



The Silver Lining

He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

April 1997

“OUR COMPASSIONATE GOD IS PATIENT”

Sermon by Bro. Steve Gutwein of Francesville, IN
Psalm 67 and Luke 13:1-17

As we are reading the continuing account of the last years of Jesus Christ as Luke recorded them in His Gospel, to Luke it was more than just history that he was giving an account of. He sets the stage so well. In the beginning, he was writing to some high authority, possibly in the government, Theophilus, and just keep in mind what we have read together in Luke thirteen.

Then as we read the preface of this chapter, it tells us: “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them to us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.” (Luke 1:1-4). That thou might know the certainty of the things we have been instructed in.

We read the account of Jesus Christ and the words He has spoken. How most surely these things were spoken as we have read together that what Luke gives account of God has permitted it to be recorded in His Word, and to be maintained until this present day, which is a great miracle. Satan couldn’t hide the gospel that he bound that woman for eighteen years. God loosed her through Christ. Christ through God loosed her of her infirmity, but Satan was unable to bind the Word and hide it from the hearts of men to this present day.

We have the freedom to enjoy the Word of God and to read the accounts that was most surely believed among those who were eyewitnesses of Jesus Christ. That sounds wonderful to believe and to enjoy when we are hearing the things that we want to hear.

Men in this day and time receive honor and reverence because they do the things, and they say the things that we like them to do that we feel are beneficial to us. Throughout history it was that way. Men were praised of high honor because of doing those things and saying those things that the people wanted to hear, and were helpful in this walk of life.

Jesus Christ talked about repentance. His cousin, John the Baptist, came and he actually had a baptism of repentance. When he baptized, he baptized those who were acknowledging and sorrowful for their sins and then he said, “One will come after me and I am not even worthy to unloose the latches of His sandals. He is going to give you a different type of baptism, one that is a result of a life that is dead to sin and alive to God, but you must repent.”

Now as these people came to the Lord Jesus, and as He had spoken in the previous chapter here, He said a lot of things that were deep thoughts and the people didn’t understand it all. Bless their hearts for continuing to inquire about the Lord Jesus Christ even though they didn’t understand it all.

They saw what He could do. Some were so impressed by His ability to take a few fish and loaves of bread and cause it to multiply to feed thousands and then to have it

left over. They were impressed! They crossed the sea to find where He was, and they listened to Him!

We came to this that people wondered who He was, and today people are still trying. People of the world, those that are not born again in Jesus Christ, are still saying, and what they are really saying is, “I really don’t believe that He is who the Bible says He is.” Because if they really believed, they would be like Luke, and would say, “...most surely believed among us.” (Luke 1:1). They would believe the gospel, and that is the only response that we can have to believe, and that is with action and obedience, isn’t it? Belief in faith and obedience to the commandments of Jesus Christ.

His commandments were offensive for those who were looking for their own self preservation, who were looking for their own enjoyment in life, and to make their own decisions. His commandments were offensive to them. Many of those who were impressed by His ability to do miracles, to heal, to break bread and multiply it,

Sermon continued on page 44

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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

April 1997

Discerning Between Flesh and Spirit

A believer in Christ Jesus should be skilled in discerning the difference between the flesh and the Spirit. It is important because, in addition to the Spirit of God in the believer's heart, there also exists an enemy of the soul who daily works to subdue, undermine and eliminate the Spirit's presence. If the believer is careless, the flesh can gradually become more and more prominent. This reduces resistance to the enemy and invites spiritual destruction.

As followers of Christ, it is a striking reality in our lives that we have a devious and sly enemy who seeks to prevent our overcoming sin and remaining faithful until life's end. Because Satan is so cunning and heartless toward our spiritual welfare and because he's not impressed with the Spirit's virtue in our hearts, it is essential that a child of God learns to recognize his tactics. Before we can resist the enemy, we must first recognize him. Failure to identify the enemy makes it almost certain that we will experience spiritual failure.

One of Satan's ploys is to advance against the believer in unexpected ways. He will not always tempt us with the major, visible and heinous sins. Rather he often uses erosion, weariness and deception to weaken our faith.

He seeks, ever-so-slowly, to wear down the believer's resolve. Worldliness begins to creep into the believer's life. Little by little a broader and more worldly-oriented lifestyle ensues. Many times this leads to a perilous pathway and ultimately to sin.

Satan also uses fatigue to reduce our resolve to press toward the mark and to finish our spiritual race. His continual pressure on God's children sometimes causes weariness which makes resistance to temptation more difficult.

In addition, Satan seeks to disturb true godliness through wayward teachings and inadequate or unsound doctrinal interpretation. Such tactics give a false assurance to those who follow scripturally

unsound doctrines. As part of his pattern of deception, Satan has diluted the Word of God through a host of watered-down versions of the Scriptures.

In all of the patterns that Satan uses, the true Christian must be alert and discern between the Spirit and the flesh in order to gauge what is right in God's eyes and must separate what is true from what is not true. In today's highly technical culture, with a multitude of powerful means of influence, the matter of correct discernment becomes vitally important.

Having established the need for spiritual discernment in each converted soul, we seek biblically-prescribed prerequisites to gain discernment. Without these, the potential for clear distinction between flesh and Spirit is reduced.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "And be not conformed to the 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" (Rom. 12:2).

The criteria for discernment are obvious: (1) The believer is not to be conformed to the world. (2) He or she is to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. What promise does this bring? We are promised that the will of God may be proved. It is thus wise to resist conformity to worldly ways and to strive for a transformed mind. Defining the difference between the Spirit (God's ways) and the flesh (man's ways) is fairly simple if one is serious about following God's counsel.

In our everyday life, anything we see or perceive stems from one of two roots: the flesh (man) or the Spirit (God). "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

The Spirit of God "...will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). The Spirit's presence will allow us to discern between flesh and Spirit. There are certain traits that will allow for a higher degree of discernment if we humbly submit to these

patterns.

Several lifestyle characteristics found in Ephesians 5 will aid us in effectively discerning between the flesh and the Spirit. As we follow God, we are to walk in love. We are to avoid all uncleanness and covetousness, not allowing ourselves to be deceived with vain words. God's children must not have any fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Further, we are to prove what is acceptable to the Lord and to walk circumspectly and not as fools, redeeming the time because the days are evil. Finally, we are to submit one to another in the fear of God.

Because in this life "...we see through a glass darkly..." (I Cor. 13:12) and often find difficulty in discerning God's will, we can benefit by strengthening one another in the faith for we are taught that "...in a multitude of counselors there is safety" (Prov. 24:6).

Thus, if we are willing to listen to and obey the authority placed over us in the Lord (Heb. 13:7, 17) we can benefit greatly. We will be able to more effectively separate the Spirit from the flesh and follow the Spirit's pathways more clearly.

In following collective discernment (i.e., the Church's guidance), we must realize however that it is not all encompassing but only covers some of the vital pathway endeavors and warns us of danger. Personally, on an everyday basis, we as individuals face a multitude of occasions whereby we must discern between the flesh and the Spirit.

If we are humble and submissive to God, His grace will actively flow into our hearts. With an abundance of God's Spirit, we will be able to discern between the flesh and the Spirit.

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (I Cor. 2:12).



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

Mission Committee Met in February

In this issue, and in subsequent issues of this paper, we want to communicate the deliberations and decisions made by the Mission Committee. A meeting of this body was held in Chicago, IL on February 4, 1997. A condensed report follows.

Financial report

The financial statement for the six months ended January 31, 1997 indicated contributions as follows:

Mission Fund	\$272,861
Bible Fund	101,562
European Building Fund ...	61,480

In addition, we had interest of \$8,204 for the six month period. The Committee approved a new reporting format for the Financial Statement in the future. It will show expenditures and activities by countries, and we hope it will be more easily understood by our supporters.

Bible distribution

A major expenditure for the period was for Bibles and other expenses relating to their distribution in the amount of \$151,029. An allocation was made for the distribution of Bibles and Hymn Books in India, Yugoslavia, Mexico, and other foreign countries.

East European Harvest

One brother recommended that we consider a contribution to East European Harvest, an organization which distributes Bibles in many of the former communist nations. After an investigation of their activities, it was agreed to contribute \$1,000 for their work. We want our readers to know how much we appreciate their suggestions on matters such as this, each of which we do consider.

Christian Aid and Iron Curtain Ministries

Approval was given for a contribution of \$2,500 to Christian Aid Ministries in Berlin, OH. Brethren from the European Board meet with this Mennonite Group as well as with an Amish Group known as Iron Curtain Ministries each year.

Iron Curtain Ministries covers one-half of the cost of the monthly sea container shipments sent to our brethren in Romania, and Christian Aid Ministries acts as forwarding agents. We have learned to have respect for both of these organizations, and feel that our cooperation has been mutually beneficial. We hope to continue the same arrangement in the future.

Yugoslavia

Expenditures for our Yugoslavian brethren amounted to \$162,334 for the six month period. As reported earlier, several of our Elders visited this land of turmoil last year. Using their input as a basis for our decisions, we appropriated the above sum for vehicles for use of ministering to the believers as well as for aid in building or repairing churches.

Activities in the U.S.

We sometimes think of Mission activities being carried out in foreign countries, but \$67,441 was spent for a variety of activities here at home. This included \$20,000 for the purchase of a church building in Atlanta, GA, and \$10,000 for the National Good Will Fund, which is used to assist our brethren and friends who have unusual expenses beyond their control and resources.

Meeting needs in Ukraine

Because of the very unstable economic and political situation in this troubled country, the Committee

feels it is important that some of our brethren meet with their elders and deacons this Spring. We want to encourage them in these trying times and assess how we might assist them.

Due to the political and social conditions in Ukraine, coupled with corruption in high places, it seems as of this writing that it would be best for this meeting to take place in Arad, Romania instead of in Ukraine itself.

Bros. Nathan Steffen, Phil Stettner, and Gene Lehman were authorized to undertake this trip.

European church building fund

This fund is used to assist our brethren in Europe to repair and construct houses of worship. We really appreciate the excellent support given to this fund by our brethren and friends here in the USA over the past several years.

However, the fund is now depleted, and the Committee approved a letter to be sent to all of our congregations giving them an opportunity to contribute. This letter was approved by the Elder Body at their conference in Bay City, MI. It has been mailed to all of our congregations.

Our brethren who visited Yugoslavia last Autumn found a great need for rebuilding churches there. We trust that the Lord will work in the hearts of our beloved brethren so that we will be able to give them the further assistance we feel they need.

Contributions for the
European Church Building Fund
can be sent to:

Bro. Gene Marti
Apostolic Christian
Mission Committee
P.O. Box 23356
Overland Park, KS 66223

For information call:
(913) 681-3796

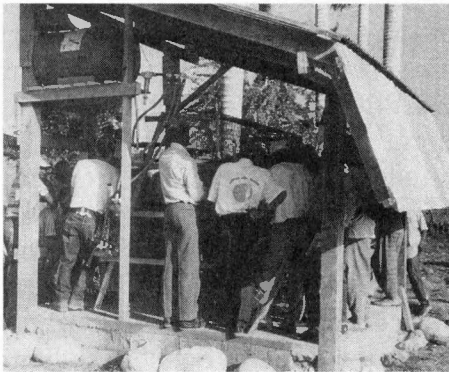


APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
World Relief

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

Agriculture Work Team Visits Haiti in February

In February 1997, our first agricultural work team of 11 brethren went to Haiti for 8 days to help a local organization build a new school building and a poultry house. God blessed us with a safe trip and the energy to accomplish everything we had hoped to do. We assembled a chicken coop and shed, assisted in preparations for building a concrete roof for the new school, taught a poultry production course, conducted a veterinary clinic, toured the farm, and farmed in the Haitian manner.



The completed chicken coop, with Haitian S.E.E.D. students having it explained to them.

A land of contrasts

Our brethren who have worked in Haiti have found it a land of extreme contrasts. There are so many poor and yet some with wealth; there is so much ugliness and yet beauty can be found; and there are so many who live ungodly and selfishly and yet others are seen to be so giving and so faithful to God.

S.E.E.D. Ministries

S.E.E.D. Ministries was started in October 1992, as a contrast to the Haitian "standard" of the meager farm plot and malnourished farm animal, in contrast to the Haitian principle that "nobody does something for nothing."

S.E.E.D. Ministries was started by Mr. Frantz Clotaire, a Haitian who studied Bible and agriculture in America for 11 years. He came close to receiving a Ph.D. in agronomy, but felt led of God to return to his country in 1992 to help his own people. Some of our Apostolic Christian elders and other brethren have toured his school and farm. Through these tours, and visits with Frantz and his wife Doris over the past 2 years, we have come to appreciate the work of their staff. Through its school, farm, and especially its people, S.E.E.D. is having an impact on the agriculture of south Haiti. We now see much opportunity for our church and brethren to help the needy of Haiti through working with them.

The S.E.E.D. School

Presently, the school has 53 students in the 3-year course of study. During the first 2 years each student takes Bible, agricultural, and veterinary technology courses. The Bible courses are usually taught by a MEBSH pastor. The agricultural courses are comprised of training on soil types, composting and fertilizers, crop rotation, insect control, plant genetics, grafting, and marketing. The veterinary courses are taught by an American veterinarian living in Haiti. Other training courses the school offers its students are the opportunities to learn to work hard with their hands and to give to others. A shock to many students when they start school is the requirement to collect their own manure for fertilizing their farm plot. Each student must donate at least 2 hours of work time each week to the demonstration farm.

The third year of schooling takes place in the field (called the Extension Program). Each third year student is sent out to a rural village to live. Here they are given a place to sleep and a

plot of land to farm. During the school year they work and teach local peasant farmers how to raise more productive crops. They also offer better seeds and seedlings, and vaccinate and treat local ill livestock. At least once monthly, an instructor from the school comes to evaluate and advise the student. World Relief funds are used to cover much of the expenses for this third year of schooling.

The Farm

The S.E.E.D. farm is a 15 acre rented plot of level land across the road from the school property. It is near the ocean just southwest of Les Cayes, 5 miles south of the MEBSH compound. On the farm are grown vegetables such as tomatoes, beets, carrots, eggplant, cabbage, and onions. Mango, banana, orange, grapefruit, and tangelo trees, as well as lumber trees, are also on this farm. Produce is grown for sale, both wholesale and retail. Applied research is also conducted in the raising of varieties of tropical corn and soybeans. Many Haitian farmers and school students tour the farm to observe how produce can be more productively grown.

The farm also has one-half acre plots for their students. Each first and second year student of the school has a plot for raising a vegetable crop as part of their schooling.

In retrospect

We were very humbled, not so much for what we were able to do, but for what God is doing for the Haitian people through S.E.E.D. Ministries. We learned that there is a special blessing when efforts are expended for others. And we learned that this ministry is a worthy organization for those of us in agriculture to "do good to all men."

By Bro. Bob Beebe - South Bend, IN

- NOTICE -

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

We're distributing more used Bibles in the United States now, although some are still sent overseas. Thanks for your continued support. You may get your books to either of us or Wing or Bluffton World Relief Centers.

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

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

Bibles distributed by our Churches

<u>1997</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>	<u>TOTAL — 14 YEARS</u>
Mar.	2,921	9,984	361,126

* Repaired Bibles Shipped = 180

NOTE: A new listing of Bibles and Testaments available for distribution can be obtained through a note or call to:

David Bertsch
11520 Grabill Road
Grabill, IN 46741
(219)627-2923 (fax the same number)

PLACEMENT OF POCKET TESTAMENTS

A very effective way of giving the pocket Testaments/Psalms/Proverbs (boxed), is to place the plastic box with label in hospitals, rest homes, motels, filling stations, stores, doctor, dentist, and eye doctor offices.

Be sure to ask permission to place the Testaments.

There are seven Testaments in each plastic box. This requires a regular check and re-fill of the boxes.

The plastic boxes and labels are available at the Leo Bible Distribution Center, 11520 Grabill Road, Grabill, IN 46741.

Eureka Apostolic Christian Home

Spring Auction and Bake Sale

The Eureka Apostolic Christian Home Auxiliary is planning the Spring Auction and Bake Sale to benefit the Eureka Nursing Home. It will be held April 19th at Eureka Middle School. The Benefit will include a bake sale, starting at 10:00 a.m., lunch (sandwiches, pie, and drink) will be served at 11:00 a.m., auction will begin at 12:00 noon, with quilts sold at 2:00 p.m.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

With the coming of spring comes new life and new motivation to be outside and enjoy the beauty of God's world. Many of the people living at ACHH, Oakwood Estate, Linden Estate, and the homes on Minnesota Ave., Detroit Street, Hazelwood Street and Wagler Street have been outside taking walks, shooting baskets, riding bicycles, or just enjoying being outside in the sun and watching the trees and grass turn green!

Sunday School students from

Princeville church spent a Saturday at the ACHH home having a great time visiting with the residents and decorating Easter eggs. It's great to see these groups enjoying each other and celebrating the joy of the Easter season.

Men and women from ACHH will soon be starting practices for track and field events at the May 3 Special Olympics meet. A couple of guys became "pool sharks" by taking a class in playing pool at the Pekin Park District. Several folks are taking weekly horseback riding classes with CIRT (Central Illinois Riding Therapy). Some of the people from the group homes are also participating in this program.

One of the favorite activities at the group homes is to host a group of guests for a monthly Hymn Sing at the Oakwood home. In January a large group of young people from Goodfield spent a Sunday evening here. Congerville church was invited in February and a nice group of different ages came from Eureka in March. Also in March, the folks who live at Oakwood thoroughly enjoyed having a group of Sunday School students from Tremont church spend a Saturday evening playing games with them. The Tremont group brought flowers to each resident to freshen their rooms for spring and donated some new games to Oakwood. We know God will bless these young people and their teachers for planning this special event.

The ladies from the group homes also enjoy being guests of different ladies in our community for a monthly "Sewing Club". It is really a fun evening as each woman unpacks her current project (potholders, embroidery, latchhook, puzzle books, etc.) and sews and talks for an hour, fol-

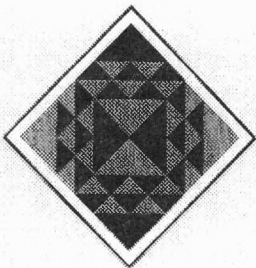
ALTERNATE & ASSISTANT HOUSEPARENTS NEEDED

We now have immediate openings for Alternate Houseparents, and also for Assistant Houseparent. The Alternate Houseparent position is for a married couple with a heart for troubled teens. The Assistant Houseparent position is for a single sister to work closely with the Houseparents.

This is an opportunity for someone, directed of the Lord, to come to work in a full-time on going ministry with the rest of us at Gateway Woods. This position offers competitive wages and benefits and a close working relationship with brothers and sisters whose hearts and lives are dedicated to a mission with an eternal reward. If you feel the call to explore the possibilities, please call one of the brothers listed below.

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

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



GATEWAY WOODS Apostolic Christian Childrens Home

Annual Auction and Sale

Saturday, August 16, 1997

We invite you to join us. Feel free to contact the Gateway Woods office at 219-627-2159.

lowed by the hostess serving lunch and everyone piling into the vans to return home. We thank all these hostesses for inviting us to their homes.

Mike Bedford, Christopher Loughe, Edward Green and Bland Jones have moved to ACHH in February and March. We welcome each one of them and hope their adjustment to us is an easy one.

May birthdays for all facilities are: ACHH (2125 Veterans Road, Morton) - Judy McRoy (2), Sam Grimm (2), Melinda Crouch (3), Terry Stoller (6), Anna Stichling (13), Steve Slagel (14), Allison Given (14), Ray Virkler (17), Ruth Klopfenstein (19), Marlene Moser (22), Chip Terhorst (22), Garth Boyer (26), Marjorie Feller (30). OAKWOOD (2213 Veterans Road, Morton) - Herbert Stieglitz (11). 650 DETROIT - Jackie Barton (26).

GATEWAY WOODS APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

Janel Ramseyer

We at Gateway Woods are already deep into 1997. When I first came to Gateway Woods in April of 1995, I put some projects on hold, looking for a slow time, a time to get caught up. I am quickly realizing that there is no slow time here. (Maybe there's no slow time anywhere, but I live in hope.) Spring brings our annual Representatives Meeting, Staff Training Retreat and our annual Recognition Dinner for Staff and Board Members. Summer is busy with summer jobs and our annual Auction/Sale, for which we've already started planning. We have Board Meetings each month and somewhere in the middle of all of this are staff meetings, trips to visit family, friends, the dentist..., and the search for quality time. But

nowhere in that list of what keeps me busy is my Christian walk. Now, I know that I am a Christian where ever I go and no matter what I do, but like any relationship here on earth, our relationship with our Heavenly Father and our Saviour, Lord, and friend Jesus takes effort. Effort to find the time and, in many instances, to make the time necessary to be with Him. I am grateful that God never sets demands as to where or when to meet Him and that He, in fact, comes to us. I realize that our best times with the Lord are in quietness and solitude, but I also know He does not disappear when I go on my errands. I know that I can pray to Him as I wait, albeit impatiently, at a stop light and that my Abba-my Daddy, listens when I talk to Him as I drive. I appreciate having instant access to the throne of God as I walk down the aisles at the grocery store and see something that reminds me to pray for a friend. Or for myself.

I read an allegory recently about a man waiting for a friend at a restaurant. The friend never showed. The man would return each day, in hopes of meeting his friend who never appeared. The extra chair at his table, however remained empty. The waiters suggested he contact the friend to ask why he never came, and even men-

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINE

1-800-747-9049

Calls are answered by an answering service and referred to the hotline. You will receive a return call shortly. All calls are strictly confidential.

Callers will receive a screening, suggestions for appropriate services and assistance with appropriate referrals.

The hotline will not provide diagnosis or treatment.

tioned that the man should drop his friend all together. But the man would just reply, "They know I am here waiting to meet with them. I cannot forget them because I love them." The message is clear. In your busy life and in mine, are we neglecting the important as we rush to the urgent? Probably. Do we need to reprioritize? Yes. Will we? Maybe. Next time you see me, please ask me if I have. I may need that accountability.

March 15 was our annual Representatives' Meeting in which we share information about our programs with members from other Apostolic churches. Topics for this year included the future direction of Gateway Woods, an update on Gateway Woods Family Services, expansion of our Foster Care program, an overview of the Child Protection System and examples of Creative Giving.

We are looking forward to Summer already! We've hired Bro. John Rassi (Tremont), Bro. Arlan Miller (Gridley), and Sis. Abby Kipfer (Bluffton) to help with our Summer program and are excited to have them join our team. We're already getting a taste of Summer—several volunteers spending the Spring Break helping out at Gateway Woods. Bros. Brett Heiniger and Steve Leman (Bloomington), Chris Eland (Iowa City), and Nick Zaugg (West Bend) helped not only around our campus, but also with work at the Leo church. They were greatly appreciated!

