

A black and white photograph of a mountain range with a lake in the foreground and evergreen trees on the right. The title 'The Silver Lining' is written in a cursive font across the top of the image.

# *The Silver Lining*

*He leadeth me beside the still waters*

January 1999

# "BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN"

*Sermon by Elder Bro. Eugene Bertschi, Roanoke, IL*

## Revelation 18

### *Prayer*

Father, it is a wonderful privilege to gather here in Thy house on this the Lord's day. We thank Thee that we have this opportunity and we pray Thee that Thou wouldest grant unto us, in this day, a blessing.

Heavenly Father, we have much for which to be thankful. We thank Thee for our salvation which is very important to us, and which is a wonderful gift that Thou, O God, didst institute and didst bring to pass in this life when Thou didst send Thine Only Begotten Son into this world to suffer and to die, and to shed Thy most innocent blood. What did Thou do it for? Thou did it for us, and we thank Thee for such a wonderful gift! We can never thank Thee enough!

We are mindful of many, many in this day who cannot go about as we do, who cannot enter the house of worship because they are in beds of affliction, hospitals, rest homes, or wherever they might be. Heavenly Father, wouldest Thou care for them. Wouldest Thou bless them and wouldest Thou give them a portion, at least a portion, of Thy Word in this day.

We thank Thee for the many, many souls that are turning to Thee. We question, is it the gleanings? Is it towards the end time? If it is, Heavenly Father, wouldest Thou in Thine own way give unto us an understanding that we may see? So when that time comes, that we will not be found sleeping, but that we will be found awake, watching and praying.

Heavenly Father, we commit all unto Thee and thank Thee for the many, many blessings that Thou hast shared unto us. We ask Thee to be with us in this day, to care and provide for us.

Call many souls unto Thee while there is time and day of grace, for there are many who are near and dear to us whom we would like to see saved. Our thought is mostly on ourselves in this matter. We hope—we sincerely hope—that we will get to Heaven someday and be with Thee in all eternity. But we don't want to think of only ourselves, we want to think of others too.

Wouldest Thou let Thy work of salvation be shed abroad in many hearts yet...that many more can come to the knowledge of the Truth. For such we ask, Heavenly Father, and thank Thee in Jesus' name. Amen.

### *Sermon*

It is not an easy thing to speak on the Revelation. We know that they tell us of what is coming, and what we can look for. We hope that the church will be raptured in due time before this happens.

One can think chronologically...

In the nineteenth chapter is the Marriage of the Lamb.

In the Twentieth chapter, Satan is bound in the bottomless pit.

In the twenty-first chapter is the new heaven and new earth.

In the twenty-second chapter is the river and tree of life.

So this is pretty close to the end of time.

Let's talk about Babylon a little bit. We can read about Babylon before this. It mentions two walls...the wall surrounding the city of Babylon, and the wall surrounding the wall around the city of Babylon. That is the way it was when Nebuchadnezzar had Babylon conquered when he was the king of the whole earth...the first world kingdom.

There was a wall that had the thickness, which, I think eight

chariots could go on top of that wall. There was a wall inside of that wall, which was not quite as wide. They had to go through both walls if they were going into the city of Babylon.

We can believe that the city of Babylon was a great, great city, as it says it here. It was surrounded and protected in such a way that they could raise enough food for several years, and then they could, keep going.

*Sermon continued on page 47*

The Silver Lining subscriptions are due from the following churches. Please collect in:

### **February**

1. Bay City, MI
2. Burlington, IA
3. Cissna Park, IL
4. Elgin, IA
5. Kiowa, KS
6. Lester, IA
7. Roanoke, IL
8. Taylor, MO
9. Winthrop, MN

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

## Light From The Word



Writings based  
on God's Word

January 1999

### Willingly Ignorant

The dictionary defines "ignorant" as lacking knowledge, education or experience. We are all ignorant in some topics for it is not possible for us to be knowledgeable about everything. As a result of our limited abilities, we must make choices about which subjects we will be ignorant and those about which we will be informed.

In choosing the topics about which we will be well informed, we need to weigh the importance of the topic and the consequences of ignorance. One topic that we are all ignorant about at some stage of our lives is the importance of salvation and a personal relationship with God.

Until we reached the age when we could understand our responsibilities toward God, we were not accountable for this ignorance. Prior to our ability to understand, the Scripture tells us that "...the times of this ignorance God winked at;..." (Acts 17:30). The time comes for each of us, however, when there is no longer an excuse to remain ignorant and we read that God "...now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

The Scripture often refers to the spiritual ignorance of man. In each case there are consequences for this ignorance. The prophet Isaiah wrote "The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace" (Is. 59:8). The Apostle Paul wrote "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro. 10:3).

Ignorance of God's ways is sometimes a result of being placed in a situation where the opportunity to know of God is very limited. Those who have less opportunity to know God's ways have limited accountability. We are instructed that "...he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes" (Luke. 12:48).

The scripture issues strong admonition about those who are willingly ignorant. Christ spoke of willing ignorance

when He said "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted,..." (Matt. 13:15).

The power of God is denied by those who are unwilling to rely upon Him - "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old (II Peter 3:5). Being willingly ignorant of God's plan of salvation in no way relieves us of the responsibility to do what is right. We are instructed that a "...servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Luke 12:47).

How can we avoid being willingly ignorant? We have many opportunities in our brotherhood to learn of God's will. We can start and end each day with a conversation with God. It is important that we remember that a conversation is a two way process. We have the privilege of talking to Him through the avenue of prayer. We have the opportunity of having Him talk to us by reading His Word. This avenue of conversation needs to be exercised fervently and often. We are taught to "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17) and "...continuing instant in prayer" (Ro. 12:12). An instant, unceasing two way communication with God will help to ensure that we are not ignorant of His will.

Attendance at all the church services possible (AM, PM and midweek) will help keep us in close contact with the Lord. Paul instructs us of the importance of "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,..." (Heb. 10:25) as a means of encouraging one another to continue in the faith.

In addition to the regular worship services, in our brotherhood we have many additional opportunities to be in the House of God and under the sound of His voice. Gathering together to "Sing forth the honor of his name:..." (Ps. 66:2) also can bring us closer to the Lord.

When a soul has repented and been

converted, they have an opportunity to share their experience with the congregation. As often as possible we should be in attendance at these testimonies to provide support to the convert and to be reminded of our conversion experience.

The members of any organization need to be informed of the concerns of the leadership of that organization. It is especially important in the household of faith that all of the brothers and sisters are aware of the concerns of the church leadership. By listening to the tapes of the general conference and by attending the reading of the memorandum, each member of the church can be well informed of these concerns and of how they can support the unity and soundness of the faith. In the early church after the Jerusalem conference a letter was sent to the believers at Antioch and "...when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation" (Acts 15:31). We also can rejoice when given Godly direction.

A special time to strengthen our faith and to draw closer to God and one another is the communion service. Each of us is admonished to "...examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup...For if we judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (I Cor. 11:28,31). This is a very sacred opportunity for each brother and sister to strengthen his or her relationship with God and with the members of the church.

Other opportunities that we have to learn of God's love for us and of His plan for our life include attendance at funerals whenever possible. This provides us with a reminder of the brevity of life and the certainty of death and that we will give an account of our life to God.

Weddings of brothers and sisters, special holiday services and other special occasions all serve to provide us with an opportunity to "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8).

God has been so good to us. He has provided ample means for us to learn of His expectations for our life. Surely none of us would want to be ignorant of His love for us, and there is no excuse for us to be willingly ignorant of His Word.



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

## USA Board Looks Back on a Busy Year of Helping Others

*...and there shall be famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, in divers places.* MATTHEW 42:7

As we review the past year, the brethren on the USA board recognize the similarity of our weather patterns and natural disasters to the words of our merciful Savior.

### Unprecedented numbers of damaging acts of nature

It seems as though the number and violence of hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, and drought is almost unprecedented in our recent memory.

We are grateful to almighty God that most of our brethren have been spared from great catastrophe and major loss. However, those whose occupations depend upon weather conditions have also felt the strain.

### Opportunities to serve God by helping those in need

Now we all have opportunity to assist those who have not been so fortunate as we by donating a portion of the blessings we have received from God above. Through our World Relief organization we are also given the chance not only to assist financially, but also with our time and efforts. Many brethren and friends have responded to the calls for help, and the need for such assistance is ongoing.

### Cleaning up following tornadoes

Work projects for rebuilding after tornadoes from early 1998 are still looking for volunteers. The storms have brought mass destruction and flooding

from the deluge of rain that accompany them.

Projects for cleanup and rebuilding have been organized. In some of these efforts we coordinate our work with Christian Aid Ministries, which has long been our ally in this kind of work. Some projects are:

- ◆ Birmingham, Alabama - tornado damage.
- ◆ Pascagoula, Mississippi - hurricane wind and flood damage.
- ◆ Cuero, Texas - flooding from rains spawned by hurricanes.

The Birmingham project is about 95 miles from our Athens, AL church. The Cuero project is close to our central Texas church meeting locations. Please contact your local Treasurer-Representative if you would like to help in these efforts or would like to have more information.



### Hay to the Southwest

Some of these areas of drought in the Southwest have been having floods as a result of the fierce hurricanes in the Caribbean. Concerned brethren continue to monitor the situation, and try to respond to the evolving events.

Late last summer our brethren were given the opportunity to provide hay and transportation to the drought area of Oklahoma and Texas. Upwards of 30 truck loads and 6 freight car loads of hay were donated by brethren and friends in several midwestern states. Aid continues as needs become apparent.

