reason things out and they go on further carrying out the work of the church.

What is the work of the church? It is to spread the Word, isn't it? If God's people are disputing and arguing and not coming to any agreement in peace among themselves, how can the Word be spread? Of course, it cannot.

So we be known as Christians by our love. Part of that love is reasoning, isn't it? Getting to-

gether and telling both sides of the story and just calmly coming to a conclusion that everyone can agree with or can live with that the work of Christ might go on.

"And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." (Acts 15:1). We can imagine the problem that caused, can't we? If someone comes up to us and tells us, "If you do this or you don't do that, you are going to lose your salvation," what a problem that would be because salvation has to do with eternity.

We are concerned about eternal life, aren't we? That is why we are here tonight. We are concerned about eternal life. This Word at times can make so much sense about life that we turn it into a philosophy instead of into a faith because within it are all the answers for how we can walk and how we can walk successfully.

But in the end, it is because of eternal life that we seek God's will and we look into the Word. These men came and said, "Unless you are circumcised, you cannot be saved." That was something that had to be worked out.

"When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." (Acts 15:2)

We read that in the multitude of counselors there is safety. (See Proverbs 11:14). Only in the multitude of experienced counselors, there has to be more safety, isn't there? They knew they had to go to those with the most experience

and those who had spent the most time with the Lord. Among those men, if anywhere, this weighty question could be answered.

"And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." (Acts 15:3-6)

I guess it really behooves us to pray, doesn't it? We believe that prayer is not in vain, and that prayer is heard. We think of that beautiful prayer of Solomon when he beseeched God to look down from heaven and to keep His promises. He asked Him to look after him, to look after his people, look after his nation, look after the kingship and he believed that God would hear those prayers and answer.

We have to have that same faith as we think of those common men meeting and trying to discern the answers to questions when obviously there isn't an easy answer for.

We have to pray when the Lord lays that on our hearts what we are really trying to do, and what we really have been called for. Help us all to grasp eternal life is what we are all seeking for.

Jesus Christ said He wondered,

*Sermon continued...*

*Sermon continued...*

and He asked a question, "When I return, will I find faith upon the earth?" It is a question that we, perhaps, think often of today. Will He find faith or will He just find a lifestyle? Will He just find a philosophy when He comes back? Or will He find faith in what He did upon the cross?

To think that we need to discern truth requires prayer. May all of us just take a little extra time in the next few days to pray that God in His mercy will look down from heaven and reveal His will to those who seek Him and ask for His will to be revealed.

We have children, don't we, most of us? We have children that we are concerned about and our prayer isn't just for us, just for now. It is for time that goes on, isn't it? If we lose just a little bit here, or we lose just a little bit there, time goes on and soon, we wonder what is left.

We are accountable, aren't we, for what comes after? Just like those before were accountable for what has come after them. If things need to be put into check, or held in place, it is up to us right now, isn't it, to be good stewards of what God has placed in each one of our hands? We need to live beyond ourselves, beyond what we need, beyond what works best for us. We need to live for faith and for the future. Again, have that faith that if we just trust God, He is going to provide.

It is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom, isn't it? It is His good pleasure to give us the kingdom, but it has to be our lot and our desire to seek Him that He might find us worthy to give us that kingdom.

"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth

should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." (Acts 15:7-9)

"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." (Acts 15:10-11)

They had to deal with the law, didn't they? They had to deal with generation after generation of discerning the law and living the law. They turned that law into a way of life, didn't they, into more of a way of life than a way of faith because it was all they knew?

But when Jesus Christ came, He made a difference. He showed them that the law was a school master to bring them to Christ, and the law was that which should reveal sin, but it might lead them to Christ.

The Apostle Peter here could say, "Let's not put that yoke back on them which they were not able to bear and which our fathers nor we were able to bear."

He could instruct them that it wasn't necessary for the Gentiles to follow that law. He could show them what was really important. He said, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." (Acts 15:11)

That is why we gathered this evening, isn't it? Because of the Lord Jesus Christ and the grace that is available to each one of us, we might be saved. What are we going to be saved from? We are going to be saved from a poor life, we are going to be saved from not knowing how we should live, and we know we are going to be saved

from eternal death.

That is the purpose of the gospel — that we might be saved and kept for eternal life. It is through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you ever think of that eloquent prayer that Solomon had? It is beautiful to read, with all his wisdom, how he turned to the Lord to express his thoughts and express his heart. I believe it was with a humble heart that he prayed at that time, but somewhere down through the years, he got confused, didn't he? That humble spirit that he had got lost.

If we just read through the Book of Ecclesiastes, we read a troubled, confused man, don't we? He strayed. He did not seek counsel evidently, did he? He did not use the counsel that he had been given and it seemed to be a bitter and sad end that Solomon, the son of David, came to.