If you feel a distant call for a change as you re-evaluate your job or your priorities, if you feel God is asking you to move into a new job with eternal results, please consider the current staff opening for Alternate Houseparents (see ad in this issue). You may contact

Bro. John Stoller, also at 219/627-2159. The Lord is doing an incredible work at Gateway Woods and we would love to have you join us in that work. We also have openings for Assistant Houseparents. This job is best suited for single Sisters. (See ads in this issue.)

You can also join the Gateway Woods team without moving, by opening your home to children who have no where else to go. One of the many ways God is blessing Gateway Woods is by growing our Foster Care program. Just last August we had two foster children. We now have ten - Jason, Jeremy, Rachel, Mark, Willie, Jennifer, April, Amy, Aaron, and Katie! While our Foster Care program is still focused in Northeast Indiana, feel free to call Bro. Bill or Sis. Jan Baumgartner at 219/627-2159 with any questions.

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

It's naptime and everything is quiet. In just a little while our group of boisterous preschoolers will wake up, but right now they are all sleeping peacefully. As busy as our lives are, sometimes I think we adults would do well to take some time out of our day to just rest and re-group. We are thankful to have some of our regular staff back after a period of rest. Sis. Doris Moore and Sis. Tricia Tucker have both returned to work after taking leave for several weeks. We are glad to be back to "normal" staff, and also thankful that Sis. Molly Stickling has agreed to stay. We are grateful to Sis. Barbara Coulter and others who have been so willing to help here in Sis. Doris and Sis. Tricia's absence.

This past month we have been

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

studying about plants and Easter and the color green. The landscape in the south has already turned green and flowers are blooming, so our teaching is reinforced by the world the children see around them. We enjoyed a trip to Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, where we had a chance to see how doughnuts are made. We were glad when they let us taste a fresh one at the end of the tour! The children are also excited about the Easter party we have on the day before Good Fri-

day.

We are grateful for the help of several volunteers this month. Anita Wilkenson (Princeville, IL) and Sis. Brittany Maller and Sis. Kari Shorb (Bluffton, IN) have each come to spend at least a week helping with our students and the various odd jobs that turn up. Thanks, all of you, for your help!

We are appreciative of all the brethren praying for us—the school, the teachers, the church, and the children. Your time in prayer on our behalf is felt across many miles, and also appreciated.

ALABAMA, ATHENS

Pam Moore

March is such a beautiful time of year in Alabama. The dogwoods and Azaleas are in full bloom once again, reminding me of the artistic wonder of our God.

We had two special occasions to celebrate in Athens. On the same day, we held a bridal shower for Sis. Ruby (Massey) Ross, and a baby shower for our newest addition, Timber Danielle Tucker.

We were also saddened in the past month. Sis. Eunice Kelley's mother, Leona Gee, of Athens passed away. Her funeral was held on February 19. Please pray for Sis. Eunice and her family.

We would like to invite everyone interested to the Memorial Day Singing, at the Tennessee Fellowship Area. This will be held on May 24-25, the weekend that Memorial Day is observed. If you are planning on bringing a large group, please inform Elder Bro. Lavoyd Moore when you make your plans, so that we can plan better. We love to see large groups come. Contact Bro. Lavoyd at (205) 232-2035.

The Theme for our Memorial Day Tennessee Fellowship Weekend is "Following in the Footsteps of Jesus". Scheduled speakers are

Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL) on the topic "As Led by the Spirit" and Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) on the topic "First Love". There is an adequate supply of hotels and motels in the area. For 1-800 phone numbers, call Elder Bro. Lavoyd at the phone number listed above, or Sis. Gwen Leuthold at (615) 352-3940.

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Ron and Ev Hoerr

Am I my brother's keeper?
(Genesis 4:9)

World Relief workers are busy tying comforters twice a week. Our Sunday School children are bringing personal care items for World Relief kits. Caring and sharing should be an important part of a Christian's life.

Bro. Dick Beery, Sis. Sophie Huber and Sis. Christine Baum attended a World Relief conference meeting in Peoria, IL on March 15.

We appreciated Bro. Bill Waibel's visit as our minister on March 2, and Bro. Lloyd Kraft (Lamont-Gridley, KS) on March 12.

Our weather has reached the upper 80's, a real delight for our many visitors whom we appreciate.

Congratulations to Bro. Alvin and Sis. Katherine Laukhuf on their 50th wedding anniversary. Due to health problems, a card shower was held in their honor. May the Lord bless them, for He knows our needs.

"Where He leads me I will follow," and with many prayers in their behalf, Sis. Robin Lemons, Kailey and Nathan bid us a loving "God bless you."

Congratulations and best wishes to Bro. John and Sis. Wilma Pulfer on their 40th wedding anniversary. Their children, Monica

and Ron Bandelier and Shayne Pulfer, hosted a buffet dinner in their honor at a local resort. May the Lord bless them in the years ahead.

We welcome Gwen Bruellman from Iowa City. Gwen is here doing occupational therapy.

Floren Klopfenstein had a surgical procedure done, Sis. Shirley Blunier was in for studies, Sis. Martha Elsasser has been ill at home. We're glad Sis. Doris Kokanovich and Bro. Alvin Laukhuf are again in church.

Note of Thanks:

We thank you for the cards, letters and gifts for our 50th anniversary. May the Lord bless you for your love and kindness. Also, we are grateful for everything done in our behalf during Bro. Alvin's lengthy illness.

Bro. Alvin and Sis. Kathryn Laukhuf

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT

Jane Hodges

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

Psalm 104:24

During the springtime of the year, as the trees and plants are breaking forth into new life, it is easy to reflect on the wonderful works of our God. Psalm 104 mentions many of God's creation that we have to bring Him praise and honor for and that reflect His glory. May we as the psalmist say, "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." (Psalm 104:33)

We wish to once again thank our visiting ministers for giving of themselves and their time to be

with us and share God's Word. They include Bros. Don Miller (Minneapolis, MN), Ed Knecht (Silverton, OR), Bill Dotterer and Ken Lawson (both of Phoenix, AZ).

We are thankful that Bro. Henry Volz is once again able to attend services.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp

February and March are busy times for us in the Tucson church. We have many visitors passing through and many activities happening. I neglected to mention in last month's article that Bro. Kenny Knapp (Taylor, MO) was with us and allowed himself to be used on the pulpit. We always enjoy Bro. Kenny and Sis. Phyllis' visits.

Also, Bro. Everett Gerber (Rockville, CT) shared the Word with us on several occasions during his visit to Tucson recently. We hope he returns each year to be with us for awhile.

Our Bro. Gene and Sis. Marge Fehr are both having medical problems. Bro. Gene had surgery recently and is recuperating. We hope they can feel our prayers as they go through a difficult time.

Our Sis. Martha Blessman was able to join us (and some of her visiting family) for church services last Sunday. It was good to see Sis. Martha in our congregation again.

Our winter visitors have begun leaving and we miss them already. The weather was beautiful for most of the time they were here with only a slight interruption of the sunshine for some appreciated rain. We look forward to welcoming our visitors again next year, Lord willing.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

With the coming of spring we see such wonderful evidence of God's continued love and provision for His miraculous creation. And all of it stemming from His boundless love manifested through His Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! How precious it is to have the scripture proofs of His death and resurrection as we anticipate celebration of Holy Communion and observation of His death and suffering concluding with His triumph over the grave!

This wonderful love manifests itself so impressively when a soul turns to the Lord in repentance and by God's grace comes under the protection of His Almighty wing and takes its place among the flock of believers. We were blessed and privileged to hear the testimony of our dear young friend, Jim Klotzle (Bro. Tom and Sis. Jody), who early in his life responded to the call of God. This, followed by baptism and the laying on of hands, fulfilled a hope and a desire rising from the Holy Spirit's presence in his heart. We welcome him as a beloved brother in Christ!

Recognition was again given to the recent marriage of Bro. Joe Klotzle and his wife, Sis. Sue (Wagenbach), as a reception was held to commemorate this most joyful and blessed occasion. They have established their home in Hermosa Beach. We are so thankful for their presence as they take their place in our small congregation.

We are thankful for our visitors during the past month, i.e., Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix, AZ) and Bros. Doug Wagenbach and Peter Petrovic (San Diego, CA) who assisted or were present for the special occasions mentioned above. We appreciated so

much their ministry of the Word.

With evidence, such as those events mentioned above, of God's bringing forth a newness within the lives of His children and His beloved church, it gives us good courage to continue the spiritual plowing and planting in the hearts of man God's wonderful truths. There is likely in the heart and being of those who till the land a fresh arousal each spring that cannot be denied. God's earth must bring forth fruits as evidence of His power of creation and abundance. So may each of us be willing, attentive and submissive to the reenergizing of our soul and spirit to bring forth in abundance fruit that is pleasing to Him. May we allow His power to work within us as we anticipate the future harvest when we shall be garnered into His kingdom!

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Rose Huette

Praise to Jesus who has risen!
Delivered from death's bond and
prison,
Appears triumphant, God's own
Son.

Thru the heavens' spacious arches,
Resound the joyful songs of
gladness,
And peace doth glow around God's
throne.

Praise Him whoever lives,
Who life and comfort gives,
Christ the Saviour, and to our God!
Death's dark abode is banished
By His conquering rod.

Zion's Harp #60

As the Easter season approaches, may we be thankful for all that Jesus Christ has done for us. The question is, "What have we done for Jesus?" May we, His children, take up our cross daily and follow Him. We are looking forward to partake of Communion on Saturday, March 22. May we

reflect with thankful hearts the great price Christ paid for us on Calvary.

Elder Bro. John Klotzle (Altadena, CA) was our visiting minister last month. We very much enjoy all our visitors. God bless you and come back again.

Bro. Rory Strahm has recently returned to his home from the hospital. He is feeling a little better. May we continue to hold him up in prayer.

We welcome Barry Winkler (Rittman, OH) to our fellowship. He is currently stationed at the San Diego Naval Base.

**ONTARIO, KITCHENER
CANADA**

Laura Baxter

Am I a soldier of the cross
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed thro' bloody seas?

Since I must fight if I would reign,
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy Word.

Gospel Hymns #494

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."

I Peter 4:12-14

It is good to be reminded that we

will have to go through trials and endure pain while we strive to live a faithful life in the Lord; but, that we shouldn't fear them or think it strange when they come. Instead, we should rejoice that we are partakers of Christ's sufferings and lean upon God's Word for support.

We again want to thank our visiting ministers, Bros. Paul Gasser (Akron, OH) and Don Manz (Junction, OH) for coming to preach the gospel to us. We are also thankful for our many other visitors that came to fellowship with us. Please come again.

We welcome all visitors. Please contact Bro. Jim Baxter (519) 699-5081 or Bro. Tim Tomic (519) 634-9796 for more information and directions.

COLORADO, DENVER

Chuck and Naomi Wiegand

Christian greetings across the many miles!

We were blessed to have two visiting ministers with us this past month. They were Elder Bro. Nate Steffen (Elgin, IL) and Bro. Peter Petrovic (San Diego, CA). We thank both of them for their loving labors.

We petition prayers for Paul Andrej in Colorado Springs. Paul is suffering with multiple tumors in his brain. We pray for his family as well.

Helen Powelson's life came to an end on March 1 after 82 full years. She was a mother to the deceased Sis. Sharon (Herman) Braun, and a grandmother to Karl (Mitzi) Braun, BethAnn (Mike) Martin, Kevin (Pam) Braun, Sarah (Paul) Lasnier, Naomi (Chuck) Wiegand, Kent, Deborah and Kristopher Braun. She will be missed and we hope to see her again in Heaven.

Note of Thanks:

We wish to express our thanks to all who were so kind and loving to our grandmother. Especially those who made such effort to make her feel welcome in church and in your homes. She certainly enjoyed all the time that was spent in visits and singing for her. May each one be blessed richly for your efforts.

The family of Helen Powelson

**CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE
Cherie Galat**

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, fear ye not: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

Matthew 28:5-6

Easter is a time of hope and joy as we remember the resurrection of our dear Lord and Saviour. We owe our thanks and praise to Him and the Father above for all our blessings.

We rejoice with one who has recently turned to the Lord and is walking upon the path of life. Sis. Karen Hunt (Kenneth) was baptized on February 23. May she feel God's strength and guidance in the days ahead.

The dear ministering brethren who visited our congregation so lovingly imparted unto us the Word: Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Morris, MN), Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA), and Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) who assisted Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan with the testimony and baptism.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON
Henrietta Meyer**

"Take eat; this is my body...this do ye...in remembrance of me."

I Cor. 11:24-25

We were privileged to join the Philadelphia congregation for Communion on March 9.

Spring has come to our area. By the end of February, trees were budding and we had temperatures in the 70's.

Our ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL), and Bros. Nelson Beer (Milford, IN), Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA), Gene Metzger (Lester, IA) and Dan Stoller (Remington, IN). Other visitors this month were from Croghan-Naumburg, NY and Rockville, CT.

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. There are several Sundays the next few months when we will be unable to use the hotel. Please contact the brothers listed below to find out where we will be meeting the Sunday you are in the area. If there is an interest expressed by our visitors, we gather Saturday evening for fellowship and/or singing.

For more information, assistance, or just to let us know you are in the area, please call Bro. Matt Fetter (703) 860-5749 or Bro. Ken Martin (703) 724-4470.

FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE
Nancy Rocke

"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know

ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 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

The Lord has blessed us with visitors, and we sure have appreciated their stay. Most of our winter residents will leave around Easter. We have enjoyed their assembling with us. Among those who visited this month were Elder Bro. Ben Maibach (Sis. Lorene, Detroit, MI) and Bro. Ron Palitto (Sis. Lynell, Akron, OH). May God bless them for their willingness to bring God's Word to us.

May the Lord be with Sis. Katherine (Bro. George) Fulop as she spent some time in the hospital. She is now home and recovering for which we are thankful.

Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'er shaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest.
Hark! 'tis the voice of angels,
Borne in a song to me,
Over the fields of glory,
Over the jasper sea.

Hymns of Zion #218

Two dear souls were laid to rest. Sis. Emma Lach passed away after being in the hospital with a broken leg and other complications. She is relieved of her pain and suffering although she will be missed.

Gathering Buds

Jesus has taken a beautiful bud out of our garden of love,
Borne it away to the City of God,
home of the angels above.
Old blooming flowers alone will not do, some must be young and

ungrown,
So the frail buds He is gathering too, beautiful gems of His throne.
Gathering buds, gathering buds,
wonderful care will be given,
Jesus is gathering day after day,
buds for the palace of Heaven.

God has taken baby Jordan Sauder (Doug and Suzanne) from this life. Prayers of comfort are extended to both families at the time of this loss.

FLORIDA,
NORTH FT. MYER'S
Kay Eisenmann
Anjie Baum

Our visiting ministers, Bros. Carroll Gerber (Bluffton North, IN) and Bob Pfloderer (Morton, IL) and Elder Bro. Ben Maibach all gave us such encouraging messages to live a life the way the Lord revealed it to them. May God bless them for this now and in all eternity!

Once again we enjoyed a cook-out. These are such special times of good food and fellowship. We want to say thank you to one and all who helped and a special thanks to our "cooks", Clarence Peters, Bros. Art Keller, Ron Yergler, and Norm Schock! May we all think on the good memories and times in our lives, and share them one with another.

A brother just reminded us in a sermon of the terrible time in the Old Testament of devil worshippers breaking all of God's laws. But remember, God destroyed them all, even whole cities! So be of good cheer, God is in control and God's promises are sure. We need to always pray "believing" He will give to us the strength to overcome or endure!

We just commemorated the death of our Saviour who willingly gave His life for all to open up the

gates of Heaven for all who will repent and live for God! What does this world have to compare with salvation? For He says, "Be not afraid, it is I". It is very easy to love family and friends, but how easy is it to love those who hurt us? Stay ever in the Word, and ask ourselves just how personal is our relationship with Jesus.

Please continue remembering our sick, Bro. Ronalan Keller and his faithful wife, Sis. Viola. Sis. Jeanette brings Bro. Ralph to church as much as she can for a half day. It is a day at a time for us all, but when the body is weak, it can be hour by hour. Sis. Jeanette is to have cataract surgery. Louise Heckel is recovering from shoulder surgery—she is thankful she can do as much as she can. Also, Clarence Peters is to have foot surgery this month, so we need to help where we can. Also, Ben Blough (Sis. Maria) is able to come to church again after a long time.

Don't forget, if anyone is thinking of relocating, think of our little church in North Ft. Myer's.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA
Melissa Sabo - Rachel Koehl

Once far from God and dead in sin,
No light my heart could see,
But in God's Word the light I
found—
Now Christ liveth in me.
Gospel Hymns #471

We were blessed with a number of visiting ministers this past month: Elder Bros. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL), and Bros. Roger Sauder (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), Carl Wyss (Washington, IL), Carroll Gerber (Bluffton North, IN), and Brian Webb (Ft. Lauderdale, FL). May the Lord continue to be with our dear ministers as they so faith-

fully preach His Word to the hearts of men.

On Saturday, February 22, our Sunday School and teachers held a chili lunch, bake sale, and auction at the Fellowship Hall. Sarasota looks forward to this annual event, so we had an excellent turnout. We would like to thank everyone who participated, and a special "thank you" to J.C. Ebach, our auctioneer.

Ralph and Ruth Walter celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on March 14. We rejoice with them and wish them many more happy years together.

Crowned or Crucified
I stood alone at the bar of God,
In the hush of the twilight dim,
And faced the question that pierced
my heart:
What will you do with Him?
Crowned or crucified? Which shall it
be?
No other choice was offered to me.

I looked on the face so marred with
tears,
That were shed in His agony,
The look in His kind eyes broke my
heart—
'Twas full of love for me,
"The crown or the cross," it seemed
to say;
"For or against me—choose thou
today."

He held out His loving hands to me,
While He pleadingly said "Obey;
Make Me thy choice, for I love thee
so,"
And I could not say Him nay.
Crowned, not crucified, thus it must
be;
No other way was open to me.

I knelt in tears at the feet of Christ,
In the hush of the twilight dim,
And all that I was, or hoped, or
sought,
Surrendered unto Him.
Crowned, not crucified; my heart
shall know
No king, but Christ who loveth me
so.
—*Author unknown*

GEORGIA, ATLANTA
Peggy Camp

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

Ephesians 4:11-12

Our congregation has given Bro. Tom Waldbeser our full support as he has been chosen to serve in the ministry. Our love and prayers are with Bro. Tom, Sis. Sue and their young children. Here to help with this important work were Elder Bros. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) and Ray Sinn (Latty, OH). Also with us that weekend was Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City, MI). We thank these brothers and their wives for the love, support and encouragement they have given to our small group here in Atlanta.

Bro. Neil Widmer (Wolcott, IN) also visited this past month. We thank him for sharing God's Word with us.

Plans are being made to move forward with the remodeling of our building. We hope to improve our kitchen facilities, have a nursery and do some work in the sanctuary.

We plan to have a day of fellowship for those in the area who may have ties to the church. If you know of anyone in the area, please contact one of the brothers listed below so we may get in touch with them.

As always, we invite visitors to stop in and worship with us. The church is located south of the city. From Atlanta, Take I-85 south to exit 13 (Rt. 138). Go west 4 miles.

The church will be on your left. Please contact Bro. Linn Stoller (770) 631-4554 or Bro. John Brewer (770) 502-8629 for further information.

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE
Millie Jepson

All nature cried that dark, drear day
When Christ hung on the cross,
While darkness filled the heavens
above
Earth trembled at the loss.

The sad disciples' hearts were wrung
With grief for all to see,
They saw no hope, for lo, their Lord
Had died on Calvary.

But hope and life came with the
dawn
Of glorious Easter Day,
"The Lord is risen," were the words
The lilies seemed to say.

All nature thrilled and cried in tune
"A victory is won.
Our Lord has risen from the dead
New life has now begun."
—*Carise Williams*

This poem was one of the descriptive recitations given by the children in our Easter program. We so enjoyed their presentations and it was special this year to have our Elder Bro. Nate Steffen (Elgin, IL) give the sermonette in the program. It was a blessed day and a meaningful prelude to Easter Sunday.

Our other guest ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Jesse Beer (Milford, IN) and Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL). We appreciate their kindness in coming with their wives and helping our ministering brothers. We thank God for the gift of teaching given to these brothers and their willingness to serve us so faithfully. And "thank you" to each visitor for coming to fellowship with us.

"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."

Psalm 91:2

There is something better than understanding God, and that is trusting Him.

—*G.H. Knight*

ILLINOIS
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL
Janice Horner - Carol Sauder

Singing and making a melody in our hearts were both experienced when the Peoria choir visited us and sang many beautiful hymns on February 16 at our monthly hymn sing. The first and second grade Sunday School children also sang songs giving praise to our great God. Our hearts were touched during their singing and a peace placed upon our souls.

Our February Bible study was presented by Bro. Ron Heiniger on the topic of "Adversity". Bro. Ron gave examples from the Bible and discussed various concepts for dealing with adversity when it comes. God never permits adversity to come into our life without having it all planned out. What we have to do is trust God and hold fast to Him. We will see His solution worked out if we have faith and trust. We also need to have a single focus in our life, and that focus needs to be God's will. Faith and focus are our allies and they will work together to accomplish God's will in our life. We thank Bro. Ron for sharing his wisdom with us on this interesting subject.

On February 26, Elder Bro. Charles Hemmer (Peoria, IL) assisted Elder Bro. Everett Hari in the reading of the Memorandum. We felt both humbled and encouraged as we listened to the exhortations springing from the love and

concern of our shepherds for their flocks.

On March 1, the Bible class held a pancake and sausage supper to raise money for their mission trip this summer to Bethany, KY. Thanks to all who took part and donated to this worthy cause.

God blessed our congregation with a visit from Bro. Lynn Stieglitz and his family from Leo, IN on March 9. May they be blessed for sharing time and talent with us.

The wedding engagement of Bro. Matt Knapp (Bro. Charlie and Sis. Paula) and Sis. Dana Banwart (Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna, Fairbury, IL) was made known to us on March 9. We rejoice with them as they undertake the second most important step in their lives.

Our March Bible presentation was given by Bro. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL) on "Prayer". Prayer is so important; it is the most powerful outlet we have to interact with God. He encouraged us to keep praying and to never, never give up. We should never underestimate the power of prayer. It is a vital link to the power of God and it has no limit. Thank you, Bro. Wayne, for enlightening us on this subject.