### Caribbean/Latin America

Hurricanes Georges and Mitch, both violent storms, brought devastation to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic plus flooding and landslides to Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Belize.

Food supplies were destroyed, and even worse, trees and vegetation necessary to produce foods were virtually wiped off the landscape. It will be years before they can grow to a size that will produce fruit.

Roads and bridges were washed out, making distribution of supplies very difficult. Again, opportunities have been given to the brotherhood and friends to donate food grains and money to deliver them.

Six containers of pinto beans are presently being processed. Four semi loads of corn have been cleaned, bagged in 50 lb. Bags, palletized, and shipped. It is anticipated that many more will be available.

These commodities are being shipped through international relief organizations with whom we have worked for many years. We are very grateful that in years past brethren have sought out and established working relationships with groups larger than ourselves in whom we have confidence. This type of mutual respect and cooperation enables us to reach much further than would be possible on our own. We thank God for guiding us in this way.

### If you want to help

Anyone who feels they would like to assist in these projects and efforts should contact their local Treasurer-Representative. Although more funds are needed, there are also many ways in which you can give of your time and effort to help those in great need.



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

### Building Advisory Committee & North American Church Building Fund

In April, 1998 we reported on the appointment and function of the Building Advisory Committee (BAC) and the North American Church Building Fund (NACBF). We wish to share with you some of the work that has been done.

#### Building Advisory Committee

This committee was appointed three years ago by the Mission Committee with Elder body approval. The purpose is to assist new, small, or needy Apostolic Christian congregations to construct or purchase an adequate house of worship.

The BAC is also available to assist any size congregation in a construction project. Five brothers who have experience in construction and financing of the same have been carefully chosen to serve on this committee.

#### On-site evaluation and help

Congregations who are investigating the possibility of having their own building are encouraged to invite the BAC to assist them early in the process. Small groups beginning a new congregation often do not have someone in the group with expertise in construction.

Committee members will visit the area and help evaluate the possibility of buying or building. Often building new is the best choice. However, many factors enter into this decision such as: availability of a structure or site, suitability of the location, and potential growth of the congregation.

These factors and perhaps some others then lead the planners to determine the size of the initial phase plus the provision for expansion should it become necessary.

#### How to finance the projects

When the BAC began to work, it soon became evident that funding the project was a major concern. Many times the group is small, and does not have the ability to finance an entire project without assistance.

The Mission Committee put much effort into investigating this situation, and eventually recommended that the North American Church Building Fund be established. Its purpose was to help small congregations cover expenses until they are large enough to do so themselves.

This was approved by the Elder body. Shortly thereafter funds from the Brotherhood Assistance funds became available, and it was agreed that approximately \$4,000,000 be transferred to this fund. Many times in past years churches and church homes were built using money from these funds as loans which were paid back as time progressed.

#### Grants or loans

The original intent of the NACBF was to give grants to small and needy congregations. A method of qualifying for grants is in place and available where needs exist. Additionally there is also a provision for any size congregation to receive a loan at reasonable interest if they do not qualify as small or needy.

#### Projects approved to date

Following are brief descriptions of approved projects in three states and in Canada.

#### Atlanta, GA

After exploring options, the BAC recommended purchasing and remodeling an existing building. It is now complete, for which we are thankful.

#### Kitchener, Canada

The BAC recommended a new building in this case, for nothing suitable was available. Construction is underway with plans provided by the BAC, who also coordinated the work. We are grateful that it will be well under budget due to a tremendous amount of volunteer labor from many of our congregations.

#### Prescott, AZ

The BAC followed the same procedure here, recommending a new building. They helped both in buying the land and planning construction. Hopefully building will soon begin with the BAC as coordinators. Volunteer assistance would be greatly appreciated.

#### Portland, OR

The BAC assisted in remodeling a building purchased prior to committee existence. Funding was not needed from the NACBF since the Mission Committee had approved financing.

Several other projects are receiving input from the BAC, but have not been given financial approval. Congregations that do not qualify for grants could possibly receive loans from the fund.

Contact for  
Building Advisory Committee:

Brad Eisenmann  
12333 Cashlan Lane  
New Lenox, IL 60451  
(815) 463-0697

## - 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.

**WE DO NOT ACCEPT ZION'S HARP HYMNALS SINCE WE DO NOT HAVE ANY PLACE TO DISTRIBUTE THEM.** Continue to bring used Bibles, Bible Story Books, Hymns of Zion, Tabernacle, or Gospel Hymn Books to:

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

## BUSINESS CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Gateway Woods has an opening on our office staff team for a brother or sister who would manage our financial operations. We are looking for someone who desires to serve in a ministry that heals children and reunites families, rather than in corporate America. This is a key full-time position that offers responsibility, management and creativity. If you have been trained in the areas of accounting and/or finance and possess good analytical, organizational, communication and computer skills and are interested in using these skills in a ministry setting, please contact one of the brothers listed below.

Tim Sauder  
Box 151  
Leo, IN 46765  
(219) 467-2159

Phil Stettner  
Counseling Elder  
(219) 565-3499



## BIBLE DISTRIBUTION CENTER MOVED TO BLUFFTON, IN

The Bible distribution center at Leo, IN has been closed and a new center opened up in Bluffton at a location adjacent to the Bluffton Distribution Center. By mid-December, it should be staffed on a part-time basis, with an answering machine and fax in place to receive incoming calls when no one is there. *Contact: Bro. Leon Gerber, 1254 S Main St., Bluffton, IN 46714, 219/824-5587.*



## ALTERNATE HOUSEPARENTS

We're going through some changes with our Houseparent Staff this winter. Bro. Todd and Sis. Carol Schrock will be leaving Gateway Woods this November after six-and-one-half years. Bro. Arlo and Sis. Lisa Kipfer are planning to take over their house, with Bro. Tom and Sis. Jodee Bauman (Goodfield, IL) joining our team as Alternate Houseparents.

Bro. Kevin and Sis. Brenda Fiechter are planning to leave Gateway Woods in February of 1999 after seven years together as Houseparents. As Bro. Chuck and Sis. Naomi Wiegand plan to take over the Fiechter House, we have another opening for Alternate Houseparents.

We pray at our Staff and Management Meetings that God will move in the hearts of those that HE wants to be here. He already knows how things will turn out and we rest in that. If you are interested in any of these positions, please prayerfully consider these openings and contact the Gateway Woods office at 219/627-2159. Each of these positions offers competitive wages and benefits.

For more information, please call one of the brothers listed below.

Tim Sauder, Box 151, Leo, IN 46765, (219) 467-2159  
Phil Stettner - Counseling Elder, (219) 565-3499



## Counselor Needed

Gateway Woods, a Christian residential childcare facility, has an immediate opening for a male or female counselor. Qualified persons for this position must hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, Counseling or related field. A Master's degree is preferred. Responsibilities include individual and family counseling, case management, and consultation with the treatment team.

For more information, please call one of the brothers listed below:

Jeff Schumacher, MS  
Senior Counselor  
Gateway Woods  
P.O. Box 151  
Leo, IN 46765  
219/627-2159

Phil Stettner  
Counseling Elder  
219/565-3499

## 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.

## TEACHER NEEDED

The Apostolic Christian Preschool of Athens, Alabama is currently looking for teaching help. The position needs to be filled immediately by a sister or brother in good church standing. Additional qualifications include at least some college training with preferably a bachelor's degree in child development, elementary education, or related field. After training, the teacher may be asked to also assume the coordinator position.

If interested in the job, please contact your local elder, and with his support, send your resume to Bro. Lavoyd Moore at 15448 Hwy. 72 W., Athens, AL 35611 or call him at (256) 232-2035. Contact may also be made with Bro. Bill Schlatter (419) 393-2621 or Bro. Ken Indermuhle (740) 483-1593.



## GATEWAY WOODS AUCTION

Sale Date for 1999:  
Saturday, August 21, 1999

## WORLD WAR II VETERANS

(12/7/41 - 8/14/45)

### Members & Friends

Date set for veterans of WWII  
Gathering at Latty, Ohio.

**June 5-6, 1999**

(55th Anniversary of D-Day)

*Make Plans Accordingly*

Further info will be sent in the  
future to those who mailed in cards.

*Others interested call  
941-756-2887 or write to:*

WWII Veterans, 713 E Perry St,  
Paulding, OH 45879

## OPENING FOR DIRECTOR OF NURSING AT CEDARS RETIREMENT HOME, LEO, IN

We have an opening for a Director  
of Nursing.

Requirements: R.N. background,  
managerial skills, love for the elderly.