I guess it is a fear that we have, too, isn't it? God has given us much. He has given us the Word to read. He has given us brethren to assemble with. He has given us a good land to live in. He has given us a place to worship, and many of the same things that Solomon had. I guess that we have that same fear that somewhere, somehow down the line, with all the blessings that we have, we might slip.

But if we can just remain in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, it won't happen. So we believe that through the grace and the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they. Again, it is going to be through our prayer and through our humbleness that God can speak to us as mere men.

He said that God had chosen, when Jesus Christ died and made some changes, to show them that there was no difference, he said, between us and them. There was no difference. There is no difference between us either, is there?



I heard recently that the ground at the foot of the cross is level. There is nobody higher than anybody else there. We can come humbly to seek God. He is going to provide our needs, putting no difference between us if we just humbly seek His face.

It said they had much disputing. I really don't know how strong that disputing word is, but they gave their points of view, didn't they?

They explained their sides why they thought this was right or whether they thought that was right, but they were able to come to an agreement without any kind of split, weren't they? They could come to a general agreement and take that word then back to those that had an interest in it.

There was a blessing on this meeting, wasn't there? We are going to encounter differences in our lives. God has put that mind in us and He has put that difference in personalities and He has asked us to work things out. He provides His grace so that it might be so.

Let's use the example of this meeting as a pattern for our lives, too. Just calmly talk about the differences and work them out.

There is no blessing in disagreement. There is no peace in separation and bitterness. God cannot work, can He, in a situation like that?

But if we seek Him and just calmly reason the problems we have, reason them out with each other, God will honor that if we follow His Word. He will provide what we need — provide a solution if both sides are humble and

can be lived with on both sides.

We look at the end of this chapter, and we see that there is another discussion between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with him on a missionary journey.

Paul was a little upset with Mark, evidently, because of his actions on a previous journey. Paul thought it was not good to take him with them as he departed with them previously and went not with them to the work.

"And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God." (Acts 15:39-40). We think if any two men could try to sit down and reason something out, it should have been those two men, shouldn't it? Two men that were given a lot of power by God.

It said that they had a disagreement so sharp that they split up. I think it is easier when we are first converted to be agreeable and to listen, but as time goes on and we gain some experience and we learn some things from God's Word, we make a little progress and then somebody disagrees with us, perhaps it is not so easy then, is it?

We have an example in this chapter of the way to handle things and a way not to handle things. Let us not let our age and our experience turn into pride that we can't still reason. Remember still, there is no difference be-

tween us. Again God is going to honor that and bless that.

There is so much work that needs to be done. There are so many souls that need to know about the Lord Jesus Christ. There are children that need to be raised. All those needs need confident Christians to carry out — Christians that dwell in peace and live the Word.

If we cannot work out the disagreements among ourselves, how can we take this message to the world? That is called hypocrisy, isn't it?

May the Lord allow us to remain humble and may He allow us to continue praying and seeing the importance of prayer. May He allow us to grasp that the path we are on is concerned with eternal life, and not only this life. We understand all those things and we are going to have priorities that are set in the proper order.

God has called us to walk in a path that follows the cross, but it is a path that leads to heaven where we will be able to see Jesus Christ face to face. Whenever we lose sight of the goal, our priorities change, but if we can just keep that goal in sight, we are going to live differently than the world. If we can keep praying and we can stay humble, God is going to take us home.

Along the way, we are going to spread the wonderful message of Jesus Christ. We can live above the world and above the way the world lives, but then in the end, there is still eternal life.





# REMEMBERING

## *Our Spiritual Heritage*

The establishment of the Nazarene church in Hungary is worthy of remembrance. Under the influence of Samuel H. Froehlich, young Hungarian shop apprentices returned to their native land to preach and witness a new Bible-based faith.

Miraculous incidents reflect a God-given legacy. The manner in which souls were drawn to the new faith are inspiring. One such example is that of Joseph Kovacs who lived in a village called Nemes.

Kovacs was an educated man of the lesser nobility. He farmed and attended to his vineyards. He took a partisan interest in government and politics. Eotvos, in *The Nazarenes*, describes him as high strung and "a man of vehement and choleric temperament." He was sometimes thrown into jail for his aggressive outbursts.

One day a young fox got stuck in a ventilation hole in Kovacs's cellar. He caught him alive. After keeping the fox for several weeks, his wife took it to market and sold it. On walking back home, she met Louis Hencsey, the devout protegee of Samuel H. Froehlich. She told him the story of selling the fox at market.

Mrs. Kovacs indicated her failure in obtaining the price her husband wanted for the fox. She said she would lie to him so he wouldn't get upset. At this, with a sincere earnestness, Hencsey responded, "My sister, in our Lord Jesus, you must not do that. To tell a lie is a sin. It is not right for a wife to behave like this."