We had an inspiring day March 16 as we witnessed the baptisms of Jeremy and Amy Masters, and Leslie Masters. Parents of Jeremy and Leslie are Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary Masters, and Amy's parents are Bill and Judy Custer of rural Bloomington. It was a privilege to have Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL) with us to assist Elder Bro. Everett Hari on this special occasion.

We were happy to hear that Jack Lowery, son of Sis. Ruth Lowery, is turning his back on the world and is making Jesus Lord of his life.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Philippians 1:6

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD
Brad & Cheryl Kupferschmid

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:9

Just as our physical body is refreshed by the warmth and sunshine of spring, our spiritual man is refreshed and encouraged when a soul comes to the Lord in repentance. Crystal Knobloch has answered the Lord's call and our prayers will be with her during this time. Her parents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Diane Knobloch.

Our dear Sis. Lois Endress spent some time in the hospital this month. We are so thankful to again see her in church.

Again God has called a dear one Home to spend eternity with Him. We pray for Bro. Sam Kieser (Sis. Lucille) as his sister, Sis. Natalie Feucht (Princeville, IL), passed away this month. We pray that God will comfort his heart as well as the other family members. She will be greatly missed.

Bro. Ron Joos (Pulaski, IA) visited us this month and brought forth the Word. Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO) also was with us for a Friday evening Bible study. We thank these brothers for their labors and may God bless them.

Notes of Thanks:

I would like to thank each and every one for all the calls, cards and prayers while I was in the hospital and during my recovery at

home. May God richly bless you all.

Sis. Lois Endress

Bro. Clarence and Sis. Emma Knobloch would also like to express their thanks for the cards, special thoughts, prayers, and love shared with them as they celebrated their 60th anniversary! May God continue to bless them.

ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN
Samuel and Pamela Furrer

I know not why God's wondrous
grace

To me He hath made known,
Nor why unworthy—Christ in love
Redeemed me for His own.

Hymns of Zion #109

Have you ever had one of those workdays when everything seems just a little too hectic? This time of year has some of those days for me, but I recently had one that had a real bright spot at the end. At the close of the day, I hurried to read my e-mail and had a message from one of my friends from church telling me that another of our friends had finally made the decision to repent. That was, of course, wonderful news for any day. It made a perfect conclusion to my hurried day filled with a thousand details that seem important now but will likely be less than nothing in a hundred years. I went from feeling a little stressed to feeling quite joyful about the continuing work of Jesus! (I think I smiled all the way home.) So, it is with joyfulness that we report that yet another of our Champaign-Urbana children has felt God's wondrous grace. Scott Mangers (Bro. Dennie and Sis. Cheryl) is that soul who found it needful to give his life to the Lord. Scott is a student here at the U of I and has been an important part

of our church family since his childhood. We look forward to seeing him have his new birth and development as a growing child of God. Keep praying, especially for our young people. We still have some who are in need of some Godly persuasion.

As springtime brings showers and flowers, it also has a tendency to bring engagement announcements for our students. Bro. Matthew Rassi (Chicago, IL), a U of I student, was recently engaged to Sis. Bridget Zollinger (Sardis, OH). Many years of joy are our wish for this new couple.

Many from our church, particularly the students, made the little trip to Cissna Park to witness the testimony and baptism of Lee Hoffman, one of our students. It was a beautiful weekend to hear of the soul's rebirth made possible by the sacrifice of God's Son. God's love is certainly evident in Lee's effervescent persona. We welcome him into the fellowship of believers.

God sent his singers upon the earth
With songs of sadness and of mirth,
That they might touch the hearts of
men,
And bring them back to heaven
again.

—*H. W. Longfellow*

Lifting voices heavenward in song, our monthly hymn sing featured the Gerst sisters of Oakville/Champaign. Coming to minister to us this past month were Bros. Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL), Curt Rassi and Steve Sauder (Tremont, IL), Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO) and Tom Stock (Cissna Park, IL). Our students and their parents hosted an evening appreciation dinner for the church, and many of the families spent the weekend. Greetings were given from roughly nineteen

congregations. The "home folks" of the Champaign-Urbana church certainly appreciate the thoughtfulness of the students and their parents. We remind the parents/families that they don't have to cook us dinner to come spend the weekend with their student and the day at our church! Know that we appreciate you coming to visit often! Our church was blessed by the ministry and presence of all of these people whether they spoke, sang, or simply visited.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Kathy Schlatter

There is more than one relationship of living with a family. One can be a full-fledged member of the family, or one can be a boarder. Ordinarily, the boarder pays room and board, and may interact with the family in many ways, yet is not really considered a member of the family and does not have responsibilities to the family. When we come to Christ in repentance, He expects us to take on only full-fledged family membership. First of all, a "boarder" could never pay enough to God for the "room and board" offered on earth—and ultimately in Heaven. Christ assumes that one of His own will interact with His family in as many positive ways as possible—and with each person that He introduces them to ("No one knocks at my door who is not sent by God"). Certainly, He also has full expectation of the responsibilities of His family that each of us is expected to shoulder, weeping with those who weep, rejoicing with those who rejoice, blessing those who curse us (Romans 12:9-21), and doing all that He would command us in love to do for His sake. Let us gladly be a doer in the family of God!

Blessing upon blessing has come

to us via our visitors recently. On Saturday, February 22, our Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann, with the soft-spoken truth of Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH), revealed the correspondence of the Elder body in its annual letter, its mission to keep us pure, holy, and "unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) and Bros. Erik Givens (Princeville, IL) and Walt Rager (Toledo, OH) visited us and spoke words from the Spirit which we treasure. May each one be rewarded for his visit, his labor, and his love.

The Lord is always working His plans in our lives—here are some special developments: Bro. Matthew Rassi (Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla) and Sis. Bridget Zollinger of Leo, IN (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry, Sardis, OH) have sought the Lord's wisdom and are soon to be married. The East House at Gateway Woods is now looking for a suitable replacement for their assistant houseparent. They are happy for her and Matthew but sad to lose her. Chicago church is also happy for Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget, yet we also know that Bro. Matthew will not be home to visit as often. A couple staying somewhat closer to home will be Bro. Matt Knapp (Bro. Charles and Sis. Paula, Bloomington, IL) and Sis. Dana Banwart (Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna, Fairbury, IL), for Bro. Matt has some time to spend in the Chicago area in physical therapy school yet. May we be prayerful and encouraging to these dear couples, as they embark on another adventure in their Christian lives, one of enduring love and constant attention to each other—soon to be bound by the threefold cord.

As I arrived at the tollway entrance, there were three exact-

change booths, all empty—but the middle one had a perennial GREEN light. The other two were red, waiting for the money before they gave the go-ahead. Naturally, I chose the middle lane BECAUSE of its green light. I wouldn't have to slow up as much nor wait that instant for the change of the light. As I went through, however, I was reminded of the lanes of life. In my Christian walk, do I always want an immediate green? What about having checkpoint times, times of slowing down to determine WHERE I am going in too big a hurry? Do I not need to be very careful of AUTOMATIC green lights, often given by the world, to too large a variety of questionable actions? Don't I need to remember that the Lord's timetable is far from mine, more evenly, sedately paced than mine? And sometimes the Lord's red lights seem to last quite some time—but that is His choice, and though His ways are not my ways (Isaiah 55:8), I am trying to learn His.

In recent weeks, I am so aware of changes: births, deaths, conversions, engagements announced, diseases diagnosed, divorces granted, jobs lost and found and consuming the workers who have them—and those are the BIG ones. Sometimes the small ones are at least as important: one's temper contained, one's love expressed in a new way, one choosing to be generous when the situation is unknown, one reaching out to another, one allowing another to make a connection, one believing through faith when "reality" makes the belief seem ridiculous. We are either of all men most miserable or of all men most sublimely blessed. It depends upon our position and whether we are using His point of view or not. May we choose blessing.

All the way my Saviour leads me;
O the fulness of His love!
Perfect rest for me is promised
In my Father's house above,
When my spirit clothed, immortal,
Wings its flight to realms of day,
::This my song thro' endless ages
Jesus led me all the way::

Hymns of Zion #21

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK
Beth Steffen - Joyce Bauer

"I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture...I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

John 10:9-10

On the weekend of March 1 and 2, we were privileged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of two dear young people, Lee Hoffman (Sis. Elsie) and Sarah Laubscher (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Gloria). What a joy to add two more to our church family. We had many visiting ministers that day. Some of them were used to bring us the Word while others taught in Sunday School and at our friends' Bible Class. They were Elder Bros. Don Sauder (Roanoke, IL), Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) and Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL), and Bros. John Stoller (Leo, IN), Jim Kaeb (Bern, KS), Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL), Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), Jaye Rinckenberger (Goodfield, IL), Ron Heiniger (Bloomington, IL), and Lenny Meyer (Chicago, IL). We thank each one who took the time to share their day with us.

On Sunday, March 9, the Bible Class entertained the Bible Class students from our churches in Belvidere, Forrest, and Washington. We always enjoy having the young people with us and hope

they will make new friends as they share the day together. Sharing the Word with us that day was Bro. Gary Brown (Forrest, IL). We thank him for being a willing servant.

Wednesday evening, February 19, was our second topical Bible presentation given by Bro. Ken Weerts. He spoke about the rich heritage of the Apostolic Christian Church. We thank you for sharing.

We rejoice with Bro. Larry and Sis. Jeannie Kaufmann in the birth of their sixth grandchild. Gabriel Timothy was born to Bro. Tim and Sis. Robin Kaufmann (Peoria, IL) on March 11. God bless you all as you enjoy this new member of your family.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;"

II Cor. 4:17

Spending some time in the hospital this past month were Sis. Eulalia Eisenmann and Sis. Gladys Winger. We are happy to report that both are home again and on the road to recovery.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Clara Hofer and Diane in the death of their brother-in-law and uncle, George Cluver. May God be especially near you at this time.

Note of Thanks:

We would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, expressions of sympathy, flowers and phone calls before and since the passing of our dear father and grandfather, Leonard Gudeman. May God bless you all richly for your kindness and love.

Sis. Judy and Urban Edelman and family

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE
Missy Banwart
Linda Knobloch

"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."

Proverbs 31:10

On February 23 we learned the engagement of Sis. Annie Steffen (Bro. Duane and Sis. Lois) and Bro. Bruce Martin (Bro. Roland and Sis. Deloris, Eureka, IL). We pray God's blessings and nearness be upon them as they plan for a May wedding.

We were exhorted and encouraged when we heard the reading of the Memorandum to remain faithful and close to the Lord as we battle the wiles of the devil. Elder Bro. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN) assisted our Elder Bro. Bob Walder in this duty. Bro. Bill Gerst (Alto, MI) also ministered the Word to us this past month. May the Spirit of God continue to lead our ministering brothers, thereby helping us all toward our Heavenly goal.

Ruth Miller has been improving as she is at the Apostolic Christian Home in Eureka. Hilda Fehr is now back in her home. We are thankful for God's healing hand upon these dear souls.

A few from our congregation have recently had the opportunity to go to Mexico and Haiti with World Relief.

"...the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me;"

II Timothy 4:17

With the spring season upon us, we can ask God to help us do a "spring cleaning" in our hearts. If bitterness, anger, greed, evil speaking or whatever the devil

would try to sow there are present, we can replace it with love, kindness, peace and generosity.

A thought: A smile takes a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN
Peggy Heiniger
Norma Schambach

"...Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Matthew 26:26-28

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO) assist as we shared a blessed evening in Holy Communion. March 8 was the date we gathered together to share this sacrament, that we could become more united in our love for Christ and one another.

Congratulations to Bro. John Kinsinger (Bro. Bill and Sis. Sandy) and Sis. Wanda Baer (Ray and Sis. Janna Baer) of Princeville, IL. We are thankful that God has led them together and may they continue to be lead and guided by Him as they make their wedding preparations.

Bro. Gene Lehman (Wolcott, IN) spent a weekend with us and shared a slide presentation of our World Relief work in Juarez, Mexico. It makes us wonder why we have so much when others have so little. May God bless him for his labors of love here and abroad.

We recently spent a Saturday morning of fellowship with our sisters and friends at our annual spring luncheon. Each year we

look forward to seeing faces we haven't seen in awhile, and remembering those faithful sisters who taught us by example how to live for the Lord.

Bro. Morris and Sis. Nina (Graf) Willaert recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. Bro. Morris is the oldest brother in our Elgin congregation. May God's blessings follow them.

Our hearts were warmed as we listened to our Sunday School children present the Easter story in verse and song. May the words they have committed to memory and the seeds that have been sown in Sunday School some day bring forth the fruit, so that His suffering will not have been in vain.

Bro. Bill (Sis. Ann) Reber was recently hospitalized and has returned home. We continue to pray for those with physical struggles. Let us also remember those who care for our loved ones.

Our sympathy to Sis. Sandy (Bro. Bill) Kinsinger who lost her uncle, Ray Banwart.

Note of Thanks:

My sincere thanks for the love and many acts of kindness extended to me during my hospitalization and upon returning home. The many cards, gifts, food, flowers, phone calls and prayers are all so very much appreciated.

Sis. Evelyn Gudeman

ILLINOIS, EUREKA
Dori Blunier

Sit and pause awhile my spirit,
 This great miracle behold;
 See the King of highest merit
 On the cross so bare and cold!
 Out of heaven, God has given
 His own Son in love untold!

Zion's Harp #226

We don't pause often enough
 and consider the miracle of Jesus

and His sacrifice of love for us. We were reminded recently how Jesus often departed from the crowds and His disciples to be alone with His Father. May we take example and sit and pause awhile.

We rejoice with Bro. Bruce Martin (Roland and Sis. Delores) and Sis. Annie Steffen of Congerville (Bro. Duane and Sis. Lois) whose engagement was announced on February 23. We certainly wish them the blessings and love of God.

Shannon Zimmerman (Bro. Tom and Sis. Janet) and Klæe Scranton of Tremont (Bob and Linda) have also announced their engagement. May God be with them as they plan their September 27 wedding.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Norman and Sis. Connie Hoerr in the loss of Bro. Norman's father, Bro. August Hoerr of Peoria, who died on March 10. May God be their comfort.

We enjoyed the Sunday recently when Bros. John Steiner (Oakville, IA) and Ken Schneider (Remington, IN) brought us the Word of Life. At the end of the day we were exhorted to encourage each other to "press on".

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY
Sally Fehr - Thelma Slagel

Spring Bouquet

God has a meaning
 In even the flower
 If we just stop
 And take one hour
 And go upon
 This pleasant quest
 In search of peace
 And happiness
 When you feel weary
 Along life's way,
 Just stop and pick
 A spring bouquet.

—Grace B. Rosser

We thank ministering Bro. Jim

Knobloch (Winthrop, MN) who visited us and shared God's Word with us. May God bless him and his family.

The engagement of Sis. Dana Banwart (Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna) and Bro. Matthew Knapp (Bro. Charles and Sis. Paula, Bloomington) was announced March 9. We wish them God's blessings as they plan their future life together.

We rejoice with Lance Mowery (Dale and Sis. Elaine) and Kati Kaisner (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Donna) as they have heeded the Lord's call to repentance. May God grant them grace in their new walk of life.

First-time parents, Bro. Jeff and Sis. Sara Moser, are rejoicing, as a precious baby girl, Myrna Jill, arrived on March 4. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill Stoller (Forrest, IL) and Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Martha Moser (Washington, IL). Great-grandparents are Bro. Elmer and Sis. Rosetta Stoller (Forrest, IL).

Hospital patients were Ollie Steidinger and Aaron Fehr (Bro. John and Sis. Jennifer).

Note of Thanks:

May God bless everyone who remembered us on our 50th anniversary with cards, gifts, prayers and thoughts of love.

Bro. Willis and Sis. Elsie Bachtold

ILLINOIS, FORREST

**Marlene Walter
Mary Bachtold**

We are thankful for willing brothers who faithfully serve us as ministers of God's Word. Visiting us this month were Bros. Ted Witzig (Morton, IL), Sid Kaufmann (Cissna Park, IL), Darrel Stoller (Bern, KS), Steve Martin

(Eureka, IL) and Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL).

Steve Anliker (Elder Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy) and Kristin Greenwald (Kenneth and Carol, Dublin, OH) are planning a June 7 wedding. We wish them God's blessings as they take this important step.

A precious bundle of love has arrived in the home of Ron and Vicki Mueller. Reagan John's happy grandparents are Bro. Eldon and Sis. Darlene Steidinger (Fairbury, IL) and Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida Mueller.

Hospital patients this month were Shanna Schaffer (Bro. John and Sis. Sally) and Bro. Larry Bachman. We are thankful God has restored their health and they are able to assemble with us again. We were sorry to hear that Bro. Dennis Edelman suffered a serious hand injury in a farm accident. It is our prayer that he will feel God's nearness and healing power during his recovery.

We extend sympathy to John and Shirley Kilgus in the death of her sister, Yvonne "Bonnie" Beenders (Roanoke, IL). May God comfort them during this time of sorrow.

Notes of Thanks:

A special thank you to each one who remembered me with cards and gifts for my 90th birthday. I pray that God will bless each deed of love and kindness.

Humbly, Bro. Emil Anliker

Thank you dear ones in faith, our children and friends for the many cards, gifts, and well wishes we received in observance of our 40th wedding anniversary. Your love and kindness is appreciated very much. May God bless each of you.

William and Helen Fehr

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY

Perry A. Klopfenstein

It was a joy to participate in Holy Communion on Wednesday evening, March 5. Elder Bro. Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) was with us.

God is to be praised for the overall sobriety (seriousness) and intense devotion that exists during this most sacred event. There is a special focus that falls on the congregation as they stand to commemorate Christ's suffering in the form of bread and wine.

It is heartening, in a society of waywardness, to note a people who have both a foundation and an anchor; and who propose to live by a code of godliness that honors the Saviour.

We should be forever grateful to God for sending His Son to endure pain and anguish, and then to bleed and die for our sake.

February 23 was a wonderful occasion as we added four new believers to the church. Finding grace to repent and become converted, and thence seek to overcome sin, were Sis. Becky Ringger (Bro. Steve and Sis. Donna), Bro. Scott Wettstein (Bro. Lyle and Sis. Linda), Sis. Lisa Stoller (Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Sherry), and Sis. Lindsey Kaupp (Bro. Tim and Sis. Betty).

Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO) was here for the occasion along with Bros. Dennis Kaufmann and Kevin Knapp (Bloomington, IL), Jon Zeller (Morton, IL) and Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL).

We were sorry for the loss of Sis. Aline Stortz who passed away on March 14. She is survived by an only son, Bro. Steve Stortz. She was the last of a family of ten brothers and sisters to expire, so her son (unmarried) is especially

alone. May God be with him always, and may the church be his constant family. He was diligent in caring for his mother. May God bless him for his efforts.

Although she turned to God later in life, Sis. Aline was appreciative of her new life, and made it a point to be present at most all church functions.

Bro. Elmer and Sis. Hulda Meiss observed their 58th wedding anniversary.

On February 26, we heard the reading of the annual Memorandum. Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) came to help in this work.

Bro. Willis Aupperle was recently hospitalized.

ILLINOIS, MORTON

**Phyllis Farney
Cheryl Wuthrich**

Our congregation is rejoicing with the angels as we have been privileged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of many of our loved ones. On March 2, baptisms were held for Bro. Jed and Bro. Kip Taufer (Bro. Dana and Sis. Chris), Sis. Megan Zimmerman (Bro. Mike and Sis. Sue), Sis. Macy Mayo (Bro. Bill and Sis. Gail) and Sis. Vicki Link (Dave and Judy). On March 16 we witnessed the baptisms of Sis. Holly Kaiser (Bro. Ed and Sis. Barb), Sis. Stephanie Schick (Bro. Stan and Sis. Carol), Bro. Bryce Spangler (Bro. Roger and Sis. Dawn), Bro. Trent Kaufman (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Rhonda) and Sis. Erma Hollis. It gives us hope and joy for the future church to see them turn to Christ and live in obedience to Him for the rest of their lives.

We wish to thank all the visiting ministers and their families for their fellowship with us this month. Heartfelt thanks to Elder

Bros. Don Sauder (Roanoke, IL), and Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL) and Bros. John Rowell (Burlington, IA), Frank Sauder (Roanoke, IL), Dean Steffen (Belvidere, IL) and Ken Hoerr (Peoria, IL).

Note of Thanks:

Sis. Ann Eberhard wishes to thank everyone who remembered her with gifts of love, prayers and visits during her stay at Restmor while recovering from her fall. Also for remembering her on her 70th birthday. May God bless all who were so kind.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA Peter and Mabel Weber

"...This is my body, which is given for you...This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Luke 22:19-20

Our Palm Sunday sacrament was a blessing and renewing.

We just crossed the spring equinox (equal night), when the sun is directly above the equator and starts moving north again. Bro. Mike Weyeneth mentioned from time to time that the great is not too great, the small not too small for God. Astronomer Carl Sagan died four months ago in Seattle at 62. He certainly had the big picture. What about the "little picture" with focus on repentance, a godly life and trusting the omnipotent God for our daily sustenance and eternal destiny?

Recently, Bro. Rick Plattner read Acts 17 where Paul is commending the Jews of Berea in Macedonia for studying the scrolls of the Old Testament. Now we have all 66 Bible books, can learn how scripture interprets scripture and that God wants simple faith to

take over when we reach the limits of our present understanding. Prophecy is proof that the Bible is the Word of God.

We thank Bros. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL) and Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL) for bringing us the Word of God on March 9 by alternating their services between congregation and the combined Bible Classes of Goodfield, Gridley, Taylor, MO and Peoria. The question, "Where is God?" was answered by "Where is HE NOT?"

Our heartfelt thanks to Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) for assisting Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer in sharing the conclusions of the 1996 Elder and General Conferences with us on March 12. Are we wisely investing towards eternity the 86,400 seconds allotted to us each day?

Over 200 attendees enjoyed the annual review of the Western US World Relief activities at the Fellowship Hall on March 15, which represented 26 churches from AZ, IL, IN, IA and MO. Several slide presentations (Haiti, Mexico, Navajos of AZ, India) and reports illustrated the great needs abroad and at home. These efforts are for their benefit, and our reward.

Richard McDermott, son of Sis. Alvena McDermott, passed away on February 25; and we said farewell to two Skyline residents: Emma Meister, aunt of Bros. Dave, Ed and Paul Meister and Walter Meister, met her Lord on March 1, and Bro. Augie Hoerr on March 10. He was the father of Bro. Norman Hoerr of Eureka and Linda McMullen of Peoria. May the Lord comfort the hearts of those who are mourning as promised in the beatitudes (Matthew 5:4).