For more information, call:

Bro. John Klopfenstein  
219/627-3934  
or write:  
15028 Reservoir Rd, Box 8  
Leo, IN 46765

## Mexico Work Teams

**Construction - Juarez  
February 6-13**

Contact Bro. Steve Gerber  
(Bluffton North)  
(219) 824-9561

**Construction - Juarez  
February 27-March 6**

Contact Bro. Jeff Leman (Bluffton)  
(219) 565-3815

**Construction- Juarez  
March 6-13**

Contact Bro. Kurt Ifer (Bluffton)  
(219) 824-2829

**Construction - Juarez  
March 13-20**

Contact Bro. Mike Fiechter (Bluffton)  
(219) 597-7330

**Construction - Agua Prieta  
Housing Project**

(Carpentry and Masonry)  
**March 13-20**

Contact Bro. Wayne Lehman  
(South Bend)  
(219) 773-4373

or

Bro. Mike Fiechter (Bluffton)  
(219) 597-7330

**Medical - Creel  
March 23-31**

Contact Sis. Cheryl Herrmann  
(Princeville)  
(309) 385-1082

**Construction - Juarez  
March 27-April 3**

Contact Bro. Bob Meyer  
(Bluffton North)  
(219) 824-3236

## APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

At this writing, Christmas is  
only one week away and there has  
been much activity the past several  
weeks. Caroling groups have  
come to the various facilities, there  
has been shopping for family mem-  
bers, cards written, parties, etc.  
The Peoria Church once again in-

## 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 Ger-  
many, Hungary, Romania and oth-  
ers.

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 in-  
clude three volumes. Volume I in-  
cludes 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

vited our residents to their fellow-  
ship hall which included a meal, a  
wonderful skit by the Bible Class  
and a gift for each resident who  
attended. It was enjoyed by every-  
one, and we thank the Peoria  
Church for all the effort they put  
forth to give our residents some  
extra Christmas joy! Here at  
ACHH, there will be a Christmas  
party this week for the residents  
and they will receive gifts bought  
by staff members and enjoy a spe-  
cial meal. The staff and residents

## HAITI/JAMAICA WORK PROJECTS - 1999

All volunteers should contact the project coordinator. Should you not be able to contact the coordinator, direct your inquiry to Bro. Harold Witzig, 308 N. Second Ave., Morton, IL, 61550. Phone 1-309-266-6263, Fax 1-309-266-8575, E-mail: hlwitzig@dpc.net.

| COUNTRY | GROUP      | DATE         | AREA          | COORDINATOR        | PROJECT         | CAP. | FULL |
|---------|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|------|------|
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Jan 1-9      | Deaf Village  | Phil Gutwein       | Work Place      | 40   | 100% |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Jan 1-9      | Montego Bay   | Mark Criss         | Deaf School     | 40   | 100% |
| Haiti   | MEBSH      | Jan 8-16     | Les Cayes     | Craig Emch         | Grade School    | 10   | 100% |
| Haiti   | MEBSH      | Jan 15-23    | Les Cayes     | Dean Pashek        | Grade School    | 10   | 100% |
| Haiti   | S.E.E.D.   | Jan 22-30    | Les Cayes     | Bob Beebe          | Agriculture Aid | 7-9  | 100% |
| Haiti   | Medical    | Jan 22-Feb 1 | Les Cayes     | Bob Pflederer      | HospLumiere     | 10   | 100% |
| Haiti   | A.W.A.     | Jan 29-Feb 6 | Les Cayes     | Earl Sauder        | Water Wells     | 4    | 100% |
| Haiti   | S.E.E.D.   | Jan 29-Feb 6 | Les Cayes     | Bob Beebe          | Agriculture Aid | 7-9  | 100% |
| Haiti   | MEBSH      | Feb 5-13     | Les Cayes     | Jim Walter         | Grade School    | 10   | 50%  |
| Haiti   | Palm Grove | Feb 19-27    | Cotes de Fer  | Tom Hitz           | Grade School    | 10   | 100% |
| Haiti   | Palm Grove | Feb 26-Mar 6 | Puits - Sales | Tom Hitz           | Grade School    | 10   | 40%  |
| Haiti   | A.W.A.     | Mar 5-13     | Les Cayes     | Earl Sauder        | Water Wells     | 4    | 50%  |
| Haiti   | MEBSH      | Mar 5-13     | Les Cayes     | Phil Isabel        | Grade School    | 10   | 100% |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Mar 5-13     | Kingston      | Terry Miller       | Deaf School     | 40   | 90%  |
| Haiti   | MEBSH      | Mar 26-Apr 3 | Les Cayes     | Stan Descarpentrie | Grade School    | 10   | 100% |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Mar 27-Apr 3 | Montego Bay   | Kent Kloter        | Deaf School     | 40   | 65%  |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Apr 3-10     | Montego Bay   | Dan Hoerr (*)      | Deaf School     | 40   | 100% |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | May 14-22    | Deaf Village  | Andy Bauman        | Work Place      | 40   | 100% |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Jun 4-12     | Montego Bay   | (*)                | Deaf School     | 40   | 0%   |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Jun 4-12     | Kingston      | (*)                | Deaf School     | 40   | 0%   |
| Jamaica | CCCD       | Jul 17-24    | Knockpatrick  | Jay Maibach (*)    | Deaf School     | 40   | 100% |

CCCD= Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf

MEBSH = Missions of Evangelical Baptists of South Haiti

Palm Grove = Mission of Haiti

S.E.E.D. = An Agricultural School & Extension Service

TBA = To Be Announced

(\*) = Held for possible Bible Class Participation

| COORDINATOR        | PHONE                        | FAX          |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Earl Sauder        | 309-387-6357                 | 309-387-6357 |
| Harold Witzig      | 309-266-6263                 | 309-266-8575 |
| Mark Criss         | 309-243-9271                 |              |
| Craig Emch         | 330-939-4591                 | 330-939-4591 |
| Dean Pashek        | 517-662-7685                 | 517-662-7099 |
| Jim Walter         | 815-692-3158                 | 815-692-2851 |
| Bob Beebe          | 219-291-2158                 | 219-299-8173 |
| Tim Butikofer      | 319-426-5486                 | 319-426-5586 |
| Phil Isabel        | 219-261-3541                 | 219-261-2885 |
| Bob Pflederer      | 309-266-5853                 | 309-676-8455 |
| Stan Descarpentrie | 309-467-3898                 |              |
| Terry Miller       | 309-747-2212 or 941-485-4302 |              |
| Tom Hitz           | 734-454-9229                 | 248-351-4629 |
| Andy Bauman        | 309-965-2174                 | 309-691-6793 |
| Jay Maibach        | 330-336-4719                 | 330-939-5805 |
| Kent Kloter        | 309-965-2727                 | 309-965-2220 |
| Phil Gutwein       | 219-843-1761                 |              |
| Dan Hoerr          | 309-243-9271                 |              |



of Oakwood, Linden and CRS had their Christmas party at the Morton Fellowship Hall this week with 100 in attendance—how they have grown! Amidst all the business of the season, we need to remember the real reason we celebrate this Christmas season—the birth of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

We miss Lyle Steffen, who moved to the Eureka Home October 13, 1998. He is closer to family and friends, so we are happy for him. Also, Herb Stieglitz moved from Oakwood to Apostolic Christian Restmor on November 2, since he was requiring daily nursing care. Then on December 10, Janet Christensen moved from Linden back to ACHH, due to medical reasons.

Birthdays for February are: ACHH - Laura Litwiller (6), Matt Pumphrey (17), John Kamm (18), Lee Anne McKay (19), Ernest Berry (27), Guy Masinelli (28). There are no February birthdays at Oakwood, Linden or CRS.

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

"I've got two fish; God is so good." Those were the excited words of my 6-year-old son; his smile was so big that you could hardly see his eyes (part of his excitement was that he was now two fish ahead of his daddy!). These words were spoken while we were on a fishing trip during our last vacation in Florida.

As we were headed out to sea that morning, the first mate was rigging poles with two or three hooks for some of the smaller children on the boat. Both of my sons were watching closely as he pre-

pared the poles and cut up the bait so they would be prepared when the time came to fish. We finally arrived and started to fish. Right before Zachary started reeling in his line, my wife heard him mutter, "Please God, let me catch a fish." As you can tell by the first words of this article, he was very surprised.

As I sat back and pondered this event, I was struck by the example my children have set for me over the years with their faith in prayer and my seeming lack of faith in prayer. Even though, as a Christian, I have the scripture that says the following things about prayer:

Matt. 21:22, Mark 11:24 - "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Philippians 4:6 - "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

Col. 4:2 - "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;"

James 5:15 - "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 5:16 - "Confess [your] faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

I often put my "human, adult" limitations on the true power that we have through prayer, while my children do not. They have taught me a lot about prayer in their short lives.

I know that we at Gateway Woods appreciate greatly your prayers for the work that we do. We often pray before meetings

that in all the things we do that the Lord would be glorified and that the children and families we work with would see the Lord through our lives.

We have been very blessed this past month with volunteers who have come and given of their time. On December 12, we had a group from Bluffton, IN, who came to help us do many jobs including putting up snow fence (I hope we need it this year). We also would like to thank Sis. Vera Manz from Junction, OH for her regular service in the office.

We would like to welcome Kevin, Laura and Emily to the Fiechtlers' and Keith to the Graf's. We would like to say farewell to Tyler and Jamie. May God guide you into the future.

Currently we have the following positions available: Business Manager, Counselor and Alternate Houseparents. Please refer to the ads in this issue or call Gateway Woods for more information.

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**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
PRESCHOOL  
Athens, Alabama  
Joan Reinhard**

On December 18, the students put on a play about the birth of Jesus for their families and friends. The play went well considering the age of our students and most importantly it helps to imbed in their hearts and minds the real meaning of Christmas.

If you come down South for a visit, you will (hopefully) hear, "Yes Sir," and "No Sir," and "Yes Maam," and No "Maam." This is something that is still taught here and when the children go to elementary school they are expected to use these terms of respect to the

adults they come in contact with. Good manners is something that does not come natural and they have to be taught. That is why manners is one of our themes for January, along with families and the color purple. These themes also help us realize what a blessing we have been given when we are brought up in a Christian home with God-fearing parents. Are we thankful for these blessings, or do we take them for granted? Are we passing these blessings on to our own children? Please pray for us here at the Preschool, that we can do the Lord's work as He would have it to be done. Training children for eternity is an awesome responsibility.