Hencsey's gold retort led to questions about his faith. She invited him into their home where Hencsey ex-

plained his faith and the brotherhood concepts to Joseph and Anne Kovacs who were devout Roman Catholics. In this, the seeds of faith were being planted, and the Kovacs pondered Hencsey's words with an unexpected sincerity.

The culminating incident, however, that drew Joseph Kovacs to repentance is of enormous interest, and reflective of the direct hand of God.

Hencsey was a marked man in the eyes of Hungary's religious officials. His preaching, and gaining converts, drew the wrath of the state church (Catholic). A parish priest (of Pahok) came to his home and without mercy, began verbally abusing him. At one point the priest sternly slapped Hencsey's face and threatened to jail him. The priest's brother stood behind and supported this tongue-lashing. Hencsey placed his walking cane against the wall so he would not be emptied to strike back. He took the priest's outburst in humble, meek silence.

Later, the priest went to Hencsey's parents' home to search for his Bibles and books. He ransacked the cottage. Again, Hencsey remained passive. When Joseph Kovacs heard of Hencsey's nonresistant behavior toward the priest, he said, "I cannot accept your new faith! Do not try to change my mind."

Eotvos writes, "The young Hencsey answered him in a quiet, gentle voice, 'Don't be foolish. A purified soul knows no hatred or revenge. It is our God who performs justice. The priest and his brother will be judged very soon. You will see it, dear friend, very soon.'

Hardly had he uttered these words

when a messenger from Boldagasszonyfa appeared and entered the house hurriedly and said, 'Have you heard the great news, sir? Something horrible has happened. The parish priest of Pahok died suddenly. God has taken his life. At noon the high reverend fell dead in his armchair. His brother died also when a rafter from the ceiling fell and struck him in the head.'

Mrs. Kovacs began to pray. Joseph Kovacs, this fiery nobleman, expressed on that very day he would like to join the new community of believers if the brethren would be willing to receive him."

The Kovacs were later baptized. They, too, became devout in faith and practice, and helped to draw many others to repentance and conversion.

The young Hencsey later traveled to Switzerland where he worked in the shops. He met Brother Froehlich. He became ill and died unexpectedly. Joseph Bella, who later emigrated to America and is buried in the South Side cemetery south of Fairbury, IL was present at his death. Hencsey was buried in a pauper's cemetery, but his few short years of evangelism reaped big dividends.

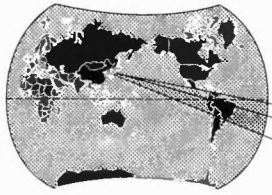
*Bro. Perry A. Klopfenstein*

**Next Issue:  
More About the Anabaptists**

# *The Light Of Hope*

*From Across The Ocean*

希望の光



## “Humility in 1996”

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

It was October 14, 1995, and we were having our Wednesday evening Bible Study in a classroom of our church. Our text was Luke 18:9-14 where Jesus tells a parable which begins as follows: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.”

Jesus ended this parable by saying, “I tell you, this man (the publican) went down to his house justified rather than the other.”

The question arose as to why the Pharisee was not justified, or made right with God. I asked Dr. Furuya, who attends Wednesday night regularly with his wife, Junko, whether or not the Pharisee had faith. His response was immediate—surely the man had faith, he was in the temple praying. We thought about obedience and had to conclude that surely

this Pharisee was very obedient, so much so as to put most of the rest of us to shame. At that point, it dawned on me like a light from heaven that faith and obedience are not enough, although I have long taught that we must believe enough to obey and then we are all set. My theology has to be revised.

We quickly realize that the missing ingredient in the life of the Pharisee was humility, but what is that? I have thought that a brother or sister who is very obedient is almost sure to be humble, but now I must think again.

According to this parable, humility is not synonymous with obedience, although obedience is very important and desirable for serving the Lord. Further, humility precludes the notion that we are better than others, even when we are exhorting others to be more obedient.

At the time I gave my testimony in the Princeville church prior to baptism, a brother who was concerned for me said we all have

reason to be more humble. Some time later a brother told me that the way I walked into church was unbecoming. One of the passions of my life is to prove what humility is, although I may never be able to explain it completely satisfactorily.

Humility includes a brokenness which makes one willing to serve at any time, at any place and under any circumstances, with no thought of giving credit to “self”, which has been crucified with Christ.

Let’s all pray for more humility and brokenness while rejoicing exceedingly in God’s great omnipotence and grace. Please join me in 1996 in trying to prove what humility is.

希望の光

Lamar 12



## LAMAR, MO -1902

In 1902 this church building was completed. Years later, a basement was added. This building served the Lamar congregation until 1980 when our current facility was constructed.

As the years pass and buildings change, it is our prayer that our precious Faith will not change.

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