Sis. Mary Swadley had bypass surgery, went home and had to return to the hospital. She is home

again now. Also, Bro. Jess Leman needed another hospitalization and has returned to the Skylines. Bro. Bud Fehr's recent trip was interrupted at the St. Louis airport by a stroke. He was transferred back to Peoria by ambulance and is stable now. He and his family have endured many medical episodes in the last several years and they have our special prayers. Returning to the hospital in short intervals is an especially trying experience and our hearts go out to all. May God lift them up and give them the assurance of true faith.

The Peoria Sunday School portrayed the Passion story in their Easter program on March 16. Jesus was glorified in word and song in modulations ranging from pre-kindergarten to the Young Group. Thanks to all participants, their teachers, and parents for their diligence.

The dictionary says a "Snow Bird" is a small finch living in cold regions. Colloquially it is today's designation of people going to FL, TX, AZ and CA for a warmer climate when locally the snow flies. This winter a number of Peorians had this privilege, along with a change of scenery and opportunities to worship and fellowship in various host congregations. Jesus set aside time for rest and leisure. Living is enjoying the good moment we have. We are glad everyone has returned home safely.

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

Joanna Herrmann

On February 25, Caleb Stahl was born to Bro. Doug and Sis. Ann Stahl. Caleb joins big brother, Joshua, and big sister, Sarah. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Lyle and Sis. Betty Stahl, and Bro. Dale and Sis. JoAnn Sauder (Tre-

mont, IL).

In Proverbs 3:5-6 we are encouraged to "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart...In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." We rejoice to see how God has directed two dear souls. The engagement of Sis. Wanda Baer to Bro. John Kinsinger (Elgin, IL) was made known to the congregation on March 2. Sis. Wanda is the daughter of Ray and Sis. Janna Lou, and Bro. John is the son of Bro. Bill and Sis. Sandy (Elgin, IL). They are planning to be married June 1.

We read in I Timothy 5:10, "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." On Wednesday, March 5, Sis. Natalie Feucht passed from time to eternity. We are thankful for her example, and that she was able to go to be forever with the Lord. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family, her children, Bro. Earl (Sis. Margaret), Sis. Shirley Feucht and Sis. Betty Jane Feucht; and her brothers and sisters, Sis. Anna Siebenthal, Bro. Sam (Sis. Lucille) Kieser, Bro. George (Sis. Esther) Kieser, and Bro. Dave (Sis. Ruth) Kieser.

Spring is a time of renewal, as we witness life in dormant plants buried under a blanket of snow. May it also be a time of spiritual rebirth. On Sunday, March 9, the congregation was encouraged to do a self-examination in preparation for Holy Communion.

"...For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh"

Matthew 19:5

March 16 was the wedding day for Sis. Hope Steiner and Bro. Lance Bucher. Sis. Hope is the daughter of Bro. Harold and Sis. Karen, and Bro. Lance is the son of Bro. Ken and Sis. Carol Bucher (Valparaiso, IN). We pray God will bless their union with peace and His continued presence.

Our hospital patients this month were Bro. Ezra (Sis. Lucille) Rumbold and Otto (Sis. Eleanor) Baer. May they feel God's nearness, and where it is His will, His healing hand.

Each Life Affects Another's

We may not always realize that everything we do Affects not only our lives but touches others, too. A single happy smile can always brighten up the day For anyone who happens to be passing by your way, And a little bit of thoughtfulness that shows someone you care Creates a ray of sunshine for both of you to share— Yes, every time you offer someone a helping hand, Everytime you show a friend you care and understand, Every time you have a kind and gentle word to give You help someone find beauty in this precious life we live, For happiness brings happiness, and loving ways bring love, And giving is the treasure that contentment is made of.
—Amanda Bradley

Note of Thanks:

A sincere thanks to each one who remembered me with your prayers, cards, gifts, flowers, phone calls, food, and visits since my hip surgery. May God bless each one for your deeds of kindness shown to me and my family.

Sis. Martha Jane Siebenthal

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

We rejoice in the wedding engagement of Sis. Gina Knapp (Bro. Dave and Sis. Carol) to Bro. Cory Gerber (Jack and Deb Gerber, Eureka). May God draw them closely together and bless them as they plan for their wedding.

A son, Curtis John, was born to Bro. Todd and Sis. Kathy Moser on March 6. He has an older brother, Bradley, and his grandparents are Bro. Lyle and Sis. Barb Moser and Bro. Ray and Sis. Carol Luginbuhl. We pray for God's blessings on this family and may they seek God's direction in raising their children.

Several of our loved ones who have been in the hospital recently are Bro. Joe Rassi, Sis. Pat Rassi and Elmer Wiedman (Virginia). May they feel God's love and care.

We shared a blessed Wednesday evening when Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL) came and assisted our Elder Bros. Tom Hoffman and Don Sauder in reading with us the conclusions of the Memorandum. Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO) also shared his slides from a World Relief trip to Yugoslavia with us at our March Bible study. We appreciate all the time and effort these brothers spend on our behalf. We also thank Bro. Roger Sauder (Ft. Lauderdale, FL) for spending a Sunday with the Roanoke congregation.

In closing, I'm reminded of the poem written by Barbara Cornet Ryberg.

A Mother's Prayer

I wash the dirt from little feet
And as I wash I pray,
"Lord, keep them ever pure and true
To walk the narrow way."

I wash the dirt from little hands
And earnestly I ask,

"Lord, may they ever yielded be
To do the humblest task."

I wash the dirt from little knees
And pray, "Lord may they be
The place where victories are won,
And orders sought from thee."

I scrub the clothes that soil so soon,
And pray, "Lord may her dress
Throughout eternal ages be
Thy robe of righteousness."

Ere many hours shall pass I know
I'll wash these hands again;
And there'll be dirt upon her dress
Before the day shall end.

And as she journeys on through life
And learns of want and pain,
"Lord, keep her precious little heart
Cleansed from all sin and stain."

"For soap and water cannot reach
Where Thou alone canst see.
Her hands and feet, these I can
wash
-I trust her heart to Thee."

ILLINOIS, TREMONT
Barbara Dill - Barbara Kaeb

"Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

I Chronicles 29:11-13

We are thankful for our visiting minister, Bro. Ted Hirstein (Sis. Joyce, Morton, IL) for his labor of love and sharing God's Word with us.

Our congregation is thankful

and happy to extend a warm and loving welcome to our Bro. Chris and Sis. Dana Leman who are now living in Tremont and are assembling with us.

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

Not too long ago, I read a story that made me think: Three men, all engaged at the same employment, were asked what they were doing. One said he was making fifty dollars a day. Another replied that he was cutting stone. The third said he was building a cathedral. The difference was not in what they were actually doing, although the spirit of the third might quite possibly have made him the more expert at the task. It was not in what they were earning, and all three were cutting stone. The difference was that only one held in his mind that he was helping build a great edifice. Life meant more to him than the others because he saw further, and more clearly.

How many of us lose sight of the big picture? We get caught up in the daily struggles and fail to keep our focus. Yes, the big picture is eternal life. We all need to focus on daily living in a manner worthy of our Heavenly Home.

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

I Cor. 4:18

Michael Kellenberger, son of Bro. Randy and Sis. Ruth, was united in matrimony to Carrie Santucci on March 15. Her parents are Carol Howell and Pete San-

tucci. We wish them God's blessings for a long and happy marriage.

Bro. Greg and Sis. Shelle (Massner) Schumacher are the happy parents of a son, Isaac David. Isaac was welcomed home by brothers, Drew and Joshua. We are so thankful for the safe delivery. Grandparents are Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Betty Schumacher, and Laura Durfey.

Ethan Michael was the stillborn son of Bro. Mark and Sis. Marti (Bienemann) Teubel. Grandparents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Louise Teubel, and Roy and Jeanne Bienemann. A private funeral and burial were held. Our hearts grieve for their loss, but know that God now holds this little one in His hands. A thank you note from his parents reads: "We wish to express our deep appreciation to our dear brothers and sisters. We were overwhelmed by the many prayers, cards, and other acts of kindness showed to us in the death of our dear son Ethan. We have been humbled by the many who have reached out to us—even those we have never met. God bless you all for showing and sharing His love." Bro. Mark and Sis. Marti

We wish to welcome Sis. Grace Klaus back from spending a year in Japan. We are thankful for her safe return.

Guest ministers visiting our congregation were Bros. Jim Le-man (Roanoke, IL) and Ken Weerts (Cissna Park, IL). We are so thankful to hear the Word in its truth and purity. Thank you, brothers, for lending yourself to God's will. We also thank Bro. Rick Plattner (Peoria, IL) for lending himself to us for our monthly Bible Study this month.

Note of Thanks:

Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Martha

(Fritz) Moser wish to express their deep gratitude for the countless acts of love during Lloyd's hospitalization and recovery. May God bless each of you for your prayers and kind deeds.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON
Brenda Bertsch - Kim Maller

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever."

Psalm 118:1

We have had three souls give their hearts to the Lord. They are Jim Agler (Sis. Pam), Bryan Meyer (Bro. Harold and Sis. Violet) and Sarah Kaehr (Bro. Jon and Sis. Julie). We wish them much grace as they begin their walk with the Lord.

Bro. Brent Kaehr (Bro. Lyle and Sis. Connie) and Sis. Allison Ringger (Bro. Alan and Sis. Sheryl) have announced their engagement. We pray that God will be with them as they plan their life together.

Elder Bros. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL), John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) were with us the weekend of March 1 to help with Communion. We thank God for their willingness to be used.

"In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me."

Psalm 120:1

On March 5, Bro. Ed Schwartz, Sr. passed from this life to his Heavenly reward. We pray that his wife, Josephine, and children, Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz, Jr. and Etta (John) Steffen, will feel our prayers and God's love as they go through this trying time.

We also wish to express our sym-

pathy to Bro. Matt and Sis. Julie Lehman in the passing of Matt's dad, Derryl.

Alivia Joy was born on February 26 to Bro. Chip and Sis. Angie Topp. Her excited grandparents are Bro. Claire and Sis. Mary Jane Yergler, Louise Topp (Francesville, IN) and Dale Topp.

Bro. B.J. and Sis. Lana Frauhiger welcomed Dakota Alan on March 3. He is joining a brother, Colton. Grandparents are Bro. Alan and Sis. Sheryl Ringger and Bro. Chuck and Sis. Marie Frauhiger.

Bro. Jim and Sis. Kathy Lantz became grandparents on March 3. Madison Janel was born to Joe and Cybil Dunnuck.

On March 6, Bro. Bill and Sis. Carolyn Gerber welcomed a new grandson. Cody Duane Ray was welcomed by Shelly Gerber and brother, R.J.

We had several in the hospital this month. They were Rodney Reimschisel (Bro. Todd and Sis. Lori), Bro. Harold Isch, Sis. Elizabeth Pfister, Sis. Elizabeth Ginzler, Sis. Sandy Ringger (Bro. Kendall), Sis. Kelly Leyse (Bro. Troy), and Taylor Pulver (Bro. Chris and Sis. Kara).

Note of Thanks:

We want to thank everyone who remembered us with your love, cards, gifts and most of all your prayers during Ed's sickness and death. It was all appreciated. May God bless you all.

The family of Edward H. Schwartz, Sr.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH
Kay Steffen - Lori Steffen

February 23 we were blessed to have two visiting ministers. Bros. Ben Manz (Junction, OH) and Lynn Stieglitz (Leo, IN) were will-

ing to be used. As they shared God's Word with us, we were reminded that God asks us to be faithful, even when we don't understand why things have happened in our lives.

Our congregation has been blessed with the birth of two baby girls this month. Monica Kate, born on February 21, is the first daughter born to Bro. Grant and Sis. Maura Frauhiger. Thankful grandparents are Elder Bro. Phil and Sis. Maureen Stettner and Bro. Doyle and Sis. Jane Frauhiger. Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill Thornton were blessed with their third daughter, Erika Jo, born on March 11. Happy grandparents are Bro. Doyle and Sis. Jane Frauhiger and Jerry and Judy Thornton of North Ft. Myers, FL and Janet Thornton of Coldwater, MI. May God guide these children and their parents as they strive to raise them according to His will.

A part of life is death, and our two Bluffton congregations were saddened by the loss of our dear Bro. Ed Schwartz, Sr. We extend our sympathy to Sis. Josephine, Elder Bro. Ed and Sis. Jeni, and John and Etta. May they feel God's strength through our prayers.

Sis. Myra Ringger has spent some time in the hospital this month and we're thankful for God's healing power. Let's try to remember those who have struggles and concerns, whether they are physical, spiritual, or emotional. Satan is powerful, but God is still in control!

We are saddened by the deaths of two dear sisters in faith: Kathy (Gerber) Clough (55 years) of the Philadelphia congregation, and Mayme (Levy) Getz of the Leo church; both having roots and/or attended the Bluffton churches in years past. We offer the respective families our sympathy.

As Christ was the perfect example of sharing God's love with those less fortunate, let us be mindful of those in our churches who are traveling with work teams to needy areas. They're not only lending their services, but sharing God's love and shining their lights for Him. May God grant them safety.

We have an anchor that keeps the
soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows
roll,
Fastened to the Rock which cannot
move,
Grounded firm and deep in the
Saviour's love.
—Owens

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast..."

Hebrews 6:19

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE Val Gutwein

As spring approaches, I am often called to the window by my daughter to look at a beautiful robin or to take note of the tulips which have pushed their way through the cold ground. Then we talk together of how wonderfully God has created every living thing, and we share the excitement of the "renewing" of the earth by the Creator Himself. As we witness this revival of the physical world, it reminds us that God also wants to daily "renew" our hearts and minds. Ephesians 4:23 states that "the inward man is renewed day by day." This is God's work and what a joy to trust our lives to Him each new day He gives.

We have had several young souls seek the Lord Jesus in the past month. What joy it brings the body of believers as we hear and witness the "renewing" of the minds of these young people. We

know the Lord will guide each convert as they search Him out and strive to walk in the way of the Cross.

We had the pleasure of hosting the annual weekend for the Apostolic Home Educators on March 8-9. We especially thank Elder Bro. Charles Sinn (Fort Scott, KS) who came and addressed the group on Saturday. Bro. Charles and Bro. Frank Sauder (Roanoke, IL) together shared the ministering of the Word on Sunday. We are grateful for their loving efforts. The weekend was a real blessing for us in Francesville, and we appreciate each one who made the effort to come and be with us.

We want to express our sympathy to Bro. Larry Linback (Sis. Connie) at the sudden passing of his brother, Richard Linback. The uncertainty of life makes us realize how truly short our time here on earth is. We prayerfully entrust the sorrowing family into God's care.

There have been several of our loved ones who have spent time in the hospital this past month: Bro. Rod Gutwein (Sis. Donna), Sis. Viola Von Tobel (Bro. Virgil), Cecelia Neihouser (Bro. Brad and Sis. Barbara), Bro. Jim Bogart (Sis. Eleanor) and Glen Boehning (Sis. Eileen). Our prayer is that each one would feel the healing mercies of God and that new strength could be found day by day.

We feel indebted to our faithful home brothers who preach the Word week after week. Only the Lord knows the sacrifices each one makes for His church.

In closing, I'd like to share an inspiring thought that our Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman mentioned during a recent sermon. He said "don't strive to master the Word, let the Word master you." May this spring bring special joy and re-

newal to your family.

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS
Melissa Baumgartner
Lynn Dotterer

Greetings of love in our Lord and Saviour.

A church supper and singing was held on a Saturday evening for our college students. It was a blessed time of fellowship. We thank all who took part.

We welcome Michael Alan Schini to our congregation. He was born on March 4 to Bob and Heather Schini. May the Lord grant Bob and Heather much joy and happiness in their raising of little Michael.

Our hearts and prayers are with little Teryn Leuthold as she recently had ear surgery for the second time. Her parents are Bro. Jerry and Sis. Doreen.

Our prayers are also with Bro. Doug and Sis. Jeni Hart. Sis. Jeni is on bed rest until the "due date" in May of their second child. May God continue granting them much comfort and peace at this time.

We thank our dear Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN), and Bros. Garry Bucher (Valparaiso, IN) and Marvin Stieglitz (Leo, IN) for sharing the Word of Life with us.

INDIANA, LACROSSE
Anna Marie Stoller

Come to Calvary's holy mountain,
 Sinners ruined by the fall;
 Here a pure and healing fountain
 Flows to you, to me, to all,
 In a full, perpetual tide,
 Opened when our Saviour died.
 He that drinks shall live forever—
 'Tis a soul renewing flood;
 God is faithful, God will never
 Break His covenant of blood,
 Signed when our Redeemer died,
 Sealed when He was glorified.

—James Montgomery

Our congregation was privileged to partake of Holy Communion on March 22. Elder Bro. Andrew Virkler (Bay City, MI) assisted Elder Bro. Curt Frank in serving the bread and wine.

The annual Sunday School Easter program was held on Palm Sunday following the afternoon service. God has blessed our fellowship with these precious children, and it brings joy to our hearts as these little ones learn the truth of Jesus. May they grow to adulthood determined to follow this one true way.

"Have mercy upon me, O God." (Psalm 51:1). God's church is observing a changed countenance on Kerri Goodwin since she began her repentance. May the love of God continue to radiate in Kerri.

INDIANA, LEO
Ethelyn Schlatter

"...Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand."

Luke 21:29-30

It is good to see the signs of spring again. But even as Jesus was foretelling of the future in the above chapter, we see how near is His return.

Bro. Howard Plattner (Alto, MI) conducted our topical Bible study on Wednesday evening, March 12. His timely message on "Angels" was thought-provoking and very interesting. Timely, because he brought out that angels are very popular in the secular world today and this current trend is from Satan, who is an "angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14), to draw men away from worship of God. When Satan

fell, one third of the angels of Heaven followed him. There are evil angels as well as holy angels. There are only three angels named in the Bible, Michael, Gabriel and Lucifer. There is a difference between saints and angels. Angels are created heavenly beings, saints are those redeemed by the blood of Jesus. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (Hebrews 2:16). "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." (Psalm 91:11).

We enjoyed the fellowship with others who came with Bro. Howard from Alto.

We also appreciated the ministry of Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN), and Bros. Greg Stieglitz (Indianapolis, IN) and Tom Schambach (Elgin, IL). May God bless them as we were blessed by their submission to the Holy Spirit.

We were happy for the safe return of Elder Bro. David Bertsch. He reported a profitable time for the work team in Haiti.

The Lord has answered our prayers. Bro. Marvin Fischer returned home and has been attending church services again.

Our dear Sis. Mayme Getz was granted her desire to enter her eternal Home. Following surgery for a fractured hip, she was moved to Kingston Care Center for therapy. On March 18, at the age of 96, she was relieved of her suffering. Our sympathy is extended to her daughter and family, Sis. Sharon and Bro. Dave Pfister, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. She is also survived by two brothers, Bro. Ralph Levy (Kouts, IN) and Walter Levy (Bremen, IN).

We entreat the Lord's blessings on Sis. Bridgett Zollinger, who has

given her time to serve at Gateway Woods and is now engaged to be married to Bro. Matt Rassi.

We rejoice with Cara Baumgartner who has peace with the Lord and we look forward to hearing her testimony.

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

Psalm 9:2

INDIANA, MILFORD
Renee Beer - Linda Beer

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;"

Hebrews 5:8

If Christ had to suffer, can we not also expect to suffer that we may learn obedience?

God sometimes asks us to go through fire and deep waters in our lives. It is at this time we know God does not take us around these difficult times, but helps us through them. We pray Sis. Mary Ann Haab (Art) and Sis. Millie Beer (Phil) have felt God's nearness and healing power as they are hospitalized.

Our congregation has been blessed with two babies this month. Michael Clark was born to Bro. Bill and Sis. Stacey Feller. Bro. Lynn and Sis. Mary Ann Feller (LaCrosse, IN) are grandparents along with Bro. Will and Sis. Sue Schieler. Michael is their first child.

Kevin Lynn was born to Bro. Rich and Sis. Kathy Schlipf. Rob, Katy, Christy, Ben and Ryan welcome him home. Sis. Lola Schlipf (Gridley, IL) and Elder Bro. Jesse and Sis. Shirley Beer are the grandparents.

We wish to thank Elder Bro.

Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN) for sharing the evening of Communion with us; also, Bro. Wayne Le-man (Roanoke, IL) for serving God's Word to us. May God bless them and fill them with wisdom and knowledge to know His will.

*What We Learn As We
Grow In Christ*

As I was driving in another state recently, I saw a sign that was meant to be clever and creative. It said, "Jesus fixes achey, brakey hearts."

As I continued driving, I reflected on the times when my heart has been aching or breaking and I decided that the theology of the statement was somewhat questionable. Jesus doesn't usually "fix" my heart. But as I yield to Him, He does become all that I need to live life victoriously while my heart gets better (which in some situations can take years).

Thus, I've learned that:

—While He doesn't always hold back the flood waters, He always wades through them with me.

—While He doesn't always keep the tornado winds from blowing my house apart, He is my strength to rebuild.

—While He doesn't always take away my sorrow, He is my comfort.

—While He doesn't always heal my body, He is my grace to endure the illness (and the reality of eternity with Him should my earthly body fail).

—While He rarely does "fix it" for me, He lives in me providing all that I need for floods and wind and pain and sorrow and death. It is then that I grow in Him, developing the character He desires for me.

Perhaps His constant and consistent provisions for my life are a far greater miracle than any "fixing" could ever be.

(C.B.)

INDIANA, REMINGTON
Patti Bahler

With spring's arrival, we can't help but notice flowers blooming as we drive through the countryside. What delicate beauty they add to the landscape! But we know that in a short time, their beauty will be gone. We'll have to wait until next year to see them again. We are reminded of this in Isaiah 40:8 where it says, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."

God's Word never fades, dries up, or blows away. It's treasures are there for us to appreciate each day. Let's each of us take time daily with God's Word to catch the beauty and majesty in it.

As we consider the renewal of spring, we can relate it to repentance and spiritual rebirth. We are grateful Rachel Virkler (Bro. Stan and Sis. Beth) has begun a new life in Jesus Christ. What joy we experience when another soul makes a choice to follow our Lord.

Visiting ministers sharing God's Word with us this month were Bro. John Hartman (Fairbury, IL) and our Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler. We appreciate so much the willingness of these brothers to share the good news.

On March 9, our Bible Class students traveled to Purdue campus for our annual ACYF for the Indiana churches. Each one was encouraged to "Accept the Challenge", which was the theme for the day.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND
Marci Neuenschwander
Sue Beebe

"April showers bring May flowers." How many of us hear that

phrase during the rainy days of April? Though we may be tempted to complain about the amount of rain we're getting, we should not forget Who sends the rain (and flowers). God alone knows how much moisture the earth needs for the weeks ahead.