We have an immediate need for another teacher here at the Preschool. Please consider this need and pray that the Lord's will could be done here. If you or someone you know would feel led to Athens to help out, please call Bro. Lavoyd Moore at (256) 232-2035.

We have a sponsor program here at the Preschool for those families who do not have the means to pay the full tuition for their child to attend Preschool. If anyone would be interested in helping to sponsor a child through their preschool years, please contact Sis. Joan Reinhard at (931) 424-5838 or call the Preschool at (256) 233-0591. Any amount would be helpful and we would pray that the Lord would add the increase to the planting and watering that is being done.

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### ALABAMA, ATHENS Joan Reinhard

1999! A year that seemed so far away when we were younger. A year of unimaginable wonder and inventions. Almost a year of fairy

tale like qualities in the time zone of our lives. Yet it comes the same as any other year. January 1 starts the same as any other day and the time seems to slide and blend together so easily, we hardly even know it is passing. It is so easy to see why one could be lulled into complacency. Satan doesn't want us to realize how precious time is and how important it is that we do not waste even one minute. He has us right where he wants us when we are too busy to draw nigh unto God, or better yet when he can get us to tell ourselves that we will spend more time with the Lord tomorrow. One day tomorrow will not come. Maybe it will be sometime this year. Let's not get stuck in the rut of complacency and procrastination, but rather let's try to "redeem the time." Each minute counts!

On Saturday, December 19, a group of us from Athens went up to Nashville and together with some of the Nashville brethren, we went caroling to Roy Barnett Jr. (Sis. Doris Moore's brother) who is in a care facility there. Roy seemed to remember some of us and seemed to enjoy the songs. We remember so well when he was able to attend church with us in Athens and sing special numbers. We are so thankful that our Heavenly Father watches out for each of us and never forgets to take care of us, no matter where we are. We also stopped and sang for little Nykulas Cravens and his family. He came home from the hospital on November 24, and is doing quite well after his heart transplant. Although he is on quite a bit of anti-rejection medicine, and will be on some all of his life, he looked and acted like a very normal, healthy 5 month old.

Many of our congregation will be traveling in the next few weeks and we pray for safe journeys for each of them as well as for those who travel down here. We appreciate the closeness we have from church to church and hope we can each do our part to keep the ties close.

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### ARIZONA, PHOENIX Ron and Ev Hoerr

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep."

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."

*John 10:1,7,14*

With a new year here, 'tis time for a new look at self, and become a better sheep.

Our visiting ministers, Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Bros. Curtis Kaufman (Tucson, AZ) and Dan Beer (Milford, IN) brought timely messages on love and direction.

"Thy word have I hid in my heart."

*Psalms 119:11*

What a gift! December 13, our church was full to hear our children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews proclaim Jesus' birth in word and song. The joy and love that radiated in our 3-year-olds to teens assured us their roots are being nurtured in the Apostolic Christian Church of America. Praise God!

Refreshments were served

later. Our thanks and God's blessings to our dedicated teachers and leaders of Sunday School.

On December 5, the singles group hosted a holiday breakfast for we seniors and our choir sang.

On December 6, we received snow after returning home from church. The huge flakes appeared small snowball size; some areas got enough for children to play in.

We are thankful God is ever so near to our church family and our two hospital patients felt His touch. Sis. Delores Hill and Gaylord Blunier were in for surgery. Timmy Kokanovich was sick at home.

When you grow bitter or critical, read I Corinthians 13.

For Paul's rules to get along with mankind, read Romans 12.

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## ARIZONA, PRESCOTT

### Jane Hodges

"Life is a journey...not a home; a road, not a habitation. And the enjoyments and blessings we have along the way are but little inns on a roadside, where we may be refreshed for a moment that we may with new strength press on to the goal."

"You will meet today ten men and women; perhaps twenty, or perhaps a hundred. Every one of them will have his or her day brightened or darkened by the tone and manner of your greeting. You can put a little more spring into the step and a little more joy into the heart of every one of them by a cheerful, confident salutation."

—*Phillips Brooks*

Ministering to our congregation this last month were Elder Bros. Art Nohl (Morris, MN) and Jon

Kokanovich (Phoenix, AZ), and Bro. Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH). May God richly bless them for their service to us.

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## ARIZONA, TUCSON

### Lisa Knapp

Our small group visited several nursing homes recently as we enjoyed our annual Christmas caroling together. We were reminded how much joy it can bring to someone who is shut in just to receive a kind word or friendly handshake. The older people seem to really enjoy our little ones. Hopefully, the residents received as many blessings as we did that Friday evening.

Our Christmas program will be Sunday, December 20. We look forward to listening to the children sing about Christ's birth.

Our Bro. Bob Haas was with us last Sunday and we were encouraged to see him looking so good. Our thoughts and prayers are with him as he continues traveling to California to receive treatments.

We have been having a bit of a cold spell the last few weeks with highs in the 50's and 60's. It has been a little easier to get in the holiday mood with our shopping and baking with a little nip in the air. Normal temperatures are closer to the high 60's and low 70's for December. Our forecast calls for more normal temperatures heading into the week of December 14th, with lots of sunshine.

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## CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

### Jim Klotzle

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

## Proverbs 27:1

"Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield."

## Psalm 115:11

Though we know not what this new year may hold, let us put our trust in the Heavenly Father who was, is and is to come!

Our theme for this year's Christmas program was "Come to the Saviour". It was truly a blessing to see such enthusiastic participation on the part of our Sunday School students as they shared the Good News.

For four years, we were blessed with the presence and fellowship of our dear Bro. Joshua Martinez. Now, as God leads him elsewhere, we have sent him on with the joy of precious memories and faith that God has ordered his steps. May his smile continue to be a blessing to all who know him!

It was also a blessing for our small congregation to share fellowship again with Bro. Shannon Stahl, as he came to California twice in November and December for job interviews. It is a precious tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.

We are thankful to have our dear Elder Bro. John Klotzle back with us. He and Sis. Lois were at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester for tests. The trip was successful.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

*Jude 1:24-25*

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**CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO**  
**Peggy Jevremov**

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

As we look ahead to a new year, may it be with faith and trust in our Heavenly Father and a renewed zeal to serve Him faithfully.

We were blessed with visitors again this past month. Among them was ministering Bro. Dwight Stoller and his wife, Sis. Lori (Latty, OH). We appreciate his willingness to serve us. May the Lord bless him for his labors of love.

In our small congregation we appreciate each one and miss them when they are absent. We surely will miss Bro. Mark Nenadov, as he feels led of the Lord to move to the Eureka area. We wish him the Lord's nearness and guidance as he undertakes this new chapter in his life.

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

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

*Hebrews 3:13*

One danger in our Christian walk is to not listen and adhere to exhortations given by fellow believers. But according to the above verse, we are to exhort (or warn earnestly) each other daily to avoid

our heart being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, which is all around us. May we continue to help each other to a life of faithfulness to Jesus.

We are thankful that Ollie Smith has chosen to begin her repentance and a new life in Jesus Christ. We pray for our converts as they go through this transition time.

We are also thankful for our visiting ministers, Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) and Bros. Mark Steiner (Smithville, OH) and Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI). We appreciate the loving support we can feel from all our visitors and enjoy the fellowship.

Many have come to volunteer their labor in helping with our church building project. We thank each one of you. At the time of this writing, the drywall has almost been completed and we are working now on the interior of the building. A precious list of skilled volunteer labourers has been made by the National Building Committee and those on the list will be contacted at the appropriate time. However, there will be a need for general volunteer labourers throughout the project. Anyone interested in volunteering may contact our local project coordinator, Bro. David Fortenbacher (519) 656-2650.

On the church building site there is a large rental house, and, along with local brethren, there is room to house about 20 volunteers. Also, for anyone wishing to do so, there is a motel within walking distance from the site; Heilelberg Inn (519) 699-4413. Please continue to lift us up in prayer as we work to complete this wonderful project.

We welcome all visitors who are in the area to come and worship with us. Please contact Bro. Wayne Saddler (519) 662-6834 or Bro. Mike Ursu (519) 669-8515 for more information and directions.

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**COLORADO, DENVER**  
**Yvonne Lehman**

On Saturday, December 5, Brothers and Sisters came together for the reading of the Memorandum. Our Elder and shepherd, Bro. Nathan Steffen (Elgin, IL), was with us for the occasion and had many thoughts to share with us. He relayed to us events about how the Lord's work is being carried out in foreign lands through the sacrifices and efforts of our brethren. How heartwarming it is to hear and what an encouragement this is for our lives.

Sis. Leona Lehman underwent back surgery on December 2. We are so very thankful to our Lord for blessing the surgeon's hands. We could all learn something by observing a person's attitude during times of trial. What an inspiration sometimes when we see brothers and sisters as they trust and have faith in Him who does provide.

We are rejoicing with Bro. Verne Lehman also as he underwent a scheduled biopsy. What great and wonderful news he received when the results of that biopsy were 0. Zero indicates "no rejection". A miracle once again Bro. Verne has experienced in his health. We who have health granted as a blessing to us sometimes take for granted the blessing of good health. We should give thanks for it, as it is a gift from above.

There are hearts and souls being used by God for His glory, be-

lieving and trusting Him, the Great Physician, each day for strength for living. There are great examples for each of us. We may not always choose our position in life or our trials but we believe we grow stronger through them and at the same time there lies possibly an opportunity to witness of our faith and peace to others.

On Sunday, December 6, we were privileged to hear the children bring to us their enthusiasm, spirit and knowledge of the Christmas story, in a way of innocence that never grows old. It is good to reflect on the best Gift ever given to mankind, the gift of His Son Jesus to us, who were in such need of a Saviour. May we ever be obedient with gratitude to our God for His indescribable gift!

If we could all say, "Use me no matter what the cost. No matter what I have to do. I'm yours." Think what could be accomplished for God by God. We were reminded of how God could accomplish the object in some other way but basically you won't receive the blessing from the experience if you are not attentive to how you may be used in times of opportunity presented to you by God. We must be receptive hearers and then doers.

"Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;"

*Psalms 105:5*

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**CONNECTICUT  
ROCKVILLE  
Cherie Galat**

It is amazing to realize that another year has passed. Looking back we can count our many blessings that God has allowed our

country the continued privilege of freedom of worship. What is ahead, we do not know but have confidence that our Heavenly Father will provide grace for the day and hope for the future.

Many prayers arise on behalf of our ministering brethren who visit and preach the Word to us. May God bless Bro. John Steiner (Oakville, IA) for his efforts of love.

Again our congregation bid a tearful farewell as Bro. Tim and Sis. Dana Schneider and family moved to Oregon. May He provide strength and guidance as they settle into their new home.

We pray that God continue to watch over our dear Sis. Emma Herzig as she was recently hospitalized. May she depend upon the loving mercy of our Father.

Our prayers are with the family of Edith Limberger (Ernie) as she has passed away recently. May He comfort and console each family member who is left behind.

*Note of Thanks:*

We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks for the love, support, kind deeds and especially the prayers for our family, not only from our home congregation, but from many of our congregations across our great land, in the tragic loss of our beloved son, Russell. May God bless each one, in His own special way, for sharing in our sorrow and offering words of comfort.

*The Family of Russell Hany*

Reminder: Rockville's collection for Silver Lining is in the month of January. Please make check payable to Apostolic Christian Church for \$11.00 or cash. This is a voluntary contribution. Thank you.

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**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
WASHINGTON  
Henrietta Meyer**

Our ministers this month were Bros. Jerry Isch (Philadelphia, PA) and Dan Stoller (Remington, IN). Other visitors this month were from Latty, OH; and Princeville, IL. We appreciate all who come to visit us. There are many things to do in the area no matter what time of year it is. Any of us "locals" would be happy to give you suggestions.

Services are usually held the first, third and fourth Sundays of the month at the Tysons Corner Westpark (Best Western) Hotel, located about one mile west of the Beltway (I-495) on Route 7. If you are making your travel plans for Spring, please note we will meet only two Sundays in April (4 & 18), in May we will meet four (2, 16, 23 and 30). Song service begins at 10:15, worship service at 10:30. 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. Barry Steffen (410) 569-3635.

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**FLORIDA  
FT. LAUDERDALE**

**Kevin & Kristine Krieger**

As this Christmas season has come and gone, we have been so reminded that the hurry and scurry of the season is not our main priority. The baby wrapped in a manger and, more importantly, the man who walked among us, is to be our focus. Our

congregation has truly learned the meaning of Christmas—Christ and Him crucified. How blessed we are that He has called us from a world of destruction to walk forever in His love.

We were so blessed to be a part of our yearly Sunday School Christmas program on December 13. The girls in our younger classes sang in beautiful harmony of the birth of our Lord and each Sunday School child recited a learned verse. Along with the adult choir lending their voices, this was truly a most memorable program for our congregation.

Once again, we have seen the Lord leading our congregation and feel His peace in welcoming back Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Morton, IL) as our counseling Elder. May God grant him the wisdom and grace to lead the flocks which have been placed in his care.

It is with happiness and sorrow that we acknowledge the Lord's leading for Bro. Matt and Sis. Nancy Rocke's future. This month, Bro. Matt announced his job transfer to Eureka, IL. Though our loss will be great, we are happy for the Eureka congregation for their wonderful addition. We want to extend our sincere thanks to Bro. Matt and Sis. Nancy for their contributions to our fellowship while they were with us.

Our annual church cleaning was held this month and we want to take a moment to thank all those who participated. We were blessed with an overwhelming amount of support from, not only our local members, but also friends and visitors as well.

Our annual Father/Son Pig Roast was also held this past month. We are always encouraged

by the turnout for this event, as well as the opportunity to build the bond that God has given us as fathers and sons.

Congratulations goes out to our college graduates this month: Bro. Kevin Krieger and Benjamin Gress.

As always, we so appreciate the visiting ministers that share with us the Word of God. Visiting us this month were Bros. Wayne Lehman (South Bend, IN), Mark Kiefer (Denver, CO), Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA) and Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Morton, IL).

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### FLORIDA NORTH FORT MYERS Anjie Baum

We pray that each of you enjoyed a very blessed Christmas and new year. The holidays are such a precious time spent with family. For those of us away from our families, we especially cherish the time spent together.

This month our dear friend, Clarence Peters, was hospitalized with heart trouble. He was in church the next week, though, enthusiastically helping with our barbecue/potluck dinner.

The weekend before Christmas, we had our Christmas program. I was deeply touched by our small Sunday School, which consists of Lindsey Steffen and Stacy Yergler. The girls did a fantastic job of singing. They each sang solos and then sang together. At such times I realize the blessing of a small church. Lindsey and Stacy are both so precious to our congregation. Our three-year-old, Shelby, also sang "Away in a Manger". It was a wonderful day of celebrating our Saviour's birth.

We'd like to express our thanks

to Elder Bro. Doug Sabo (Sarasota, FL) and Elder Bro. Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL) for visiting and ministering to us this past month.

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### FLORIDA, SARASOTA Melissa Sabo Rachel Sabo

When you receive this issue, we will already be into a new year, the last year of this millennium. Surely it is a time of reflection and consideration of our standing with the Lord.

Our visiting ministers this month have been Bros. Larry Bahr (Fort Scott, KS), Marvin Steffen (North Ft. Myers, FL) and Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA). We want to thank each one for their service and dedication in the Lord our Saviour and also want to remember our home ministers for their service year round.

On December 13, our Sunday School brought us the Christmas story in verse and song. We appreciated so much the time and effort our teachers and students put forth into this program.

Our hospital patient this month is Sis. Maria Reardon who had been in an automobile accident, and in writing this is in a comatose state. Let us keep her and her family in our prayers.

"For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul."

*Jeremiah 31:25*

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

*I Corinthians 4:5***GEORGIA, ATLANTA****Keith and Carol Kaufman**

We wish Bro. Kevin Krieger (Sis. Kristine) and Matt Pamer God's blessings as they have completed chiropractic school. We look forward to having them here through March for post-graduate classes. We welcome Megan Pamer as she begins her schooling at the chiropractic school.

Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) and Bro. Vic Beer (North Ft. Myers, FL) were our visiting ministers this past month. May God richly bless them for their labors.

On December 13 we were privileged to hear the children tell and sing of Christ's birth. They reminded us that, "Tis not the babe, but Christ, the man who walked in Galilee; 'Tis not the manger, but the cross, that sets the Spirit free." (Hymns of Zion #36, vs. 2)

We were privileged to go Christmas caroling for Betty Bahler and the other residents at Mariner's Health Nursing Home. Each person who heard the singing seemed to enjoy it. May we remember that they would enjoy it throughout the year.

Sunday services begin at 10:15 and 12:30. We also meet the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. If you're in the area, please include us in your plans. The church is located at 6225 Campbellton-Fairburn Rd., Fairburn, GA. Take I-85 south to Exit 13. Go west four miles. The church will be on your left. Contact Bro. Linn Stoller (770) 631-4554, Bro. John Brewer (770) 502-8629 or Bro. Keith Kaufman (404) 243-6232.

**ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE****Sheila McCoy**

Christmas is a gift from above...  
A gift of salvation born of God's love.

On Sunday, December 13, our Sunday School classes presented to us the message of the birth of Jesus, our Saviour. Then our congregation went Christmas caroling to area nursing homes which was followed by a delicious church dinner.

The joy of that special Sunday reminds us to be ever thankful for our religious freedom. Let us not take for granted our bountiful food supplies. In India, Bangladesh and North Korea 16-18% of the population is malnourished. A staggering 62% of children in North Korea under 7 years old suffer from stunted growth, a symptom of long-term malnutrition. This means a high likelihood of impaired mental development, also.

Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL) was our visiting minister two times this month. Thanks, Bro. Gary, for your love and support.

"I was sick, and ye visited me."  
*Matthew 25:36*

Let us remember the words of Jesus and as we have opportunity, do as instructed. Gary Moser (Sis. Doreen) was hospitalized for a couple days due to flu induced complications with diabetes.

"I was in prison, and ye came unto me..."

*Matthew 25:36*

A few in our congregation joined

many from the Elgin congregation to go Christmas caroling at the correctional facility for young men in St. Charles, IL.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee..."

*Psalms 61:2*

Ireland, Denmark, Norway, California, New York, Texas, Mexico, Germany, Chile...many in our congregation are required to travel with their jobs and these are some of their destinations in recent months. But it is such a comfort to know that God is everywhere, hears our prayers and watches over us when we are separated from our loved ones.

**ILLINOIS  
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL****Carol Sauder  
Janice Horner**

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

*John 14:27*

December 5 and 6 were the dates for Julie Gudeman (Bro. Richard and Sis. Jan) and Amanda Loy (Bro. Matt and Sis. Barb) to share their testimonies of faith, and were baptized as Sisters of Jesus Christ. Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL) assisted our Elder Bro. Everett Hari in these activities.