It is much the same in our relationship with our Saviour. If we are living according to His Word, and are in His will for our lives, we will be blessed. Yet our human tendency is to complain if things don't go our way. Isn't it wonderful to know that He loves us even when we may be ungrateful? May we ever be faithful, thankful, and willing to be used as He sees fit.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above ye heav'nly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Heavenly Highway Hymns

Bros. Bob Beebe and Marty Langhofer, along with Bro. Marty's son, Brad, recently visited Haiti as part of a work crew. We thank the Lord for their safe return.

We appreciated a visit from Elder Bro. Jesse Beer (Milford, IN) and his wife, Sis. Shirley, last Sunday. May God bless them.

Ben Flis has given his life to the Lord and is repenting. We wish him God's grace and blessing.

Congratulations to Bro. Wayne and Sis. Shirley Lehman. They celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on March 17.

Bro. Wayne and Sis. Shirley's daughter-in-law, Cathy (Dale), was diagnosed with cancer earlier this month. She has begun chemotherapy.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO
Cheryl Bucher - Ken Susdorf

When everything in life seems against you, the safest place to be is in the will of God. No matter what happens to us, God is standing at our side, ready to use every experience to bless us. He has a plan for each life. God likes us to trust Him and when we do, He has promised He will reward us.

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Habakkuk 3:17-18

Our visiting ministers this month were Elder Bros. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) and Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) who shared Holy Communion with us. Bros. Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL) and Todd Feller (La-Crosse, IN) also came and ministered to us. Heartfelt thanks seem small in the way of appreciation, but we give them anyway. God bless you each one.

Sis. Irene Nuest has now moved to the Apostolic Christian Home at Francesville. We'll miss seeing her at church on Sunday. I hope she can feel at home there soon.

Kelly Thomas (Sis. Claudia and Bro. Mike) is engaged to be married to Paul Sommers of Valparaiso. An April wedding is planned. We wish them God's blessings as they are united in marriage.

IOWA, ELGIN
Gloria Frieden

As springtime approaches, we become increasingly anxious for warmer weather, green grass and

the return of the robins, but here in northeast Iowa we just had another dose of sub-zero temperatures and snow. Needless to say, it is rather discouraging this close to spring, but as I was driving home from work, I had to thank God for the beauty my eyes beheld. The fields sparkled with clean white snow and the ice hanging from the fences and trees glistened in the sunshine. If God had asked my permission to send this snow and ice, I'm sure I would have thought it unnecessary and would have been denied this almost breathtaking beauty. It is a lesson to me that sometimes God sends circumstances into our lives that we may not think, at first, necessary, but in time we often can see that they served a purpose and perhaps even a blessing. May God help us to always trust in His perfect wisdom and plan. Soon the April showers will cause the earth to spring forth in new life.

Anew, Lord, we are bound to Thee
Through Thy blest sacrament,
which we
Partook, that joined in heart and
hand;
To Zion's realm and holy land
We journey on.

Just as we look forward to seeing new life about us, what a blessing to also be refreshed in the Spirit. It was recently our privilege to prepare for and partake of Holy Communion. Now we press forward anew to our eternal goal. May God richly bless Bro. Wayne Grimm and Elder Bros. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) and Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) for serving us this Holy Sacrament and teachings from God's Word.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Scott and Sis. Leona Fehr as their little Elizabeth arrived too early to survive. Surely Grandma

Schmidt (Sis. Ella Mae, Winthrop) is enjoying her in their Heavenly Home.

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE
Delores Reinhard

Oh, what a beautiful day today and looking out the window I see the many robins, bluejays and other birds giving us a welcome song that spring is just around the corner. Let us all keep our hearts in tune with God, that we can hear that still small voice speaking to us with songs of melody in our hearts, praising God. May we never forget to thank our great Creator for the many blessings He has given us.

We are thankful for the visiting ministers, their families and all those who have come and shared in hearing God's Word with us this past month. Bros. Glen Funk (Wichita, KS) and Fred Eberhardt (Burlington, IA) have brought precious messages to us. We were reminded that as we invest in earthly matters, let us also invest in spiritual matters, so we can have life eternal. If we invest in Satan, it is a form of gambling.

We were also reminded of the sower who went out to sow his seed. Are we sowing seeds of love and peace that will bear fruit an hundredfold? Or are we sowing our seeds among the thorns and rocks where it will be choked out?

Seeds of goodness we are sowing
In the hearts of man today.
Bless it, Lord, that it may prosper,
And bear fruit for harvest day.

Hymns of Zion #46

As we are approaching Good Friday, let us all take a spiritual trip out to Calvary's Hill where Jesus died and to hear those words He spoke and to see Him in His woe. Do we thirst for righteousness and pray to be fed? Some day

the Lord will say "Tis finished, all is done." Will we be ready for that Great Day?

Low in the grave He lay - Jesus my Saviour!
Waiting the coming day - Jesus my Lord!
Vainly they watch His bed - Jesus my Saviour!
Vainly they seal the dead - Jesus my Lord!
Death cannot keep his prey - Jesus my Saviour!
He tore the bars away - Jesus my Lord!
Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah!
Christ arose!
Tabernacle Hymns #205

IOWA, IOWA CITY
Janette Schulz

Greetings to all! We again extend our thanks to all of our visitors this month, including ministering Bros. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL) and Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL) and their wives and families. May their efforts to share God's Word and love not be unfruitful.

We also lovingly thank Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) for helping our Bro. Joe Gerst share the conclusions of the Memorandum with us. As our earthly fathers so prayerfully provided for us, nurtured and guided us, and yes, sometimes admonished us as we grew from childhood into adulthood, so our shepherds "watch for our souls" with the same love and concern, nurturing our spiritual growth and protecting us from spiritual harm. May we strive to be obedient children, bringing joy not only to our shepherds, but to our earthly fathers and our Heavenly

Father as well.

Believing there was room in their hearts and home for another child, Ron and Audrey Landherr have lovingly welcomed 2-year-old Michala Marie. Chris, Heidi, Jeff, Matt, Laura and Noah are glad for a new sister. May God bless each one as they build the special bond of love and trust that family members can share.

After the snow and the gray and the cold,
The sure signs of spring are a sight to behold!

The greening grass and budding tree
Are part of spring's new tapestry.
Brighter colors are added each day,
Replacing winter's threads of gray.
Awaking from sleep, the cold, dark earth
Shows daily signs of miraculous rebirth.

So the soul, so lost in sin
May be slowly responding to God's love deep within.

Don't stop praying for hearts cold and hard

Which seemingly all thought of Jesus have barred.

God's love can melt through fear, pride, and hate.

Don't stop praying—just pray,
love...and wait!

—JMS

IOWA, LESTER

Sue Warner - Cindy Leuthold

We are grateful that Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Morris, MN) was with us on March 8 to share in the reading of the Memorandum. He, along with our Elders, conveyed to us the conclusions of the Elder brethren from the summer Conference. We are thankful for the encouragement and timely admonitions given to us.

Tara Kellenberger has found peace with both God and man and now awaits baptism in the near future. Her parents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Shirley Kellenberger.

Bro. Nathan Knobloch (Sis.

Irene), Sis. Gladys Knobloch, and Bro. Rodney Mogler (Sis. Lois) have been surgical patients recently. Bro. Fred Metzger (Sis. Esty) has again had surgery, but he, as well as the others, have returned home and are doing well. Other hospital patients have been Bro. Tom Metzger (Sis. Deb) and Carl Leuthold (Deb). Sis. Irene Knobloch (Bro. Nathan) spent time in the hospital also but is now residing at the Good Samaritan Center in Sioux Falls. Our prayers are with these dear ones as they endure the afflictions of the flesh.

March 15 was the wedding day for Glen Alderson and Charlene Bosch. Parents of the couple are Mr. and Mrs. Glen Alderson of West Bend, IA and Bro. Tony and Sis. Pam Bosch. May they seek the Lord as they join their lives together.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Bro. Andy Mogler (Sis. Freida) with the death of Sis. Leah Schaer of Pulaski. Funeral services were held in Oakville, IA.

Bro. Roy Koehl (Morris, MN) has ministered to the Lester congregation this month. May God bless him and his family for his willingness to be used in His service.

IOWA, OAKVILLE
Debbie Wagenbach
Melody Steiner

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sis. Vera (Bro. Tom) Lindeen, Sis. Janet Schaer, Jane (Les) Reiman, Bro. Dave (Sis. Sandy) Schaer, and Don (Sis. Sue) Schaer in the passing of their mother, Sis. Leah Schaer. We know they will miss her, but can rejoice that her time of bodily suffering is over. She is now in the arms of her Saviour. We also want to remember her husband, Bro. Bernie Schaer

(Pulaski, IA), as well as her grandchildren and brothers. May the Lord be their strength also. We thank Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) for being here to help with the funeral service.

We also extend our sympathy to Sis. Doris (Bro. Leon) Kuntz in the passing of her father, Bro. Ben Moser, of Morton, IL. May the Lord be with her and her family as they think back of the precious memories of years gone by, and look forward to the day they can be together again.

We want to thank our visiting ministers who have been in our midst this month. May the Lord bless them and their families for their labors of love. They include: Bros. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL), Gary Endress (Bradford, IL), Bill Gerst (Alto, MI), Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT) and Doyle Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN).

January 4 was the wedding day of Joey Bonnesen (Joe and Sis. Carol Bonnesen) to Kendra Allen. We wish them the Lord's many blessings as they now walk together as one. Just a special note to add: Joe and Kendra's home for right now is in Alaska. If anyone would be vacationing up there, they would love to have contact from others. Their address is 1725 University Way, Apt. D 36, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709. Joey is also the grandson of Bro. Earl and Sis. Ada Massner.

Carl Gerst, as well as his five younger sisters, Rachel, Brenda, Rhiannon, Kourtney, and Sydney, welcome home another little sister to play with. Their parents, Bro. Fred and Sis. Susan Gerst, have named their newest little bundle from Heaven, Sarah Luanne. Also rejoicing with her safe arrival are her grandparents, Sis. Hilda Gerst (late Bro. Carl) and Bro. Jodi and Sis. Ruby Eberhardt. May the

Lord be with Bro. Fred and Sis. Susan as they strive to raise their growing family.

IOWA, PULASKI
Lisa Knecht

The Ministers of the Gospel
 Should I restrain the Spirit's course
 For fear of man so feeble?
 Though Satan's hosts are raging
 here,
 Should I not be more faithful?
 Awed by a mortal's frown, shall I
 Conceal the Word of God Most High?
Zion's Harp #113

We are thankful to God above all, and to our visiting ministers, Bros. William Emch (Sis. Susan, Lamont-Gridley, KS), Wayne Wiegand (Sis. Rosemary, Goodfield, IL), and Roy Koehl (Sis. Jenell, Morris, MN) who did not "restrain the Spirit's course".

"In my Father's house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again...and receive you unto myself."

John 14:2-3

Sis. Leah Schaer is now safe in those Heavenly mansions that the Lord has promised her. We know her absence here on earth brings sadness to her family left behind. Our prayers will continue for each one, including those of our congregation: her husband, Bro. Bernard, and son, Don (Sis. Sue Ann), and grandchildren, Brian and Esther.

IOWA, WEST BEND
Eunice Fehr - Lela Banwart

We felt richly blessed when Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) was here to assist our Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr and Bro. Wayne

Grimm in bringing forth the Conference Memorandum letter. It was encouraging to be reminded of the many tools God provides to lead us to victory in our spiritual battles.

So often in our lives, joys and sorrows alternate. We are thankful that we can rejoice with three dear ones who have received the blessed peace in their hearts that only our Lord can impart. They are Julie Zaugg (Darrell), Carrie Gress (Bro. Cloyce and Sis. Carol), and Michelle Wirtz (Bro. Mike and Sis. Lila). Our prayers for them continue as we look forward to their testimonies in the near future.

Our sympathy to Bro. Melvin and Sis. Glenagene Fehr, who attended graveside services for the infant daughter, Elizabeth, of their son and wife, Bro. Scott and Sis. Leona Fehr (Elgin, IA). May God's love comfort them in their loss.

Our congregation was shocked and deeply grieved to hear of the unexpected death of a loved one. After a short bout of pneumonia, our precious, dear friend, Beth Metzger (Alice Marie and the late Bernard), was taken from our congregation and community. Our hearts ache and the tears flow with her mother, Alice; brothers, Kurt and Wyan; and a family that had a special place in their heart for Beth—Ron and Carolyn Banwart and their children, Eric, Jody and Alex, of Fort Dodge, where Beth taught school. Beth touched many young lives with her loving and patient teaching ability and she will be greatly missed by all. Visiting ministers present for the funeral were Bros. Craig Martin (Princeville, IL) and Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN), and Elder Bro. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN). May God bless and be near to all of His servants as they give of them-

selves and try to comfort the many in need. Our prayers and sympathy go out to all the dear family. May they feel God's merciful arms around them, and pray He will sustain them in their many lonely hours and days ahead.

Our thoughts and prayers have been with our hospital patients. Sis. Glenagene Fehr (Bro. Melvin) spent a few days in the hospital. Bro. Verner Wirtz, along with his wife, Sis. Betty, was spending some time in Zapata, TX, and suffered a heart attack, so had been a patient in the Loreda hospital. We are thankful that God has provided them with better health again.

How often, and especially when spring and the Easter season are upon us, our thoughts go to the cross of Jesus and His resurrection. May we thank our Lord every day for the price that He paid to redeem us and the blessed hope we have in His resurrection.

JESUS LIVES!

Jesus lives! I live with Him,
Death no more my soul shall
frighten,
Now He lives, and at His call,
From death's sleep I shall awaken;
I am glorified in Thee;
This my confidence shall be.

Jesus lives! No pow'r of night,
From the Lord my soul shall sever.
Sorrows may come o'er the way,
Yet I'll cling to Him forever.
Light and faith I find in thee;
This my confidence shall be.

Zion's Harp #120

JAPAN, TOKYO

Andrew and Jana Klaus

Cherry blossoms will be blooming the last week of March and the first week of April, heralding spring as the start of the new year as people move off to college or start their new jobs. It is one of the most beautiful and pleasant times

of the year. With the advent of spring, however, many are suffering from allergies due to all the pollen in the air, or from colds and flues that have been going around. For some reason, spring allergies seem to be increasing in recent years.

Hannah, the one-year-old daughter of Bro. Andrew and Sis. Jana Klaus, came down with some type of hemolytic anemia, and was hospitalized for a week. We are very thankful to God that she has now almost fully recovered. Many thanks to all of you who prayed and sent letters of encouragement. It meant very much to us!

KANSAS, BERN

Holly Meyer

Lori Baumgartner

What a renewed sense of joy and anticipation we feel as the dormancy of winter melts into the new life of spring. The robins have returned. The buds are swelling on the trees. The first spring shower has caused the wheat fields and lawns to show forth a hint of green. The soil temperature is warming and the tulips, which have laid dormant all winter, are pushing through the soil. Only God, through His omnipotent power, can bring about these awesome changes. Likewise, only God can bring about a spiritual rebirth in a heart that is living in dormancy. The Lord sends the rain, the sunshine, and the wind to cause seasonal changes on the earth. He also sends various blessings and trials into our lives to create a spiritual renewal. It is up to each of us to have our hearts in the right condition that these experiences may have the desired effect.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit

within me.”

Psalm 51:10

We were recently exhorted to examine our hearts and undergo a spiritual “spring house cleaning” in preparation for Communion next month. We were kindly reminded that we should always have our lives in order (not only at Communion time), as we know not the day nor the hour of our Lord’s return.

If Jesus Came To Your House

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two—
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you’d do.
Oh, I know you’d give your nicest room to such an honored Guest,
And all the food you’d serve to Him would be the very best,
And you would keep assuring Him you’re glad to have Him there—
That serving Him in your own home is joy beyond compare.
But—when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door
With arms outstretched in welcome to your heav’nly Visitor?
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,
Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they’d been?
Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn’t heard,
And wish you hadn’t uttered that last, loud, hasty word?
Would you hide some worldly music and put some hymnbooks out?
Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?
And I wonder—if the Saviour spent a day or two with you,
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?
Would you keep right on saying the things you always say?
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?
Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace,
And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?
Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read?
And let Him know the things on

which your mind and spirit feed?
Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you’d planned to go,
Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?
Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends,
Or would you hope they’d stay away until His visit ends?
Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on,
Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?
It might be interesting to know the things that you would do
If Jesus Christ in person came to spend some time with you.

—Lois Blanchard

We are appreciative of the visiting ministers and their families who have assembled with us recently: Bros. Gary Hertzell (Sabetha, KS), Don Wagenbach (Washington, IL) and Dale Wulf (Lester, IA). May the Lord bless them for their willingness to lend of themselves.

March 1 marked the wedding day of Mandi Hartter (Bro. Steve and Sis. Lois) and Paul Simpson (Lynn and Carolyn, Pratt, KS). We rejoice with them and pray that they feel the Lord’s guidance as they establish their home in Pratt.

There is reason for rejoicing in the homes of two families in our congregation. A daughter, Kara Jean, was born to Michael and Sis. Luci Goodman on February 28. She is welcomed home by one sister, Jodi. We rejoice with grandparents, Eugene and Judy Edelman and Elvin and Beverly Goodman. On March 15, a son, Ryan Lee, was born to Bro. Brad and Sis. Michelle Strahm. He is welcomed home by one brother, Joshua. The thankful grandparents are Bro. Don and Sis. Eileen Braker (Kansas City, MO) and Bro. Alpha and Sis. Mamie Strahm.

May we remember our hospital patients in prayer. Hospitalized

during the past month were Doug Parton (Lana) who suffered a broken knee; Bro. Wilhelm Metzger who underwent knee surgery; and Sis. Katie Grimm (Bro. Paul).

Sis. Lisa Menold (Bro. Don and Sis. Pat) is absent from our congregation. We pray that she will feel the Lord’s nearness as she adjusts to new employment and a new church family at our Forrest, IL church. May she always know that she is welcome back home anytime.

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT

Tammy Sinn

On March 19, the Sunday School presented their Easter program to the church. We appreciate being reminded of Christ’s death and suffering through the verses and hymns.

We have had three hospital patients this month. Sis. Ida Sinn has undergone surgery. We are thankful that she is again able to assemble with us. Rueben and Caroline Banwart have also been hospitalized. Our prayers continue to be that God’s healing hand will be upon them.

KANSAS, KIOWA

Darcy Kisling - Janice Bahr

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

Ephesians 5:31

Richard Allenbach (Bro. Ron and Sis. Lois) and Candace Brooks (John and Peggy, Wichita, KS) were united in marriage on March 8. May the Lord richly bless their lives and may they always look to Him for guidance.

“For whatsoever things were

written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

Romans 15:4

How blessed we were to have Bro. Max Reimschisel and his family with us this month. We are so thankful for those who are willing to share God's Word with us.

We would like to welcome back those who have been gone this winter. We have missed their presence and fellowship.

KANSAS, SABETHA

Mary Kay Wenger

Clifford and Sis. Barb Edelman are happy grandparents of Trent Clifford Wulf. He brings much happiness to the home of Bro. Stan and Sis. Pam Wulf (Morris, MN) and Heidi, Matthew and Eric.

Sis. Matilda Steiner has moved to the Apostolic Christian Home. We pray for God's presence as she adjusts to this change in her life.

It was a beautiful Saturday evening when we were able to extend God's blessings on the marriage of Bro. Tom and Sis. Carrie Strahm (Morris, MN). We also appreciated having her father, Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN), on the pulpit the next day.

We appreciated Elder Bro. Eugene Marti (Kansas City, MO) ministering to us on a Wednesday evening. His services were followed by an exhortation on Communion. "...Pray that ye enter not into temptation". (St. Luke 22:40)

We were host to an invite-a-couple weekend March 8-9. It was a blessing to have couples from near and far, including ministers, Bros. Lloyd Kraft (Gridley-Lamont, KS) and Kevin Banwart (West Bend, IA).

Reminder to Sabetha: This is the month of our annual Silver Lining collection.

KANSAS, WICHITA

Emma Miller

We had the blessed privilege to partake of Holy Communion on March 2. We are grateful to Elder Bro. Ed Lanz and Sis. Joan (Oakville, IA) for arranging their plans so he could be with us that day. Also, we experienced another blessing as Ruth and Jonathon Long expressed their desire to be reinstated into the brotherhood. We were able to greet them as our brother and sister in faith before the Communion service. Praise the Lord!

Last month, I reported the passing of Bro. Virgil Barth's brother. Now, this past month, Betty's brother has been called into eternity. May we continue to offer comfort to those who cope with hurt.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON

Doug and Rebecca Germann

A special thanks to Bro. James and Sis. Virginia Hoerr (Peoria, IL) for visiting with us this past month and sharing the Word with our small congregation. We were also thankful to have Holy Communion. Elder Bros. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) and Wes Knapp (Goodfield, IL) and their wives came to carry out this sacred occasion with the brothers and sisters here. Thanks to all who came from various places to fellowship with us; we always appreciate the fellowship.

With the recent flooding in counties to the north of Lexington, came several brethren from the Taylor area. Thanks to these brothers who shared their time with the less fortunate here. Also,

a special thanks to those who donated used Bibles so that area churches could have services again. Many were deeply touched by this help.

MICHIGAN, ALTO

Melanie Kaeb

Michelle Oesch

Springtime Again

I feel the springtime in the air,
I sense God's presence everywhere.
The whole world stirs from winter's rest,
Awakening fair, renewed, refreshed.

The budding twigs on branches high
Are etched against the cloudless sky
To reassure me, once again.
Life is God's greatest gift to men!

Give me new purpose, vision, worth,
As springtime comes to this dear earth.

Eternal goodness, may I be
Alive, alert, aware of Thee.

May failures of the past and doubt
By faith and hope be crowded out,
And in my heart a melody
Sing of a happy destiny.

—*Cornelia M. Stillings*

When I heard a lone bird singing outside our bedroom window the other morning, I thought of how much I'd missed hearing the birds sing during the long winter months. Their song brings a lightness to the heart and the hope of warmer days ahead. How like the Lord to remind us of His gift of eternal life with something as simple as a bird's song in spring, when life begins anew.

On Saturday evening, March 15, our teens held a slave auction, where they offered something they had made or themselves as servants for a day to be sold. It was a fun evening and the money they raised will be sent to help a couple of different World Relief projects here in the U.S.