Congratulations to Suzanne Kieser (Bro. Bob and Sis. Laura) and Erik Wilcox (Jeff and Pam) as they plan to marry on August 6, 1999. We pray they will incorporate God in their daily life to help them

build a firm foundation.

Wednesday, December 9, we gave fond farewells to Sis. Lois Stoller (the late Lyle) as she moves to Eureka to be nearer her family. We wish her God's blessings and are thankful for her many years of service here as one of the first members in our Bloomington Church. She had various responsibilities over the years, including being the first Silver Lining writer!

We also said goodbye to Bro. Ross and Sis. Erin Wuthrich, who have moved to Lafayette, IN as he has found employment there.

*Note of Thanks:*

Since my hospitalization and recovery at home, I've been thankful and humbled for the love shown to me and my family. The cards, flowers, meals, calls, and prayers offered have been a comfort and great help. I'm deeply grateful and thank each one. I pray that God will reward you as only He can.

*Sis. Kathie Inoue (Bro. Hisato)*

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**ILLINOIS, BRADFORD**

**Brad & Cheryl Kupferschmid**

Another Christmas season has passed and a new year has begun. Could this be the year of our Lord's return? May we all be ready and pray more fervently for those who have yet to answer God's tender call.

Another blessing from God has been added to Bro. Fred and Sis. Sue Hausmann's home. On November 21, Jacob Alan safely arrived. His big sister, Amy, and brother, Steve, welcome him home. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Alfred and Sis. Verla Hausmann and Bro. Noah and Sis. Evelyn Herrmann (Princeville, IL).

On December 5, a precious little girl was born to Ben and Jenny Beaver. Brenda Rose has two big brothers, Jeffrey and Isaiah. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Richard and Sis. Marilyn Tanner. We pray that both of these parents will be given God's direction as they raise their families.

What a blessed time we had on December 11 as we sang those old Christmas carols to those who can't go out as well as they used to. Four groups went to different places. Then we all met in the church basement for more carols, lunch and fellowship.

We had two visiting ministers this past month. We pray that God will bless Bros. Don Manz (Junction, OH) and Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL) for lending themselves as they shared His Word with us.

*Note of Thanks:*

A very sincere thank you for all of the prayers, cards, memorials, calls, food and other acts of kindness shown us at the passing of our dear husband, father and grandfather, Sam Kieser. May God bless you all!

*Lucille Kieser*

*Bonnie Kieser*

*Jane and Marvin Leman & family*

*Jerry and Wilma Kieser & family*

*Bertha Jean and Harry Herrmann & family*

*Mrs. Loris (Martha) Kieser & family*

*Mrs. David (Shirley) Kieser & family*

The weekend of November '20 was especially busy for our church. On Saturday, the 19th, the Sunday School teachers and students gathered at the church to prepare food baskets for some needy families in our communities. This is a real group effort with some children helping to decorate boxes that the food will be delivered in, while others go on the shopping trip. The day is busy but a blessing to all who help provide a little help for those without the resources and necessities of life that most of us have always enjoyed.

On Sunday, November 20, we had a very full church as our Sis. Kara Banwart became the bride of Bro. Aaron Klopfenstein of Indianapolis. Kara is the daughter of our Elder Bro. Wayne and Sis. Charlen, and Aaron is the son of Bro. Cleve and Sis. Kathleen of Peoria. The new couple will be establishing their home at 5246 E. 86th St., #101, Indianapolis, IN 46250. The following Sunday, our Bro. Chad Keever (formerly of Mansfield, OH) took Sis. Laurie Schafer of Indianapolis as his helpmate. They are making their first residence at 822 St. Andrew's Circle, Rantoul, IL 61866. We wish these couples many blessings.

In one way, it seems that the family of Bro. Bob and Sis. Barb Fehr just moved here from Iowa, and in another it seems that they've always been a part of our church. However, time and employment change things and Bob, Barb, and Sis. Lana have now made a move to Lancaster, PA where Bob has been working for several months. Their daughter, Sis. Tina, has moved to Kansas City where she is working as a nurse and living near her older

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**ILLINOIS  
CHAMPAIGN-URBANA  
Samuel and Pamela Furrer**



brothers, Tom continues as a student at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, and Dona is living with the Banwarts in order to finish her high school education here. She will join her Pennsylvania family in January. We truly enjoyed having the Fehrs with us for the past several years and trust that they might find Champaign a good central meeting spot for their family. The new address for Bob and Barb Fehr is 2970 Kings Lane, Lancaster, PA 17601.

We welcome Sis. Gwen Bruellman who recently transferred to our area from Iowa City. She is working as an occupational therapist at the Veterans Administration Hospital in nearby Danville, IL for the next few months. We are pleased to have her as a part of our community and congregation.

"Jesus: The Light of the World" was the theme of this year's Sunday School Christmas program. Through various scripture readings, verses, and songs, the students shared how darkness was overcome by light in Creation itself, how Jesus was sent to be the Light of the world, how wise men followed the heavenly star, and how we can reflect the light of Jesus in our lives.

### *Stepping in the Light*

Trying to walk in the steps of the Saviour,  
Trying to follow our Saviour and King;  
Shaping our lives by His blessed example,  
Happy, how happy, the songs that we bring.

*Tabernacle Hymns #160*

Visiting ministers this past month included Bros. Ken Hoerr,

Dave Obergfel and Mike Rieker (Peoria, IL), Gary Endress (Bradford, IL), Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA), Tim Hohulin and Ed Sauder (Roanoke, IL), Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL) and Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO). Thanks to all of our visitors over the past month, especially those who labored on the pulpit while they were with us.

### ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

#### **Jill Rager**

The last week of November and early weeks of December brought unseasonably mild weather to our area. As a result, the hyacinth bulbs in front of our home have sprouted and apparently think it is spring. I'm sure by the time this is printed Old Man Winter will have taken care of any hopes for spring blooms for this year. Even though it has been very comfortable to experience the warmer temperatures, it is not good for the vegetation and will rob us of the joy of spring flowers.

I found this to be a good analogy of our spiritual walk. It would be so comfortable to just coast along without the trials and lessons God would have us to learn, but it would then be so easy for that old serpent, called the Devil, to coax us out of our protective armor, catch us in a snare and rob us of the joy of our salvation.

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the ap-

pearing of Jesus Christ:"

*I Peter 1:6-7*

Our prayers have been with Tom Clauss as he grieves the loss of his stepfather, Bro. Harold Schieler (Francesville, IN). We hope that Tom can find comfort in knowing that Bro. Harold is now resting in the Lord.

Among the usual church activities that go along with the holiday season such as Thanksgiving services, Christmas caroling and the Sunday School Christmas program, we have had several other happenings. Sis. Jeanne Hangartner (Bro. Gene and Sis. Evie, Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Ron Nuest (Bro. Elvin and Sis. Jan) of La-Crosse, IN, announced their engagement. We wish them God's blessings as they start a new phase of life together.

Our congregation got to help Bro. Virgil and Sis. Mary Metzger celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary with a reception following our monthly singing. It was doubly joyful as their son, Tim Metzger, had just begun a new life in Christ the prior week. As we know God has answered many prayers for Tim already, we will continue to pray as he experiences some of the difficult, but necessary battles ahead.

We are celebrating another new life in our congregation as Alexander Phillip Conrad made his entrance into the world on December 16. His happy parents are Bro. Phil and Sis. Heather Conrad. Grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Vicki Steffen (Remington, IL) and Bro. John and Sis. Jayne Conrad (Cissna Park, IL). We pray for God's blessings on this young family.

Finally, our thanks go to ministering Bros. Arnie Gerst (Taylor, MO), Howard Plattner (Alto, MI), Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL), and Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS) for their recent visits.

### **ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK**

**Darlene Walder  
Beth Steffen**

December was a busy month as we try to do so many things. I had to think as I was wrapping gifts about the time and search we put forth to give just the right gifts to our loved ones. All we give seems so unimportant when we realize the "best gift" won't ever fit in a box nor can it be bought in a mall. The best gift has already been given when God gave His Son (John 3:16).

God gave just the "right gift" with His full return guaranteed. For even though we celebrate Jesus' first coming as a baby, we also long for His second coming. What a glorious day that will be. May we all be ready.

We rejoice that Kimberly Young (Dave and Barb) has opened her heart to receive this "best gift" of all. Kim currently lives in Champaign where she is attending college. In a world that seems to be rich in what money can buy, and poor in what money can't buy, we pray for Kim to "be rich". Not "get" rich but "be" rich in the gifts that money can't buy. God bless you, Kim, as you "...grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen." (II Peter 3:18)

A good number of our church family enjoyed caroling on December 6, followed by a lunch at the Fellowship Hall. It is always a

blessing to be with all ages and to visit those who are shut in.

At our Christmas program on December 16, we were inspired with the verses and songs our Sunday School youth shared with us. May the teachers and students receive a special blessing for their efforts.

Visiting ministers this past month were Bros. Kevin Knapp (Bloomington, IL), Glen Braker (Princeville, IL) and Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL). We appreciate these brothers' labors of love in teaching the precious Word to us.

Sis. Louella Jacobs moved to Fairview Haven. We certainly miss her here and pray God will keep her in His loving care there. Our prayers have also been with our Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler as he underwent surgery recently. May your faith in God sustain you, Bro. Alfred, as you wait the return of good health. We continue to lift our loved ones with failing health to God in prayer. Bro. Ray Eisenmann and Sis. Wanda Maul's parents especially come to mind at this time. We also remember those who for the first time this Christmas had loved ones missing. May God continue to heal both body and soul.