Our prayers have been with our dear Sis. Margaret Wingeier these past weeks. She suffered a bad fall down the steps while cleaning church. She was in the hospital for a couple of days and has since been recuperating at home. We miss so much seeing her at church and pray the Lord will continue to renew her strength and grant her healing. We have been praying for a young mother in our church, Kim Koehl (Rob). She has been undergoing treatment for cancer. May the Lord give her strength and His special healing.

Bro. Ted and Sis. Sandy Steffen were blessed March 16 with a precious baby girl. Little Abigail Jean was welcomed home by big sisters, Tasha, Heather and Nicole. We wish their family the Lord's blessings!

Just a thought: "If instead of a gem, or even a flower, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels give." (George McDonald)

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

Marlene Mosher

Rhonda Knochel

We have had many illnesses in our community and our church family this winter.

We wish our Lord's blessings, grace and healing touch to bring a measure of health and well-being to those sick in body and soul. Our loved ones need the prayers of those that love them. Sis. Florence Wieland had surgery and is doing well. Mildred Wackerle (Clyde) had a stroke and is not doing very well. Mike Schmidt (Sis. Cheryl) has been ill and is doing better. Sis. Margaret Ruegsegger (Bro. Glen Sr.) has been ill and is doing better. Sis. Loretta Mosher (Bro. Winsor) has had surgery but is doing bet-

ter. Bro. Wallace and Sis. Alvina Wackerle were in a car accident and are bruised and scraped.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

James 5:14-15

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

Manuela Denes - Kristie Meyer

"...having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,"

Revelation 14:6

We are very happy to welcome back Bro. Tom Hitz, Bro. Randy Gasser, Bro. Benjamin Denes, Bro. Mark Ramseyer and Karl Moilanen from their missionary work in Haiti. Speaking to them of their experiences and learning about how people live in Haiti really makes us realize how blessed we are in North America.

The news of Sis. Helen Shaw's death was a reminder to us all of the frailty of life. She is survived by her daughter, Sis. Linda Shaw, and her sons, Tom and John Shaw, and their families. We pray for God to comfort them in their loss, but should remember that the glory of our Heavenly Home awaits all those who believe in Him.

Our prayers are with Sis. Alisa Beyer (Bro. Keith) who was in the hospital, and Sis. Sheryl Maibach who injured her foot. We wish them speedy recoveries and look forward to having them back with us.

As winter turns into spring, we see signs of renewal and growth. It's always inspirational when someone turns their life over to the Lord. We rejoice with Sasha Mojic as he makes that important decision "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14).

When I was in Sunday School, it was always exciting to visit and fellowship with other Sunday School classes. On March 8 and 9, the Detroit junior and senior high students traveled to Chicago. I'm sure that they brought home many wonderful memories of their time there. Many thanks to Bro. Phil and Sis. Dawn Bahr and Bro. Mark and Sis. Kelly Ramseyer for organizing the weekend.

Easter is approaching quickly and it is a time for us all to remember the sacrifice that Christ made for our eternal gain. His death and ultimate resurrection make it possible for us all to receive everlasting life!

He Lives

Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian, lift up
your voice and sing
Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ
the King!

The Hope of all who seek Him, the
Help of all who find,
None other is so loving, so good and
kind.

He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives
today!

He walks with me and talks with me
along life's narrow way.

He lives, He lives, salvation to
impart!

You ask me how I know He lives?
He lives within my heart.

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS

Perry Virkler

A time of fellowship was enjoyed when our Junior and Senior Bible classes hosted the same classes from the Fairbury, IL Sunday School. We really appreciated

their coming the many miles

to spend the weekend with us. A special thanks to Bro. John Hartman for also coming and lending himself in bringing us God's Word.

We express our sincere sympathy to Sis. Ethel Bednarski (Joe) in the passing of her sister, Caroline Overson (Winthrop, MN), and to Sis. Esther Lienemann in the passing of her brother, Gerald Schmidgall (Sacramento, CA).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

I Corinthians 15:58

Our dear retired minister, Bro. Noah Miller, 85, went to his eternal reward March 8, just three weeks after his wife, Sis Laura. In 1955, Bro. Noah was put into the ministry in Winthrop, MN. In 1965, he moved his wife and family to the Minneapolis area where he was instrumental in establishing the Minneapolis Apostolic Christian Church and continued as our minister, retiring in 1985. Bro. Noah was a man of God, dedicated in serving the Lord and our congregation. Many precious memories will linger on. Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to his 12 children, Bro. Don (Sis. Bernadine), Melva Eckberg (Duane), Wayne (Ruby), Thomas (Maggie), Sis. Mary Kellenberger (Bro. Orlan), Roger (Ruth), Judi Feucht (Jerry), Jean Ishaug (Kelly), Mavis Hickman (Frank), Brent (Kathy), Ilene Grace (Eugene), and Michael; 35 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren, 2 sisters and many nieces and nephews.

"Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give

you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30

He Heeds Our Slightest Plea

When your heart is heavy-laden
And your day is filled with care,
There's One Who'll share your
burden,

If you'll go to Him in prayer.

He never is too busy,
He heeds our slightest plea,
What He has done for others
He'll do for you and me.

"Cast your burdens on Me,
And I will give you rest":
This is the promise Jesus gives
To help us face life's tests.

O Blessed Burden-Bearer
In Thee we'll ever trust
Remembering, that once,
Thou bore the cross for us.

—*Kay Hoffman*

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:38

We enjoyed a blessed weekend March 15 and 16, when Jan Schmidt (Darrin) and Joe Bednarski (Sis. Ethel) gave their testimonies and were baptized. It has been wonderful to see them grow in the Lord. We joyfully received them as our dear sister and brother in Christ. We are so thankful for the increase to our little flock. Elder Bro. Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL) assisted our Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Winthrop, MN) for this special occasion.

Christ Knocks on Heart's Door

In heaven there's great rejoicing
For one who turns to God,
Much more than we can fathom,
Who walk this earthly sod.
For it is God's desire
That no one should be lost,

And so He sent the Saviour
For sin to pay the cost.
In heaven there's great rejoicing
For one who comes to God
Through Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
Our Staff and too, our Rod.
Christ knocks upon the heart's door
Awaiting our response;
Let there be joy in heaven...
Believe on God's dear Son!

—*Loise Pinkerton Fritz*

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:53-54

Following the baptisms, our Elder brothers conducted Holy Communion services. We were privileged and humbled to be able to partake of this Holy Sacrament. We thank these dear Elder brothers for laboring on our behalf.

We also want to thank Bro. Paul Messner (Winthrop, MN) for ministering to us this past month.

Notes of Thanks:

We wish to express our sincere thanks to everyone for your love, prayers, cards, memorials, food, and your kind expressions of sympathy at the passing of our loved one.

The family of Linus Lienemann

We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone for the cards, flowers, food, memorials and prayers since the passing of our dear mother and father, grandmother and grandfather. May God richly bless each of you for all your love and deeds of kindness.

The family of Bro. Noah and Sis. Laura Miller

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Linda Schmidgall
Nancy Wulf

"I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits:"

Eccles. 2:4-5

Doesn't spring create in all of us a yearning to plant and watch grow green and living things, to color our world with beauty and fragrance? What joy to experience a newness of life as winter fades away, and nature is reborn. After a long, cold winter, spring happens at a time when we begin to wonder if it will ever come. Perhaps this lesson is a gift from God, to continually remind us to patiently wait for Him to perform His wonders, when He knows better than we do, when that time is perfect for us.

One occasion for waiting is when a little one is due to be born, and you know not the exact day. Thankful parents whose gift from Heaven finally arrived on March 11 are Bro. Chris and Sis. Shelley Koehl, who welcomed Anthony Edward. His sisters, Olivia and Kaitlin, are excited for a little brother. Grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Eileen Nohl and Bro. Eddie and Sis. Lois Koehl.

Looking forward to a May 24 wedding are Carol Luthi (Harold and Bernice) and Dale Richter. May God bless them as they make plans to become man and wife.

Meeting with accident, but marveling at God's protection, is Bro. Alphai Moser. Also, Sis. Ruby Luthi spent some time in the hospital.

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP
Becky Braulick - Jan Messner

Why should we weep when the weary ones rest,
In the bosom of Jesus supreme,
In the mansions of glory prepared for the blest?
For death is no more than a dream.
Only a dream, only a dream
Of glory beyond the dark stream,
How peaceful the slumber, how happy the waking,
For death is only a dream.

Heavenly Highway Hymns #218

We wish to express our sympathy to the family of Bro. Noah and Sis. Laura Miller, who both recently went to meet our Heavenly Father. Especially to their son, Tom Miller (Maggie), two sisters, Sis. Florence Messner and Sis. Pearl Lienemann, and sister-in-law, Sis. Sophie Miller. May the Lord be with them in their time of sorrow. Bro. Noah moved to Winthrop in 1924, was put in as minister in 1955, and moved to Minneapolis in 1965.

We also want to extend our sympathy to the families of Linus Lienemann (Sis. Ester) who recently passed away, especially sister-in-laws, Sis. Pearl Lienemann and Sis. Sophie Miller; and to the families of Caroline Overson who also recently passed away, sister of Bro. Elmer Schmidt (Sis. Hazel), Bro. Darrel Schmidt (Darlene) and Gene Schmidt. May God comfort those who have lost loved ones in the recent past.

With spring in the air and new life in flowers and trees, we think of our new brother and sister in Christ. What a blessing it always is to be able to sit and listen to the testimonies of dear souls that have heeded the call. Sis. Jan Schmidt (Darrin, parents are Bro. Dick and Sis. Mary Lou) and Bro. Joe Bednarski (Sis. Ethel) of Minneapolis,

MN were brought into the fold this month. We rejoice with them and their families and wish them many blessings in their new walk of life.

Our hospital patients this past month were Sally Heikkila (Sis. Dorothy and John Jacobson) and Sis. Florence Messner. May God place His healing hand upon them as they recover.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY
Brent Kellenberger

We have been blessed with a month full of fellowship and faith. This month we had the Memorandum, Invite a Guest weekend, and a baptism. Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) was here with his wife, Sis. Beverly, and their daughter, Amber. We are thankful for his willingness to help Elder Bro. Gene share the Memorandum with us, and also for his labor on Sunday.

On the same weekend, many of us assembled to watch a slide presentation on Israel. Bro. Randy and Sis. Evie Mogler spent some time there and had many interesting pictures and stories. I was surprised and intrigued by Golgotha (the place of the skull). I didn't realize the skull was still there, shaped in the rock. It is a poignant reminder of what He did for mankind.

Invite a Guest weekend once again proved to be a special time. We thank all our guests for attending. We'd especially like to thank ministering Bro. Pat Zaugg (Sis. Julie) and his family for serving us on that weekend.

On March 15-16, our congregation and many others rejoiced as Bro. Ron Strahm gave a touching testimony that undoubtedly gave us a greater appreciation for our salvation and our church. As I approached Bro. Ron to greet him as

a new brother in faith, I noticed water had leaked from the baptismal tub in front of the first pew. It made me reflect on how Jesus' blood fell to the earth so many years ago. His death bridged the gap between God and man, and now we have access to God's throne—and the hope of Heaven. We thank Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS) for assisting our Elder Bro. Gene Marti.

We were blessed with many visitors throughout the entire month and thank each one of them for spending time with us.

MISSOURI, LAMAR

**Carolyn Banwart
Martha Kellenberger**

We enjoyed having visiting ministers this past month, and extend a sincere thanks to Elder Bros. Art Nohl (Morris, MN) and Everett Hari (Bloomington, IL), and Bro. Wesley Moser (Lester, IA) and their wives for their service on our behalf. May God richly bless them.

Hospital patients this month included Bro. Leonard Braker (Sis. Bonnie) and Bro. Leonard (Joe) Marti (Sis. Evelyn). We pray for God's healing mercies.

Babies are such a precious blessing from God, and little Margaret has brought much joy to the home of Chad, Kelly, and Madison Kellenberger. Happy and thankful grandparents are David and Karen Carlton and Bro. Orlan and Sis. Mary Kellenberger (St. Louis, MO).

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Peter Schrenk

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Psalm 27:1

We thank Bros. Galen Rokey (Bern, KS), Tom Troxel (La-Crosse, IN), Dan Stoller (Remington, IN), Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield, IL), Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL), and Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) for traveling to be with us this past month. We appreciate all the visitors who come to worship with us.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Tina Sutter

We were spiritually fed by a topical Bible study by Bro. Kent Heimer on the Holy Spirit. We want to thank Bro. Kent and Sis. Jan for their desire to spread the truth and their willingness to put forth the effort.

As we studied about the "fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians, a thought came to mind. I have often prayed for some of those fruits listed, patience being at the top of my list. Perhaps, if I would pray for the Spirit and nurture it as well, so it would dwell abundantly and those fruits would just grow naturally. After all, it does say that they are the "fruit of the Spirit".

We are also grateful to Elder Bro. Charles Sauder (Sis. Miriam, Tremont, IL) for giving of his time to come and share in our Communion service as well as Sunday services.

On February 2, the wedding engagement of Sis. Jamie Knapp to Bro. Casey Knobloch was announced. His parents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Judy Knobloch (Bloomington, IL). She is the daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Luann Knapp.

Among those hospitalized this month were Sis. Loida Hodel, who underwent eye surgery; Sis. Marjorie Sutter, who is recuperating

from knee surgery; Sis. Sally Haerr, who had outpatient surgery on her feet; and Clayton Scott, father of Sis. Diane Sutter. We can offer a word of thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for their recovery.

Our prayers and thoughts are with Mindy and Kevin Knapp, as Mindy's grandmother passed away.

On February 27, Marissa Annette was born to Marcia and Kip Massner. Grandparents anxiously awaiting the arrival of this little one were Bro. Allen and Sis. Rosie Massner.

Sarah Haerr (Bro. Norman and Sis. Sally) has turned to the Lord in repentance. How thankful we are for each soul who takes that most important step in life!

NEW YORK CROGHAN-NAUMBURG

Alice Virkler

The calendar shows us that the season of "Spring" will be here next week, but looking outside today looks very much like winter will be with us for some time as we have had snow and wind for the past two days. We look forward to the spring time of the year when the snows melt away and we can see the birds returning north and the revitalization of the earth. In our area the farmers have begun tapping the trees in preparation for making maple syrup. About two weeks ago, the weather looked favorable for that but the past days have brought several inches of snow and colder weather. As spring approaches and we see the new beginnings of the season, may we each take account of our lives and if we have not made that "new beginning", there is still time to do it before the Lord's return.

Tonya Greenwood (Dean and

Joyce) was hospitalized when she had her tonsils removed. We hope she will be back in Sunday School soon. Several others have been shut in for a Sunday with various illnesses and we are glad that God restores health so they can be out and about again.

Sam and Laura Valenti, Ithaca, have welcomed their second daughter, Amanda Hirschey, who was born on February 7. Her little sister, Melissa, will be her playmate. Their grandmother is Sis. Bernice Hirschey. May God be with them as they raise their little family.

OHIO, AKRON

**Diane Jarrett
Joyce Gasser**

We were blessed to have Elder Bros. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) and Kevin Ryan (Rockville, CT) to assist our Elder Bro. Gene Pamer in the reading of the Memorandum.

The visiting Elders and their wives stayed for Sunday, and we appreciated the inspiring messages they brought forth.

OHIO, COLUMBUS

Nancy Banks

Springtime was a favorite time at our house, especially when the baby lambs were let out to pasture after being cooped up in the barn all winter. They would run and jump, sometimes frolicking out of sight from the flock and their mother. Soon there would be a chorus of frantic bleats from the baby lamb and deeper "bahs" from the mother as she gently guided the lamb safely back to her side. It always reminded me of the times I would sit my two-year-old daughter on my lap and we would recite "This little lambie went hopping and skipping away from the shep-

herd and sheep." Her bottom lip would start to quiver and the tears would pool in her eyes and I'd have to hurry the little story along so the shepherd would find the "wee lamb". Imagine how we must grieve our Heavenly Father when we, as His lambs, stray from the flock. May we strive to live a life more pleasing to Him!

It has been a blessing for us to have several ministering brothers and their families with us this month. We are so thankful Bro. Dale and Sis. Sandra Stoller (Fairbury, IL), Bro. Doyle and Sis. Jane Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN) and Bro. Glenn and Sis. Lou Rigenbach (Smithville, OH) traveled to be with us.

We bid a sad farewell to Bro. Bob and Sis. Marcia Feller as they will be relocating in the Philadelphia area. Our little Sunday School will miss Natasha, Austin, Celise and Laine but our loss will be Philadelphia's gain and we wish them God's richest blessings.

OHIO, JUNCTION

Sandra Manz

Our thanks to visiting ministering Bro. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH) for his service to our congregation. May God grant an extra measure of grace to each of our faithful ministers.

We solicit your prayers once again for our Bro. Roger Gasser, Sis. Sue, and their six young children, as Bro. Roger has returned to Chicago for a new series of treatments for his leukemia. We plead for the Lord's mercy, realizing it is entirely in His hands.

OHIO, LATTY

**Joyce Klopfenstein
Kathy Sinn**

Bro. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH) shared the Word with us during

the month. May God strengthen him as he continues to preach the truth of God's Word.

Bro. Dave Stoller (Sis. Irene) has been hospitalized for knee surgery during the past month. May God give him comfort as his body heals. Sis. Ellen Schlatter (Bro. Ben) was also hospitalized during the month. May God give her and Bro. Ben strength to continue on.

Eric and Sherry Rager (Sis. June) have accepted God's gift of grace and began their repentance. We rejoice with them as they journey on striving to work out their soul salvation. "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:" (Matthew 3:8)

On the weekend of March 1 and 2, we were blessed to again hear how the Lord has worked in the hearts of man. Tim Stoller (Bro. Rod and Sis. LeAnn) and Shelby Sinn (Bro. Walter and Sis. Renee) expressed these thoughts to the congregation as they gave their testimonies. The Lord is truly still working among mankind. On Sunday we witnessed their baptisms. May the Lord continue to guide and direct them on paths of truth and righteousness. Elder Bro. Doug Sabo (Sarasota, FL) assisted Elder Bro. Ray with this work. Bros. Sam Schlatter and Don Manz (Junction, OH), and Chris Wuethrich (Francesville, IN) were with us during the weekend. May the Lord continue to strengthen these brothers as they preach week in and week out.

Saturday evening, March 8, our congregation gathered in the Fellowship Hall to listen to Bro. Perry Klopfenstein speak about parenting and about the history of the Apostolic Christian Church in America. He encouraged parents to stay involved with their children and emphasize the importance of their heritage.

First-born little Shayla Lynn was born to Aaron and Jennifer Shepherd. May she always feel the love of her parents as she is raised in the nurture of the Lord. Grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Deb Wenninger and Dave and Judy Shepherd.

Chris and Sis. Amy Hopkins are also first-time parents. Little Carli Cristine was welcomed by each family member, especially grandparents, Bro. Phil and Sis. Gloria Grant and Kirk and Laurel Hopkins.

As two souls are born into our congregation, two souls have been taken into eternal life. Sis. Rosa Laukhuf successfully completed her walk with the Lord and now awaits for us in Heaven. Sis. Esther Stoller (Bro. Loren) also closed her eyes in death. May her family be comforted knowing that she is free from pain and can sing that new song in Heaven. May God be ever near these family circles as they continue on and look forward to meeting their loved one on yonder shores.

OHIO, MANSFIELD
Cari Mann

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

Eccles. 3:1

"A time to weep...a time to embrace..."

Eccles. 3:4-5

As we welcomed our new sister-in-faith, Heidi Domka (Bro. Fred and Sis. Connie), on March 9, there were many that were weeping, some for joy that another lamb has entered the fold and some who were convicted. There was also much embracing as we

had the privilege of greeting this new sister to Christ. It is our prayer that Sis. Heidi will always feel the love that was expressed on that day.

We also wish to extend a loving and warm welcome to Bro. Roger and Sis. Dorinna Miller (son and daughter-in-law of Bro. John and Sis. Lillian Miller) who are now assembling with us. May they ever feel a part of our church family.

"...and a time to speak."

Eccles. 3:7

We are ever thankful for those brethren who are willing to speak. Our visitors this month included Elder Bros. Doug Sabo (Sarasota, FL) and Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) and Bros. Merle Hartzler and Art Ingold (both of Rittman, OH) and Bill Brake (Sardis, OH). May God bless these brothers and their wives for taking time to be with us.

"A time to be born..."

Eccles. 3:2

Hallie Webel kept showing Grandma and Grandpa, Bro. Pete and Sis. Linda Webel, the babies in church on Sunday. Her sister, LeAnna Ashley was born to Bro. Jeff and Sis. Julie Webel the day before on March 15. Also rejoicing in the birth of a new granddaughter are maternal grandparents, Jim and Barb Somers, and paternal great-grandparents, Bro. John and Sis. Anna Webel. May God be with them as they raise their daughters.

"...and a time to die."

Eccles. 3:2

Sis. Martha Enderle has endured her final trial on this earth. On March 15, she passed from this life into the arms of her loving

Father. We wish to express our deepest sympathy to her husband, Henry, and sons and daughters-in-law, Ray and Carol Enderle, Richard and Hilda Enderle and Bro. Larry and Darlene Enderle. May they feel God's comforting arms during this time.

We also wish to express our deepest sympathy to Laura Ramsey (Ed) in the passing of her father. May her family also feel God's comforting arms.

"And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

Luke 22:15

Elder Bro. Dennis Warner read this passage before we shared Holy Communion on March 15. As we partook of the earthly bread and wine, I thought about what a joyful occasion it will be when we can partake of our first "meal" at the Father's table in Heaven. Let us each strive for that heavenly goal with our heart's greatest desire.

On March 16, the Sunday School students proclaimed the Easter story to us through verse and song. May the true meaning of Easter become clear to each one of these students as they reach the age of accountability.

"Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

John 4:13-14

Recently, we had trouble with contaminated water and therefore we could not drink it so we had to buy bottled water. By the time we

could drink it again, I was "thirsty" for the taste of our regular water. I had to wonder if I was as thirsty for the water that Jesus has to give as I am for the water that cannot really quench my thirst. May each of us strive to be thirsty for the water that is able to spring up into everlasting life.

Reminder: Silver Lining donations will be due in May.

OHIO, RITTMAN
Carla Stoller
Michelle Dotterer

We are happy to spread the news that Ryan Steiner (Bro. Dave and Sis. Carole) and Brett Lanz (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Diane) have heeded the call to repentance and to live for Jesus Christ. May God's grace and strength be abundant in your life.

On March 1, many gathered together to hear the testimonies of Laura Lee Riley (Dale and Sharon Riley) and Gretchen Schar (Bro. Rowen and Sis. Judy). Elder Bro. Andy Stoller was present for the baptismal service on Sunday. It was a weekend of rejoicing.

We are thankful for visiting ministers. Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Congerville, IL) preached the Holy Word to us on March 9.

Fred and Mindy Hartzler now have a little baby girl. Shayleen Joell came into this world on March 9. Grandparents are Bro. Dean and Sis. Jan Hartzler and Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Haught.

Shawn Alan was born on March 5 to Bro. Dave and Sis. Kathy Ault. His two older brothers are Benjamin and Mitchell. Melvin and Gladys Ault and Bro. Dale and Sis. Jeanette Stoller are his grandparents.

Our Holy Communion service was March 15. Visiting ministers

were Elder Bros. Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH), Gene Pamer (Akron, OH) and Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH). It is so important for us to be thankful for all that Jesus Christ has done for us. As the Easter season comes and goes, let us always remember where our salvation comes from.

On March 16, the congregation heard the engagement of Bro. Dean Ramsier (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Terri) to Sis. Julia Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Mim, Sardis, OH). May God bless you and your families.

Recently, Bro. Ernie Stetz (Sis. Diane) has been in the hospital. We pray that God's healing hand will touch those who are ill.

Our sympathy goes out to John Calame Sr. (Sis. Margaret) who's sister recently passed away.

May God's grace be with you all during this Easter season.

OHIO, SARDIS
Joy Indermuhle

Greetings, dear brethren! Though it has not been a difficult winter here in Sardis, the first signs of spring are still invigorating. Crocuses and daffodils are blooming; the air is refreshingly spring-like. As I took a walk one day, reveling in the beauty of God's creation, I couldn't help but remember what one dear sister recently said to me, that God always promises spring. Isn't this a joyous thought, whether winter has been long and hard or green and quiet? May the blessings of spring fill each of our hearts with spiritual renewal.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

This verse is one of the verses that our dear convert, Sara Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam), read that proclaimed to her that she has peace. We were thankful to hear of this on February 16. We pray that she will continue to feel God's grace and nearness as she awaits baptism.

In the Garden

He speaks, and the sound of His voice

Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,

And the melody that He gave to me, Within my heart is ringing.

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,

And He tells me I am His own;

And the joy we share as we tarry there,

None other has ever known.

Tabernacle Hymns #130

We rejoice with Sis. Bridget Zollinger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry) and Bro. Matthew Rassi (Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla, Chicago, IL) as their engagement was made known to us on March 9. May they feel God's grace and blessings as they would prepare for a May wedding. Our many prayers are with them.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE

Edith Miller - Julie Maibach

First-time parents, Bro. Steve and Sis. Amy Dotterer, welcomed Haley Jo on March 14. We wish them God's guidance and direction as they care for their little one.

It always brings joy to our hearts to hear when a sinner has repented and has found peace with God. Eric Miller has found that peace and wishes to share his testimony in the future. We pray that he can be close to his Lord in this

special time.

We had one visiting minister this month. We were encouraged to have Bro. Wallace Ramsier (Mansfield, OH) share God's Word with us. May God be his rich rewarder.

Boyd Nieman was hospitalized this month for chest pains. May God comfort and care for him. Also, Sis. Florence Hanzie has been hospitalized. We pray that God's mercy and healing powers will be with her.

OHIO, TOLEDO

Rebecca Beard - Edie Fetter

Bro. Neil Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) was with us on a recent Thursday evening for our mid-week service. We thank God for his willingness in serving our church.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

II Timothy 4:3-4

We were blessed by hearing the Memorandum read to our congregation. Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) shared in this work. How thankful we are for this sound doctrine brought to us in love.

Recent hospital patients were Sis. Colette Harmon (Bro. Howard) and Jesse Beard (Bro. Dave and Sis. Geralyn). May God bless them with a full recovery.

OREGON, PORTLAND

Mary Berg - Louisa Gallup

Greetings everyone!

Good health is a great blessing which often is taken for granted.

There are a number of people in our congregation who need our support and prayers in regards to their health. Sis. Golda Ditch and her husband, Lowell, each had a broken leg. They have been recuperating in a care center and are doing fairly well. Sis. Golda also will be undergoing back surgery on March 26. Hopefully, this will relieve her of the pain she has been suffering. Both Sis. Golda and her husband are certainly in our thoughts and prayers. Since they live in Medford, unfortunately the distance prevents most of us from visiting them regularly.

Sam Feucht had surgery on March 10. He has a pacemaker now and we pray this will help him and enable him to keep feeling well enough to worship with us. We sure appreciate his faithfulness in attending as well as his cheerfulness and positive attitude.

"And the Lord shall guide thee continually..."

Isaiah 58:11

On March 8, we assembled with the Silverton congregation to hear the reading of the Memorandum. It was good to be together as a body of believers and be given guidance and reminders to keep us united and to keep our faith pure. We thank Elder Bros. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO), Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) and Art Metz (Silverton, OR) for their efforts and loving concern regarding these matters.

It was very interesting, and humbling at the same time, to see the slide presentation about our churches in Eastern Europe shown to us by Elder Bro. Gene Marti. It sure made us realize how much we have to be thankful for.

As always, we appreciate visitors very much and thank every

one who came to Portland church this past month. Special thanks to our visiting ministers: Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Sis. Mary, Kansas City, MO), Elder Bro. Art Metz (Sis. Betty, Silverton, OR), and Bro. Ed Knecht (Sis. Judie, Silverton, OR). We thank them for their sermons and support.

OREGON, SILVERTON

Rosa Lee Kuenzi

March has long been Silver Lining collection month for Silverton and it seems appropriate to mention the change in the collecting procedure. In the past, each subscriber paid a set annual rate to the Silver Lining reporter who then sent it in with an updated listing of the names and addresses. Under the newly adopted procedure, each congregation gives its members and friends an opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the Silver Lining during their usual collection month. This was done the past two Sundays in Silverton. Your Silver Lining reporter will still take care of any address changes, additions or deletions from the mailing list. Also, if anyone missed the opportunity or was unaware of the collection, they may still give their donation to the Church Treasurer, Bro. Lynn Kuenzi, or directly to the Silver Lining or to your Silver Lining reporter.

Silverton was again blessed with one of the highlights in a Christian's life...the opportunity to listen to the testimonies of dear ones that desire to become brothers and sisters in faith. March 1 and 2 was a special weekend as Jason and Collette (Fehr) Snook gave their testimonies, made their covenant with God and were baptized as brethren to our Lord. Parents and grandparents here were

Elder Bro. Wayne and Sis. Kathy Fehr and Bro. Elmer and Mathilda Fehr (West Bend, IA), and Vance and Sis. Liz Snook and Bro. Lewis and Sis. Gloria Kuenzi of the Silverton congregation. Elder Bros. Art Metz and Wayne Fehr together lent themselves to this wonderful work of the Lord.

The following Saturday, joined by Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO), the three Elder brethren served together to bring us the weighty and ever timely words of wisdom, warning and encouragement contained in the Memorandum of the General Conference of 1996. We are so thankful that the Watchmen still stand on the wall and sound the trumpets for our eternal benefit.

While Bro. Gene Marti was here, we were privileged to view the slides of his recent trip to visit the churches in Eastern Europe. It is sobering to see how most of them live with so few comforts that would seem commonplace to most of us and then to realize that to whom "much is given, much is required."

In addition to Elder Bros. Wayne Fehr and Gene Marti, we were pleased to have visiting ministering Bros. Don Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN), Gene Lehman (Wolcott, IN) and Lloyd Kraft (Lamont-Gridley, KS). We sincerely thank these brothers for their willingness to serve us.

March 15 was birth-day to two new little ones, born hours apart at Silverton Hospital. Bro. Dean and Sis. Heidi Sinn, Jonathan, Jordan and Erica welcomed Savannah Shirley in the morning. Grandparents are Bro. Otto and Sis. Marian Sinn, and Bro. Ernie and Sis. Freda Aberle (Tremont, IL). Later in the day, Quintin Ray joined the family of Bro. Bill and Sis. Kris, Aaron, Brooke, Zayne

and Weston Luthi. Grandparents are Bro. Richard and Sis. Rosa Lee Kuenzi, and Bro. Ray and Sis. Vi Luthi (Lamar, MO).

I just want to add a "thank you" to Sis. Peggy Schulz for her five and a half years of service as our Silver Lining reporter. Her efforts have been much appreciated.

**PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA
Franz Soni**

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

II Thess. 2:16-17

Sis. Kathy Clough (John) has recently been hospitalized, and we pray for her and her family.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Sis. Marilyn Lanz's (Bro. Edwin) sister and brother-in-law, Sis. Laura and Bro. Noah Miller, who attended our Minneapolis, MN church.

We thank Elder Bro. Andy Virkler (Bay City, MI) for being with us on the weekend of March 8 and 9. On March 8, we had a church supper and singing. On March 9, Elder Bro. Andy Virkler assisted our Elder Bro. Edward Aeschleman in serving our congregation the Lord's supper. These times are so special.

We thank Bro. Galen Rokey (Bern, KS) for sharing God's Word with us this past month. May God richly reward him for his efforts.

We welcome all who are in the area to come worship with us. Services are Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and at 12:30 p.m. and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. If you need more in-

formation, please call Elder Bro. Edward Aeschleman at (302) 478-7846.

**TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE
Gwen Leuthold**

"Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God..."
I Chronicles 22:19

A book I was recently reading made mention of the verse above. This was one of those verses that inspired me and caused me to think over the next several days. If we really want to reach the beautiful shores of Heaven, we must seek and follow the Lord diligently and be willing to be used by Him. "...If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23). In order to follow the Lord, a few qualities we may need include strength, courage and determination (just to name a few). If we feel weak, we need not despair as the Lord has promised to help us along our journey. All we need to do is to seek Him and ask Him for help. "God is only a prayer away."

During the month of March, we were privileged to hear God's Word as given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through Bros. Carl Wyss (Washington, IL) and Brian Huber (Francesville, IN). We also had many other visitors from Francesville, IN; Wolcott, IN; Princeville, IL; and Goodfield, IL. We enjoyed worship and fellowship with all of you and wish you God's rich blessings.

This past month, excavating work was done on the hillside behind the church to allow for additional parking. Gravel was also added to the parking area; Lord willing, we hope to eventually fin-

ish off the parking area with concrete.

Upcoming services for Nashville are scheduled (Lord willing) for May 4 (Roanoke, IL); May 18 (Oakville, IA); June 1 (Goodfield, IL); June 15 (Rittman, OH); July 6 (Tremont, IL); and July 20 (Elgin, IL). If you plan to be in the Nashville area and would like to worship with us, please contact Bro. Don and Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928; Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 352-3940; Bro. Don and Sis. Enid Miller (615) 384-8761; or Bro. Stan and Sis. Jean Hohulin (423) 376-9153 (Knoxville, TN area).

TEXAS, CENTRAL AREA

Lois Gray

Visiting ministers the past month have been Bros. Vic Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH), Gary Tonner (Sis. Diann, Bluffton, IN) and Gary Endress (Sis. Evelyn, Bradford, IL). We greatly appreciate those who travel so far to minister to us and to fellowship.

Juanita Sundberg (Jim and Carol) has returned to Austin after spending a year in Guatemala in connection with her university studies. We are grateful for her safekeeping and return.

Services are held the FIRST Sunday of the month in Dallas, the LAST Sunday in Round Top at the home of Bro. Bill Zeltwanger. The Sundays in between services are held in Austin at the Omni Hotel at I-35 and Hwy. 71 at 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Contact persons are Bill Zeltwanger (409) 249-5102 and Terri and Brian Kaisner (512) 338-4222. We welcome visitors and remind you to call in advance in case of schedule changes.

TEXAS, DALLAS

Dee Rapp

Food For Thought

Don't tell God how big your mountains are, tell your mountains how big your God is.

If you have everything but Christ, you have nothing. If you have nothing but Christ, you have everything.

Either the Bible will keep us from sinning or sinning will keep us from the Bible.

Q. Do you have the desert disease?

A. You know where the living water is and are telling no one.

Eric Strassheim from the Pulaske, IA congregation has moved to Greenville, TX to accept a position with E-Systems. We welcome him and ask that the Lord's Word will be a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path (Psalm 119:105). In this manner, all men will know that he is God's disciple.

We want to thank the brothers who have faithfully served us this past month. Dallas services are held on the FIRST Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon at the Holiday Inn, DeSoto, TX.

Central Texas services will always be held the LAST Sunday of each month at the home of Bro. Bill Zeltwanger in Round Top. The remaining Sundays will be held at the Omni Hotel in Austin at the intersection of Highway 71 and 35W at 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Contacts are: Bro. Howard and Sis. Dee Rapp (792) 867-4074 and Bro. Bill Zeltwanger at (409) 249-5102.

TEXAS, ZAPATA

**Viola Perdelwitz
Melva Messner**

The blue bonnets and Indian

paint brush, plus other Texas flowers are starting to dot the area with pretty colors. Some citrus trees are blooming and filling the area with a sweet fragrance. It is a time when we see nature saying "it's time to wake up and see the beauty God has wrought."

Bro. Verner Wirtz (Betty) was in the hospital this month. We are glad to see his smiling face among us again.

Elder Bros. Leo Moser (Lester, IA) and Ed Aeschleman (Philadelphia, PA) were here to instate Bro. Kenneth Sauder (Mansfield, OH) as our new counselling Elder. We enjoyed his presence and give him our prayerful support. Bro. Kenneth intends to spend more of his winter months in Zapata. Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) served us many years and we wish to thank him for his years of service.

Other visiting ministers include Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA), and Bros. Mike Bauman (Mansfield, OH), Jim Hoerr (Peoria, IL), Roy Ehnle (Bradford, IL), Carroll Gerber (Bluffton North, IN) and Everett Gerber (Rockville, CT). We thank them for their words of wisdom. We also enjoyed the visit of retired Elder Bro. Sam Anliker (Lamont-Gridley, KS) and retired ministers, Bros. Clarence Dietrich (Silverton, OR) and Elmer Schmidt (Winthrop, MN).

At our biggest fellowship breakfast there were 92 present and 26 of our churches represented. We thank our many visitors.



Keep in mind what the Lord did for us and how much He suffered on the cross for us. He was willing to suffer the cross for the glory that was set before Him. That same glory lays before us and He hasn't asked us to suffer the cross. He has asked us to do a few things. **ARE THESE THINGS TOO MUCH FOR HIM TO ASK?**

1. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK us to put aside worldly entertainment, such as TV, movies, organized sporting activities, including skiing, golfing, bowling and such like which steal our time and potentially weaken us spiritually?

2. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK for our Brothers to wear their hair short, neatly trimmed, and to keep their faces clean shaven of facial hair?

3. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK for our Sisters to wear their hair long, which is scriptural, gathered and put up unadorned (*also scriptural*) in a modest fashion?

4. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK for our Brothers and Sisters to wear modest apparel, refrain from wearing shorts and other scanty or suggestive clothing and to wear everyday clothing that defines our gender?

5. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK for our Sisters and Brothers to refrain from using cosmetics, jewelry, or to try to enhance their God-given appearance?

6. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK for our Brothers and Sisters to shun membership in worldly organizations whose main purpose is pleasure and social activities?

7. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK for our Brethren to avoid the use of drugs that destroy our minds and bodies and worldly music that can so easily disturb our spiritual inner peace?

8. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK to hold fast to these traditions, to defeat the intrusion of worldliness into our churches and restore unity, harmony, and peace in our churches and among us?

9. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK to hold fast to these traditions to preserve the precious church and faith that we have come to know and love and depend upon so much?

10. IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK to keep the promises that we have made that we would be obedient to God and the church for as long as we live?

ARE THESE THINGS TOO MUCH TO ASK OR ARE THEY JUST A REASONABLE SERVICE?

-1995 Brotherhood Conference

This item has already appeared in a previous Silver Lining (November 1995). However, with the world pressing in upon the Church on every side, it does us well to be reminded about our reasonable service. Let us be counted worthy to suffer for Christ's name sake. If we feel we are suffering too much, we need to read about our forefathers and the early martyrs and perhaps then we will begin to realize that not much is being asked of us in this day and time.

"...For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke 23:31.

Sermon continued from page 2

turned their backs upon Him because His way was offensive to them.

Jesus said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself..." (Mark 8:34). That is offensive to the natural man. To my natural man, that is offensive to me because the natural Steve does not want to deny himself, and take up the cross. There are a lot of other things we would rather take, and then follow me.

It starts with repentance. If we come after Him, we have to deny ourselves. (Step 2), take up the cross; and then (Step 3), follow Him. In the end thereof is life eternal, the Bible tells us. Life along the way is really wonderful. I wish I would have understood more about life in Jesus Christ before I gave my life to the Lord; it wouldn't have been such a struggle to decide to repent. It is revealed by the Holy Spirit of God when we make the decision of our own free will which God has given us to come and follow Him.

The Bible doesn't use, and Jesus doesn't use the word except too often in the Bible, but when He does, we need to take note. It is not an option. To be a child of God, to be saved and go to heaven, enjoy the beauties of heaven and peace with God, repentance is not an option, because Jesus said, and Luke has told us, "We were eyewitnesses of these, we heard these things, they are most surely believed among us."

He said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5). In another place, Jesus said, "Except a man be born again out of water and spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (See John 3:3). It is not an option.

Being born again is more than accepting or acknowledging that there is a God and even acknowledging Jesus Christ. It is taking up the cross, denying ourselves, following Him and be willing to lose our life so that we might save it and find it.

I am sure the people might have been disappointed at the response Jesus Christ had. He preached the

message of repentance in what we have read this morning. To our friends, if the word repent is offensive, we understand. There was a time when it was offensive to me. Our children at home really don't like that word that well. I am not saying that they dislike it, but they really don't like it that well. It is not an option in the eyes of God, or the way of Jesus Christ.

These people came to Jesus. You know there are a lot of ways to get peace and feel good. A good day at work, a day when things go right, when nothing breaks down and we are working well with our co-workers, (maybe we say in the business place now), we just feel good about it, don't we? It gives us a peace.

In the home, when things are going well, the children are being obedient and are being the helpers for their mothers, it just seems like we are getting our projects done and the things we want to do, and all is in good order, it gives us a peace, doesn't it?

That is a peace that is good for us, because it motivates us to do well in this life, and God wants us to have that. That is different from the peace of God. Another way we can get peace is to justify the things we do because somebody else is doing something worse. We have heard it before, it is nothing new, but there are times when we evaluate our Christian walk of life, brothers and sisters, on the fact that such and such is struggling out there. Even though I have some problems in my life, I have some habits that need to be taken care of, I have an attitude problem at times, but such and such is having more problems than me, so on a relative scale, I am justified, and therefore, I have a measure of peace as a result of that.

God doesn't work with relativity. He works in absolutes. The Bible says, "...let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay," (James 5:12). It is either yes or no. It is not maybe. It is not, "Well, depending upon this." It is not the situation, ethics, or mind set that we see in the world today around us that doesn't want

to recognize Jesus Christ as King. It is not that at all.

But we do get a measure of peace from that. That is not the peace God gives; that is the peace the world gives.

So when these people came to Jesus, they told Him about these Galileans—these terrible sinners whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Jesus said, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all other Galileans?" Do you suppose the other Galileans kind of justified their way because these people were off the deep end? But Jesus told them here, "I tell you..."

Did you ever try to get a point across to someone and before you say it, you say, "I am going to tell you..."? We do it sometimes to emphasize a point. It is a pointed expression, and maybe not received that well, "I tell you." We do that with our children sometimes.

Jesus said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?" Because they received this judgment for their sin? He said, "Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3-5).

Jesus was classifying the world that he came to save, letting them know that they were lost. We have got to realize that we are lost before we can ever be found, before we can ever be saved. If we have never been to the cross and repented for our sin, and we don't really feel like we are lost, we have been deceived. That is the first step in that process.

That is what John the Baptist was trying to share to the people, that you have to recognize that you are lost. Without God, we have nothing...no hope! Then when we recognize we are lost, we start dealing with that big problem of sin.

Only through the blood of Jesus Christ can we be cleansed from our sin. That's a powerful message, the Easter Story! When they took the spear and pierced His side, it says,

“Blood and water came forth.” Blood is symbolic of the atonement, and water is for cleansing. Some of us have been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. There is no other Name under heaven whereby we can be saved, and there is no other place to go.

We have atonement, and we have been reconciled to God. He doesn't see our sin like it was when we were born in the earth we live in, because His blood covers that sin. Then the cleansing of the Word, the washing of the water by the Word, is that which causes us to walk in fellowship and harmony with one another and above all with Jesus Christ.

Jesus went on further, and as He was teaching here, He spoke also this parable, “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.” We read back in Psalm 67, verse six, “Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our God, shall bless us.” It is something that is expected, isn't it? When we plant something, then there should be some fruit.

“Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it. And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.” (Luke 13:7-9).

Patience is a tremendous virtue, but no person on earth begins to have the patience and mercy that God has. Patience is what we are looking at here...how patient God is! I believe that Jesus is portraying how much mercy He has upon all mankind and that sin is going to be judged according to Jesus Christ because He is the Son of man. A righteous judgment, but it doesn't matter as we can get into those difficult situations in life, but we can be saved from those situations because of the power of Jesus Christ.

Then He is talking here about the mercy of God. This fig tree was

planted in the vineyard. We could liken it unto many things. It could be in our Christian walk of life when we make a beginning with Jesus Christ, but there is not a lot of fruit there. We see the dresser of the vineyard says, “These three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I don't find any. Let us just go ahead and start over again and get rid of this.” Or, it could be the calling of God, I believe unto those of our friends. Let us use the number three here because that's what is spoken of in the parable. Three times and no response, no fruit, and not the fruit of the repentance, so as a result of that, let us just forget about it. God doesn't look at things that way.

Did you ever feel like God is giving you another chance? Brothers and sisters, do you feel like God has given you another chance? Is there anything more humbling and thankful? Let's say we have done something foolish in life, say it is a relationship with our children, and we say, “Please, God, give me one more chance to make this right.” God gives it to you, and it is one of the most humbling things we can go through.

The patience of God, or maybe it is the calling of God to our friends. “Lord, please call me one more time.” You know our human nature loses patience quickly. There are times sin will result because we're not patient.

Saul was an example of that. He saw the battle was going to be great and he didn't know how he was going to win the battle. I am thinking of the time when he conferred with the seer, the witch of Endor, the total lack of patience on his part. He wouldn't wait upon the answer from God. As the result of that, he suffered miserably. We do, too, many times suffer because we are not as patient as we should be, maybe with our children or with one another.