A small piece of paper fell out of my husband's Bible the other day and on it he had written, "Lord, who and where are the Lazarus's today?" This seems like a good question for each of us to ponder as we begin a new year. Make this song your prayer..."Lord, lay some soul (some Lazarus) upon my heart and love that soul through me." If we all do this in 1999, we will make a difference in "brightening the corner where we are".

### **ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE Sandy Steiner Glenna Rinkenberger**

We are rejoicing with the angels as souls continue to turn from the world and sin to a new life in Christ. Never give up on those who have been in your prayers for many years. God calls the old and the young alike. We are so thankful for His boundless mercy and patience with weak men. Lucille Blunier is seeking the Lord. She is a sister to Bro. Frederick (Sis. Marjorie) Knapp and Bro. Jerry (Sis. Nancy) Knapp and Sis. Mary (Ed) Steffen. Also, Becky Zimmerman has made a beginning on a new pathway. She is the daughter of Bro. Fred and Sis. Maryellen Zimmerman. The rejoicing continues with Adam Ott's change of heart. His parents are Bro. Glenn and Sis. Mardell Ott.

With joy we have sorrow here on this earth. We extend our heartfelt sympathy in the death of Sis. Esther Steiner of Cissna Park. She is the sister of our Sis. Marjorie (Bro. Frederick) Knapp.

Visiting ministers were Bros. Art Mueller (Belvidere, IL) and Tim Zimmerman (Lamont-Gridley, KS). We always appreciate these brothers who lend themselves to God's service and our spiritual benefit.

Bro. Ed Steffen spent some time in the hospital with pneumonia. We are thankful to report that at the age of 102 he is back at the Eureka Home and doing fine.

Sis. Laura Schieber (Bro. Mike and Sis. Mary) was engaged to Bro. Kevin Gutwein (Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda) of Francesville, IN. We pray that as one in the Lord they will strengthen the Faith.

Early in December, we enjoyed our all-church Christmas caroling. The precious fellowship and singing of the songs of Christ's birth were a blessing for all.

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**ILLINOIS, ELGIN**  
**Peggy Heiniger**  
**Norma Schambach**

Two of our families were blessed with new little ones. Matt and Natalie Steffen and little sister Molly welcome Jordan Leigh born on November 30. Her grandparents are Elder Bro. Nathan and Sis. Marilyn Steffen.

Bro. Mark and Sis. Nancy Wewetzer welcomed their third son, Klint Allen, born December 17. Big brothers are Kurt and Kyle. Bro. Bill and Sis. Marge and Bro. Gene and Sis. Libbie Ann Moser are grandparents. We wish these growing families God's grace and wisdom.

As these families rejoice at the birth of their little babies, the whole world rejoices at the birth of God's Son. Our all-church Christmas caroling brought these glad tidings to many of our shut-ins who cannot enjoy the holidays like they used to. On December 20, our Sunday School children shared the Christmas story with us. As we enter the new year, may this gospel of peace and love abide with us.

Surgical patients this month were Bro. Keith Kellenberger (Sis. Ida) and Sis. Sara Dietz (Bro. Jeff). We are thankful for their recovery. We continue to pray for others who are not able to assemble with us.

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**ILLINOIS, EUREKA**  
**Janet Zimmerman**

December 20 was the wedding day for Sis. Rachel Stoller (Bro.

Tom and Sis. Edie) and Bro. Kevin Schrock (Bro. Ken and Sis. Janet) of Congerville. May God bless their marriage together always. We will miss them as they make their home in St. Louis where Bro. Kevin attends school. We were thankful to have Elder Bros. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) and Bob Walder (Congerville, IL) to help with the wedding ceremony.

Other visiting ministers we have had this past month are Bros. Mike Baumann (Mansfield, OH), Tim Hohulin (Roanoke, IL), Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO), Wayne Wiegand (Goodfield, IL), and Randy Mogler (Washington, IL). We thank them for their labors and may God be their Rich Rewarder.

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Bro. Gus Baum. He died on December 13.

On December 16, we enjoyed a blessed evening together when we had our annual Sunday School Christmas Program. We were inspired by verses and songs of the children. May God bless each one that took part and our teachers who so willingly teach them.

We are happy to announce three engagements this month: Sis. Teri Martin (Bro. Lewis and Sis. Arletta) and Bro. Brian Vierling (Bro. Jim and Sis. Linda); Sis. Becki Martin (Bro. Les and Sis. Ruth) and Bro. Dean Martin (Roland and Sis. Deloris) of Washington, IL; and Bro. Todd Martin (Bro. Nelson and Sis. Mary Ellen) and Sis. Joy Ellen Wettstein (Harold and Loretta) of Washington, IL. May the Lord guide and direct these dear couples as they plan for the future together.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Leroy Fehr (Sis. Wilma)

who has been hospitalized recently for heart surgery. We pray for God's healing hand upon him.

Our prayers are also with Sis. Cathryn Wettstein who has spent time in the hospital and is now residing at the nursing home.

With the dawning of a new year, may we put our faith and trust in God who provides for us each day.

Trusting Jesus  
 Simply trusting ev'ry day,  
 Trusting through a stormy way;  
 Even when my faith is small,  
 Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Brightly doth His Spirit shine  
 Into this poor heart of mine;  
 While He leads I cannot fall;  
 Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Singing if my way is clear;  
 Praying if the path be drear;  
 If in danger, for Him call;  
 Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Trusting Him while life shall last,  
 Trusting Him till earth be past;  
 Till within the jasper wall:  
 Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Trusting as the moments fly,  
 Trusting as the days go by;  
 Trusting Him whate'er befall,  
 Trusting Jesus, that is all.

—*Tabernacle Hymns #122*

*Note of Thanks:*

We thank God for our precious brotherhood and thank you dear brethren for remembering me so kindly with cards and phone calls. God bless you all.

*Humbly yours,*  
*Bro. Leroy Huber*

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**ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY**

**Sally Fehr  
Joann Zehr**

The New Year is not present with us. Only a new day! So it will be continually. We shall see but one day at a time...If each day is lived right, the whole year will be right; if each day is wrong, the year will be all wrong. Each day is a white page to be written. Write it beautifully, and the year will be beautiful.

—*Mountain Trailways For Youth*

As we turn the calendar again to another year, may we concentrate on living each day of it beautifully, dedicating it to the service of God and the way of the cross.

As they go forth upon life's way,  
Sustain them by Thy grace...

*Hymns of Zion #286*

A number of us were in Forrest for a November 22 wedding. Vowing lifelong faithfulness to one another were Bro. James Tate (Don and Marilyn of Gridley) and Sis. Carrie Knapp (Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean). We welcome Sis. Carrie to our congregation. May the Lord bless their newly established household.

Wedding vows were also taken by Cheryl Slagel (Ron and Sis. June) and Rick Hoffman (Clyde and Donna) on November 28. We wish them God's blessings in their life together.

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

*Romans 10:15*

Preaching the glad tidings of salvation in the past month were the following visiting brothers: retired Elder Bro. Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL); and Bros. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) and Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA). We thank them for their efforts.

Three couples are experiencing the joy of new life in their families. Dustin Luke Walter joined the family of Dan and Patti Walter on Veteran's Day (November 11). His brother and sisters, Travis, Dana and Heather, welcome him. Grandparents are Bro. Rich and Sis. Colleen Walter, Sandy Sisco of Fairbury and Jerry Broadus of Florida.

A new little bundle at Bro. John and Sis. Jennifer Fehr's home is Michelle Lynn, born on Thanksgiving Day (November 26). Her brother, Aaron, and sister, Stephanie, are happy for a little playmate. Grandparents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Shirley Ifft (Forrest) and William and Helen Fehr (Forrest).

Bro. Kevin and Sis. Kara Moser welcome Reena Frances, born November 30. Reena's siblings are Silas, Damaris, Leighton and Gideon. Grandparents are Robert and Cherie Kaisner, Colleen Loschen and Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Martha Moser.

One by one their seats are emptied,  
One by one they went away,  
Now the family is parted,  
Will it be complete one day?

—*Hymns of Zion #222*

Bro. Eli Meiss passed into eternity on December 11. Our prayers are with his family, including two daughters, Sis. Dolores Zehr (Bro.

Warren) and Sis. Rosemary Hartman (Bro. John); two sons, Bro. Marion (Sis. Barb) and Bro. Carlos (Sis. Jane); 17 grandchildren; 3 step grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; and five step great-grandchildren. At age 93, Bro. Eli had the distinction of being the oldest brother in the Fairbury congregation. He was often looked to for advice and wisdom. His life was a testimony to the goodness of God.

Funeral services were held by our ministering brothers for Laura Sutter Landells, 86, who passed away December 8. Laura had been living in Hemet, CA, but had relatives in our area. We extend sympathy to her family. Also may God comfort Sis. Laurie Edelman (Bro. Kevin) in the loss of her grandfather.

Bro. Alf Steffen (Sis. Fannie) and Pearl Schmidt (Bro. Frank) recently spent some time in the hospital. May the healing power of the Spirit be with them.