We see the patience of God here. When there is a fruitless tree, He says, “...cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto them, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about

it, and dung it.” (Luke 13:7-8). Give it another chance, let grace, let the Holy Spirit either convict or bring back and then see if there can be fruit. Then He said, “If it bear fruit, then wonderful.” It was just like it was always a fruit bearer.

I believe in our Christian life, some of us, and I probably speak from my own experience, but it seems like if you drew a graph of Christian growth in the life of Steve Gutwein, you would see some acceleration. Then you would see some peace, see some valleys, and sometimes it gets kind of low, then it goes back up again, up and down, back and forth. We see sometimes the result in our life of bearing fruit.

There are times when we bring forth a lot of fruit, our enthusiasm is great and our love for the Lord is great, then we get bogged down from the things in this life. A lot of things distract us, and we go down and we go into those valleys again.

David went through it, some really deep valleys, almost reached bottom. I believe he did reach bottom, but he was able to come back. Peter, the Apostle Peter, reached bottom. He denied the Lord, but he wept and came back. He became a useful source.

Judas reached bottom, but never came back. He is just like that tree that was given a second chance. When he went out and if he would have said (we don't know for sure the life of Judas, it is fresh in our minds from the past weekend), but if he would have said, “Lord, give me one more chance,” do you suppose God would have given him the chance? After he betrayed the Lord of glory, do you think God would have given him another chance? He did not have to hang himself. He repented, but he never brought any fruit of repentance. God is really patient.

So, on this growth curve, as believers, we are kind of in the valley right now. Are we heading up or do you think we are heading down? Let's stop and take a good look. Prayer really helps us do that.

Sermon continued next page

Sermon continued from page 45

“Lord, let me know where I am. Then mold me and make me do what is necessary so I can be steadfast, and so I can enjoy being a fruit bearer in the vineyard of the Lord.”

We see the patience of God as we look at our friends. It is interesting. The calling of God, to me is one of the most intriguing, wonderful, glorious things that ever happens in a person's life. How strong it is to some, and how revealing it is to some, but to all, we are sure that God has called us when He has called us.

It can be something very simple. I believe God uses some of the real little simple things of life. He might use children, or He might use an everyday occurrence that just happens to stand out someday to cause us to recognize and acknowledge God. We accept God when He calls us. We are accepting that He is calling us, then we listen, and take the repentance step.

With our teenage children, we see that they wonder about the calling, and then we ask them. Some are called at young ages, very young, and some can go through high school, and maybe beyond and they can't really say they have had a strong calling. The question is, how does this work.

We don't understand that in fullness, but one thing we know that the gospel of Jesus Christ that is preached and even more so, the gospel that is lived in the life of believers, I believe is the greatest calling to the unsaved world. There is more to life than just the life they are living. As a result of that, this becomes a calling unto those that are yet unsaved to come and follow Jesus. God is patient in His calling.

Did you ever wonder why things have progressed to the state that they are in right now? We are talking about the world, and of things that are going on around us. You wonder sometimes. It seems like God could have sent His Son Jesus Christ a while back, and maybe the previous generations felt the same way.

When you have the conviction

that sin is so overwhelming in the lives of those who are unsaved, and even the test that we as believers have, due to the struggle of sin and temptation being very great, what is it that causes God to wait? We know one thing—that everything God does is well done, so His time is going to be perfect.

We should not be frustrated by that, nor should we be discouraged by that because if we have another day to live, it is a day of grace regardless of how dark things get around us. It is a day of digging around the fig tree and of fertilizing that fruit tree. Every day of grace is just that kind of a day. What we want out of that day is entirely up to our attitude, and it is entirely how we submit ourselves to what grace really is.

Remember what Paul said. He said, “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” (Romans 5:20). It is like running a race of sin and grace. Sin accelerates, it builds up momentum. Grace abounds, at least a step ahead.

Who are we pulling for? Who do we root for? Whose side do we want to be on when that day comes for us and we have to give an account of the life that we lived?

I want to close with one of my favorite verses of Jesus Christ. That is compassion. Some were offended by the fact that He told them, “Deny yourself and take up the cross and follow Me.” (See Luke 9:23). Let us look at compassion. Remember many of these people were steeped into the law of the Old Testament, and of all of the intricacies of the law, they kept the law.

Jesus was bringing in the new day of grace, and they were offended by Him. I believe they couldn't see the mercy that He was trying to share unto them. When we see the compassion of the Lord Jesus, how much compassion was under the law? How would we like to live under the law? It is not that God is not compassionate; He was compassionate, but the purpose of the law was not for compassion. The purpose of the day of grace was mercy and compassion.

Let us use an example. Under the law, I believe, if the sin of adultery was committed, if there were two or three witnesses, the stoning took place. That person faced the judgment of death as a result of that sin. Where would the world's population be today if God dealt with us under the same circumstances and situations?

Let us look at the life of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. These same ones who knew the law so well and tempted Him, they brought unto Him a woman that was taken in the same sin, the sin of adultery, in the very act, and what did He do? He said, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” Then He looked up at her and said, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” (John 8:7,11). Is that compassion?

Sometimes we are so critical and we judge so harsh one another, even between husbands and wives, and within our family circles. We are so hard on others that we forget about the compassion of Jesus Christ.

He looked over the city where He was going to be crucified, and wept, the Bible tells us. He wept. He saw the city that hated Him and the people of that city was going to cause him to suffer, and He wept upon those. He said, “How oft I would long to gather you unto Me, but you wouldn't come.” His compassion never ceased and it has not ceased today.

If we are struggling in our Christian walk of life, we have a friend in Jesus Christ because He has compassion upon us. He will never compromise sin, but He has compassion on us. Jesus Christ is the intercessor who said, “Let's give it another year, maybe two.” Let us let grace abound. Where sin abounds, let's let grace abound because He has compassion.

If we want to know how to live the Christian life, let us just try to live like Jesus did because He was the perfect example. He said, “Follow me.” He doesn't lead us into grace without giving us the wonderful opportunities to walk close to Him,

and share in His love.

As we see this compassion, we see this woman here and it was on the Sabbath day. God caused it to be a Sunday that He did this healing because He was trying to get those under the law to see what compassion was really all about, and what Jesus Christ was about. He said, "This woman was bowed for eighteen years and she couldn't lift herself up." A pathetic situation.

We see these situations in life, and I believe every Christian who sees those that maybe don't have the mental or physical ability or are handicapped, I believe every Christian, those of us who are walking with God, our spirit pours out a prayer to have compassion on them. It is Sunday today, and we can't have that kind of compassion because it is the Sabbath. You don't do anything on the Sabbath.

Jesus took that woman and He laid hands on her and immediately she stood upright and glorified God.

He did more than lay physical hands upon her, He touched her with His love, and with His compassion, and she glorified God. As a result of this, things are building up here to the hatred of Jesus Christ by the leaders of the Jews, the Scribes and Pharisees.

Every time Jesus did a miracle, He was taking Himself one step closer to the cross, because these were the things that caused them to deliver Him. Why did they deliver Him? It was for envy that they delivered Him. When He did a good work, He was taking himself one step closer to the cross. He suffered for you and I, even in the things that He did good. Virtue left Him, and He suffered. He went on to teach a lesson. Now if your donkey gets loose, you water your

animals on Sunday, and then He saw the compassion. Sometimes we have more compassion on animals than we do for people.

I believe we are living in a world

with the day and time that we have more compassion for "Mother Earth" than we do for the souls of people. This woman had the opportunity to be healed on Sunday. We can water our animals on Sunday, but we can't heal; that is distorted religion. False religion. Unbelief in Jesus Christ.

He said, "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham," she is one of you, have compassion, "whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed?" It says, "...all his adversaries were ashamed." (Luke 13:16-17).

The adversaries were ashamed and the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him. Common people rejoiced. They really saw something in Jesus. Those that wanted to do it their own way, were His adversaries. They were ashamed. They came back later again and again, taking him one step closer to the cross.

THERE IS A CALM

Beyond the restless, stormy sea of life
there is a calm,
Which spurs us on to cling to faith thro' strife
we'll have no qualm.

Our ship of faith will "weather" stormy gale
with Jesus. He
Will map the course of this our bark so frail
speak "peace" to sea.

The winds and waves will yield to His command
we need not fear
Just follow faithfully His guiding Hand
then we shall hear:

"Come enter in the home prepared for you"
who did adhere
To walk by faith, not sight, in trials, too
to teachings clear.

Now robe of white and glittering crown so bright
exchange for cross
To those who kept the faith and fought the fight
shall know no loss.

Endless the blessings through ETERNITY
for you and me.
New song we'll sing — praise, honor unto Thee
forever free!

by a sister in faith

Faith of our Fathers

As the Faith of Our Fathers is so important to our faith, so also is the lack of our obedience and the consequent punishment of God. God is loving, kind and merciful to His creation and we know this without any question in our mind. As we think upon the message in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," we feel a certain comfort from God's spirit, the Holy Ghost. However, God reveals His omnipotence in Genesis 6:3 where He states His disappointment in mankind. *My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh.* God witnessed man get more and more wicked and His Word, the Bible, states rather clearly that there does come a time when He will bring down His mighty hand in punishment. God seems to forebear long and is long-suffering, however there is a limit to that forbearance and then comes swift and sometimes deadly punishment. We are never going to be able to reason in our finite minds what is the infinite working of God.

We are told what we need to do to find Salvation in the Word of God; therefore we must not struggle with our finite minds to attempt to "out think God." We simply need to accept the fact that we do not always know what is God's infinite plan. Sometimes many events take place simultaneously, which in the end bring about the will of God. Years after the fact, we can look back and understand the wondrous tapestry of God's infinite will, which sometimes is merciful and sometimes it brings about terrible punishment. Thus it behooves us to remember the lessons of history so we do not fall into the same judgment of God.

The Flood: was God's punishment of His Creation because of their total disregard of His will.

This for the most part took place with old patriarchs still living and warning and conversing. "God will not always strive with man," came the word from God to Noah. God is not pleased with mankind came the warning from Methuselah, who was present on earth right up to the flood. Nobody listened until the flood came.

Sodom and Gomorrah: was another incident of unbridled wickedness, unheard of again until our modern time, which ended in a very destructive punishment.

Eli: was a good example of one who undoubtedly spoke the right words, as he was the teacher of Samuel, but did not carry through requiring obedience. Eli's sons were wicked and he may have thought his sons were too old to correct or for whatever reason he just did not restrain them from their iniquity. Because Eli did not take God's desire for obedience serious enough, Samuel, as he was shown in a vision at the age of eight, told Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house would not be purged by sacrifice or offering forever. Many years later Samuel would tell King Saul that obedience is better than sacrifice, which he undoubtedly learned when Eli fell backwards from a rock and died upon hearing the news that the enemy had killed his sons and taken the Ark of the Covenant. The punishment came in the time frame God chose.

Numerous incidents through the old testament, such as David at the threshing floor, the captivity of the people of Judah, and many others mentioned throughout God's Word, the Bible, are all historical lessons of God's forbearance, which ended in judgment and punishment. It seems that historical lessons in the Bible have amply taught us of the importance of following through on the written or spoken Word of God.

The most vivid lesson of God's delayed punishment came upon the Jews after they rejected the Lord as their Saviour. We might think, how could they not have believed in the Lord, with all the miracles He done in their presence? He fulfilled the prophecies of the old prophets, He healed the sick, the maimed, the halt and gave sight to the blind. How could He not have been accepted as the Saviour considering all the wonderful miracles He performed? Was it not jealousy? Was it not a lack of faith?

The account of what happened to the Jews after the Lord's ascension is well documented in history and is preserved for us that we might benefit from it. May the Lord let us learn the importance of obedience to God's divine will through the lessons of history that God has given.

The War on Jerusalem

"But Jesus turning on them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

Luke 23:28-31

Jesus looked down in pity upon the Jews who were crucifying Him. However, even though our Lord's death was a part of the plan of Salvation, we can believe God's anger was kindled. God waited for a generation to pass before He started to put things in order for the severe punishment that was due upon the Jews for crucifying the Lord of Glory. Let us now look at some of the events recorded for us in the history written by Josephus who

was born in 37 AD.

The citizens of Israel, the Jews, were a proud people who wanted independence from Rome. They wanted a national identity not too unlike what they wanted in the days of Samuel and Saul. They were not content to live under the supreme rule of God and thus were continually in contention with God's will. They were not content to "wait upon the Lord."

The leaders of the various sects of the Jewish religion united and inspired a rebellion against the Roman government. Josephus writes that, "he too put on the armor and joined the rebellion" until he was captured and taken to Rome. He was so overwhelmed with the Roman power and splendor, that he was inspired by God to return to Jerusalem and warn the Jews, much like the prophet Jeremiah, to cease the resistance to Rome. This is one of those places where it is too much for our finite minds to understand and we leave all the events, reasoning, and otherwise will of God in His almighty hand.

Whatever the reason, the Jews would not listen to anyone and continued the rebellion against the occupational armies of Rome. Finally after some time, the Roman Emperor Nero sent an army, led by Titus, to suppress the uprising. However the Roman army met such resistance that the effort turned into a full scaled war and the city of Jerusalem was besieged.

The atrocities of war are never fair and are so cruel. It is disheartening to read of those harsh days that the Jews endured, however we can believe again that God in His infinite thinking was molding the future and at the same time bringing forth the prophesied punishment. Perhaps it would do our soul

good to know just a few of the atrocities of the besiegement of Jerusalem so we can relate to the importance of following God and our Saviour Jesus Christ obediently.

There are many accounts in the Bible concerning the judgment and punishment of God, but nothing like what happened at Jerusalem starting in the year 66 AD. There was not a time in the history of Israel that such terrible destruction and punishment came upon them. During the four years of war, as hunger set in upon the Jews trapped in Jerusalem where they fled for safety, the Jews ate all the food stored in the city and ate anything that could be chewed including shoes, belts, harnesses and so forth. The people became weak and died even as they tried to bury their loved ones. Food became an obsession and the Jewish soldiers would have to march over and around the stacks of human carcasses as they would go out of the city to fight the Romans. It is written that they did not look upon the dead as human, but only were directed to fight on. Disease was rampant and slowly through the four years of fighting they became weaker and weaker until finally the Roman army broke into Jerusalem and the destruction began.

Probably the most well known story of that time was of a wealthy Jewess who, traveling to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover, was trapped in the siege of Jerusalem. The Roman soldiers, bent on destruction, were attracted to the place where she took residence, because of the aroma of roasted meat. After breaking down the door and taking entry, they demanded her to relinquish any food or meat she may have left. The despairing Jewess went to the back room and returned

carrying half of the roasted body of her son. The soldiers shrank back in horror and left the house. It was this incident that revealed to Titus how far down the Jews had sunk and declared that all men, women, and children should be killed. People were crucified until no wood could be found to make crosses. The Jews would swallow their jewels and gold in hopes of concealing them from the Roman soldiers. Somehow they were found out and the Roman soldiers would cut open live people in search of jewels and gold. It was a horrible time of confusion and atrocity.

When no one was left alive, Titus ordered the destruction of the city save three towers. We can read how the Lord's prophecy was fulfilled when He said no stone of the Temple would be left upon another. Gold wedged in the mortar joints became the incentive to tear everything apart. The half has not been written for history and on this written page is only a glimpse of the omnipotence of God.

During this time, 70 AD, many of the disciples of Jesus were killed. The accounts of Luke being hanged in Rome, Onesimus, Dionysius, and many others died and were scattered, never to return to the destroyed Jerusalem. It was the just punishment of God! We who can learn from the lessons of history would do well not to let history repeat itself.

We, as a Church, the bride of Christ, must maintain a separation from the world and remain true spiritual virgins awaiting the time of the Master's return. We will do well to look to the Saviour to lead us and give total obedience to His Word.





Diligence and Devotion Part IV - Spreading God's Word

While Christianity had existed in America for two centuries, the presence of the Froehlich churches took place with little notice.

Because of persecution in Europe, our brethren were content to remain distant and largely unnoticed by state authorities. For years, the church had no official name and no records were kept due, in part, to caution toward the state.

The early brethren were full of zeal but careful not to labor and plan ahead of what God wanted. Having been inspired by Bro. Samuel Froehlich in Europe, and heartened by the successes God allowed on that continent, our early forefathers proceeded with optimism in America.

While we often think of our forefathers in faith as old men, it is instructive to note that when the American churches were established, most of them were young men. Elder Benedict Weyeneth was only 29 when he first came to America. Bro. Isaac Gehring (at Sardis, OH) was 28. Bro. Samuel Froehlich was 44 when the brethren came to America initially in 1847. Although Bro. Froehlich never came to America, he surely helped to offer advice (and influence), either via letters or in meeting with brethren who returned from America to visit in Switzerland.

The little church in Sardis, OH became an important central location and embarking point for early brethren who emigrated to America from Europe.

Located on the Ohio River, it was an ideal place for immigrants to stay for a period of time before deciding where to finally locate in America—usually in the rich farmland areas of the midwest. In a historical sense, Sardis became known as the “mother” church here in America.

In about 1850, another church near Sardis was established. This was across the Ohio River on Limestone Ridge, eight miles east of New Martinsville (a river town).

A diary entry by Emma Rigggenbach Barth noted an experience at Limestone Ridge:

“One Sunday morning, Isaac Emch, who was one of the ministers at that time, was preaching. My eyes were opened while he was preaching, God touched my heart, I felt I was a sinner, and the tears flowed freely. I repented, and on April 4, 1897, I was baptized. When we got home that evening, my husband started to repent, and it wasn't long until he was baptized. That was the happiest day of my life.”

In a vivid portrayal of the early days, Sis. Barth further wrote:

“We looked forward to those blessed Sunday mornings. We had a hill to climb and dirt roads to travel. If it rained on

iner, wife of the Chippewa Mennonite Church Bishop. Her sister, Elizabeth, also became a convert. Bishop Steiner did not take kindly to his wife's conversion.

From this seed of belief, a large community of faith was developed. By 1996, Rittman, OH had 419 members and Smithville, OH had 197. This reminds us that diligence of one or two people can result in a host of eventual believers.

Bro. Gehring walked the rigorous route from Sardis to Rittman many times. Later in life in one of his letters, he indicated his legs were giving out like an old horse's.

Elder Bella, a single man all his life, traveled widely on behalf of the Faith. He would always return to his “home base” at Sardis. He lived humbly in a woodshed “lean-to” attached to a two-room, two-story house. He repaired watches for a living.

As our brethren came from Europe and fanned out into the vast regions of the midwest, a need for preaching the Word and nurturing new believers took place. With zeal and sincerity, our early ministers went into the harvest.

New beginnings took place as these ministers stayed with the literal messages of the Bible. Using God's Word as the only text for their sermons (as now), a positive response took place. The church grew from within. Another source of converts (which added to the church) was from Amish and Mennonite groups. They spoke the German language and many were receptive to our ministers' German sermons.

The entry into our church of various early Mennonites had an affect, historically, on our general order and lifestyle. But our final guide for faith and life, then and through the subsequent generations, has been the Bible. It is God's truth of salvation which allows our church to prosper.

By: Perry A. Klopfenstein

Next Issue: Keeping the Faith



Saturday night or on Sunday morning, the girls would walk to church in their bare feet and carry their shoes and stockings. We always kept a basin under the church and we would take rags with us and they would wash their feet and put their stockings and shoes on. When we started home, they took them off again and went home barefooted. We always took our lunch and stayed for the afternoon service.”

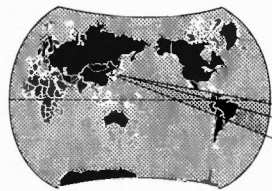
Elders Isaac Gehring and Joseph Bella were instrumental in spreading God's Word here in America. They were tireless, and very willing to exert themselves in God's vineyard.

Elder Gehring walked 140 miles from Sardis to Wayne County (Rittman, OH) to preach. He “had a feeling some fellow believers could be found.” Indeed, he was “able to find some people who were interested in their soul's salvation.”

It was an incredible incident. The first convert at Rittman, OH was Anna Ste-

The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean



希望の光

“A Soft Heart”

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

I've been pondering the idea that it is the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ that really motivated the early disciples. They weren't motivated immediately as we can see by Peter's statement, "I go a fishing," (John 21:3), after having seen the risen Christ several times. Peter was saying in effect, "I can't figure out what's going on. I need to do something that I understand better."

By the time Jesus ascended to Heaven in His resurrected body, Peter and the other disciples had pretty well gotten the picture that the Kingdom of God that Jesus brought was not a material kingdom but an eternal and spiritual kingdom. That made the things of this earth seem strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace. After that, there was no stopping the early disciples. They were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and thereafter devoted themselves to spiritual things. Their philosophy was, "Forget the material things, they don't amount to much, except to

the extent necessary for human life."

It was not the resurrection alone which so motivated the early disciples but also the miracles which continued to happen in their midst. This resulted in a rapid growth of the church as people felt the power of the Holy Spirit, repented, believed, and obeyed. We must never put a limit on God's power—He is the Creator and can still perform miracles today. We should cooperate with the Holy Spirit by having much love and respect for one another. In order to do that, we each need to be dead to self.

During the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth, the early disciples saw many miracles. Why weren't they motivated then as they were later after the resurrection? Our first response to that question is that they had it in their heads that Jesus was definitely from God and that He was going to set up His kingdom here on earth, here and now. They were mostly concerned about who among them

would have the preeminence. "By the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest." (Mark 9:34). They each thought that they were on the inside track and were better than the others.

The other day I found a verse which gives a clue as to what was different about the disciples after the resurrection. It is Mark 6:52, where it is written, "For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened." In those days, the miracles which Jesus performed didn't change them much. Why? Because their hearts were not soft. If that is true, we are in dire need of soft hearts. How is your heart? Is it soft, hard, or medium? I'm not sure what a soft heart is but I think it has something to do with being dead to self. The Apostle Paul wrote, "I am crucified with Christ." Crucifixion of self makes our hearts soft, and a soft heart is a prerequisite for genuine spirituality.

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Tremont, IL - 1910 *(pictured in 1939)*

The first Church at Tremont was built in the Dillon area, but soon proved too small with the large amount of emigrants that came to Illinois looking for fertile farm ground. The second Church was built in 1881, located about a mile and a half from town. The Church that is pictured here was built in 1910 and became the focal point of the Tremont congregation. In 1962, a new brick Church was built and serves the Tremont congregation yet today. From the pioneering days, when families would have to live for a while with neighbors, until today where large farms stretch out over the acres, the Tremont brethren have always been known for their hospitality and humble attitude. Even though there were troublesome times around 1908, the Lord has surely blessed the Tremont congregation through the years.

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