A dear friend and sister in faith recently shared the following thoughts:

**OUR THINKING vs.  
GOD'S PROMISES**

"It's impossible."  
*All things are possible*  
(*Luke 18:27*)

"I'm too tired."  
*I will give you rest*  
(*Matt. 11:28-30*)

"Nobody really loves me."  
*I love you*  
(*John 3:16*)

"I can't go on."  
*My grace is sufficient*

(II Cor. 12:19)

"I can't figure it out."  
*I will direct your steps*  
(Prov. 20:24)

"I can't do it."  
*You can do all things in Christ*  
(Phil. 4:13)

"I'm not able."  
*I am able*  
(II Cor. 9:8)

"It's not worth it."  
*It will be worth it*  
(Rom. 8:28)

"I can't forgive myself."  
*I forgive you*  
(I John 1:9 & Rom. 8:1)

"I can't manage."  
*I will supply all your need*  
(Phil. 4:19)

"I'm afraid."  
*I have not given you a spirit of fear*  
(II Tim. 1:7)

"I'm always worried and frustrated."  
*Cast all your cares on me*  
(I Peter 5:7)

"I don't have enough faith."  
*I've given everyone a measure of faith*  
(Rom. 12:8)

"I'm not smart enough."  
*I give you wisdom*  
(I Cor. 1:30)

"I feel all alone."  
*I will never leave you or forsake you*  
(Heb. 13:5)  
—Author Unknown

## ILLINOIS, FORREST

**Jean Knapp  
Linda Anliker**

Another year comes to a close and a new one begins, and I am reminded of ocean waves. Correlating the waves to our lives in years, one wave follows another; some rather tempestuous and others smooth and gliding, but when they reach the shoreline and the water recedes, all we have left are the memories. As we near the end of a century, we ponder when will the waters become still and time, as marked in years, cease.

Coming into a new year, a new responsibility has been given to our Bro. Paul (Sis. Loretta) Zimmerman. Through prayer and direction of the Holy Spirit, the lot of preaching the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has fallen on Bro. Paul. May he be granted grace to break the Bread of Life in all humility, putting self aside and being fully dependent upon the Holy Spirit.

I embrace, O Lord, Thy servants,

Joined to them in love so fervent,

Asking, Lord, that from Thy face

They receive a thousand blessings;

In Thy ways, Thy strength possessing

Lead them in Thy light and grace.

*Zion's Harp #189*

We thank all our ministering brethren for their willingness to labor for the Lord. Visiting servants of God sharing the Word to us were Elder Bro. Art Bahler

(Fairbury, IL), Bros. Chris Wuethrich (Francesville, IN), Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL), Pat Zaugg (West Bend, IA), Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL) and Neil Widmer (Wolcott, IN).

Marriage is honorable...Taking wedding vows to remain true and faithful to life's end were Sis. Carrie Knapp (Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean) to Bro. James Tate of Fairbury (Don and Marilyn, Gridley, IL); and Lana Lanz (Bro. Elmer and Sis. Lavonne) to Joel Brown (Bro. Gary and Sis. Jane). May they be committed to God in accepting His will in what is best for them as they walk this path of life together as husband and wife.

Loved ones spending time in the hospital were Bros. Ed (Edith) Honegger, Clarence (Sis. Doris) Koehl and Sis. Marie Schrof. May God grant restoration with His healing power and strength.

## ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

**Jan Beer**

With thankful hearts we attended Thanksgiving morning services, and were led in worship by visiting minister, Bro. Don Manz (Junction, OH). Thank you, Bro. Don.

November 29 was the wedding of our Sis. Carrie Rocke (Sis. Connie and Bro. Mark) and Bro. Erik Wiegand (Sis. Barb and Bro. Ron). Often with a marriage, a congregation loses one of its members. We are grateful that both Sis. Carrie and Bro. Erik will remain in our Goodfield fellowship. God's blessings as you establish your home, dear newlyweds.

Lexi and Serena Bauman join Sis. Stacie and Bro. Rick in welcoming a new baby brother into their family. Gage Harrison Bau-

man was born on Friday, December 4. Grandparents in our congregation are Sis. Trish and Bro. Roger Gerber and Sis. Helen and Bro. Les Bauman, and great-grandparents are Sis. Elna Grimm and Sis. Mildred and Bro. Elmer Bauman.

Our newest sister in faith, Hope Knapp, gave her testimony on December 5. Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) assisted our Elder Bro. Wes Knapp. After Hope was baptized on Sunday, we joyfully welcomed her into our fellowship of believers.

Also, on Sunday, December 6, announcement was made of the engagement of our Bro. Tadd Gerst (Sis. Bonnie and Bro. Steve) to Sis. Melissa Frieden, presently of Leo, IN. We are anxious to meet Sis. Missy and witness again how God brings two people together in love who are perfectly suited for each other.

Also, on Sunday, December 6, our Sunday School presented the Christmas program to family and friends. Surely God's heart is touched when He watches His little ones do their best to say their "piece" correctly. Thank you, children and young adults, for your participation.

Several folks in our congregation have had surgery since the last writing: Sis. Mary Ellen Wiegand (Bro. Simon), Marianne Hofmann Strawn, Sis. Verla Wiegand (Bro. Dan), and Bro. Morrie Zimmerman (Sis. Kathy). We are very thankful that all are able to assemble with us again. Our Sis. Florence Bauman remains on the sick list, and we pray God will give her the grace to endure. There may be others in our congregation that I am not aware

of who are suffering from physical tests; may God's healing touch be upon them.

All-church caroling was Friday evening, December 11. The weather was not our typical "caroling" weather — instead of ice patches, we had to watch for mud puddles! Our thanks to the food committee who had barbecue sandwiches and lots of other goodies ready for us at our return to the Fellowship Hall (I did notice the lack of hot chocolate this year!) I pray that each caroler received as great a blessing as those to whom we caroled.

The 1998 Christmas celebration is past; what special memory do you have of this year? A most unexpected and profound memory was made for me when we caroled at the Woodford County jail in Eureka. As we stood within a few feet of those cold, metal prison bars and sang of "joy to the world" to those men, locked in those cells, my heart was touched. When we asked for requests, one inmate wanted us to sing Amazing Grace. I wondered, "Does this young man have a mother who taught him of God's amazing grace and who is at home praying for her son?" We went to an upper floor of the jail to sing to the "felons", most of whom appeared to be young men in their early twenties. To conclude our visit, we sang Silent Night. As we began to sing, I noticed one young man cover his face with his hands, and I saw his shoulders shake with silent sobs as the words of that song brought back to him some memory that moved him to tears. At that moment, the true meaning of Christmas became very real to me; baby Jesus was born to set us free from the prison of sin by His

shed blood upon the cross. Glory to God in the highest!

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### ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY Perry A. Klopfenstein

At the beginning of a New Year, we are wise if we view it positively—and with a sense of being willing to serve God in the many opportunities He presents us.

Although it is a time of disappointment and peril in our nation, we who sincerely seek to serve the Lord should be optimistic, and full of hope. The believer is exhorted to be content with only food and raiment. Yet, we all possess far more than these two essentials.

More than anything, we have God's Word and His plan of salvation. To augment this, we have the Truth, which according to the psalmist reaches "unto the clouds." Such a monument of truth should inspire us with hope and a daily resolve to serve God as best we can, by His grace.

A wonderful verse to note as we begin the last year of this century (1999) is found in Luke 6:38, "Give and it shall be given unto you." The more we give, the more we will receive (in a spiritual sense).

Auxiliary to these teachings is an appropriate saying: "Judge each day not by the harvest, but by the seeds you plant."

Sis. Viola Witzig was hospitalized with a broken hip. Sis. Gail Kiefer was also in the hospital.

On December 20, Bro. Ed Fritz (Washington, IL) was our visiting minister.

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### ILLINOIS, MORTON Phyllis Farney Cheryl Wuthrich

Once again in December our

congregation enjoyed the traditional activities of the season. On December 6, the Sunday School presented the Christmas story in song and scripture. Year after year one never tires of the message and one never fails to be thrilled at the students' enthusiasm. On December 12, the church went Christmas caroling. We split into groups to carol and then met back at the church for chili. It is an activity enjoyed by all ages.

We are including the obituary of Vernon R. Haerr of Arvada, CO, formerly of Deer Creek, IL, as some of you may have known him and his family. He passed away on November 10. May the Lord comfort and bless his wife, Gloria Kimbrell Haerr; his three daughters, Dr. Mary Gillum, Kristine Lewis, and Dr. Carolyn Hartmann; his son, Robert; his two sisters, Sis. Virginia Hunziker and Norma Welch; his three brothers, Alvin, Don and Louis; and his seven grandchildren.

We would like to thank Bro. Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL) for ministering to our congregation this month. We always appreciate the visits from his family.

## ILLINOIS, PEORIA

### Peter and Mabel Weber

Thanksgiving was a cloudless and balmy (63) day and we thank our visitors for worshipping with us and Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS) for reminding us to be thankful at all times, name our blessings one by one, see what God has done and be grateful to Him and the Bible, the road map for our lives. Nine of the ten cleansed lepers were so wrapped up in that event that they rushed to the priest to be reintegrated into their

society and forgot to give thanks. We are thankful for the many freedoms we have. If we are looking at the negatives, we are complaining. God wants us to give thanks to Him and be effective as a child of His. We want to overcome and increase in knowledge and look for that crown which we can have in Heaven. We don't have all the answers, but anticipation. We have been delivered from a place we cannot imagine. When the power goes out in an ice storm, we could be turned back several hundred years but Jesus electrifies us and we lean upon Him with thanks for delivering us from the power of darkness as without Him, we are helpless. May we continue in the faith and be continually thankful for what God has done for us and don't move away from the gospel of God and follow Him (Psalm 92, Col. 1:3-23).

On November 29, we were blessed by Bro. Marshall Heinold's (Ixtlan, Mexico) meditation on Ezra 6 and Gal. 3:1-22. Jesus was crucified, but this is not editorialized in our newspapers. Only with Godly sorrow are we ready to make a change and say "cleanse me!" We are to do good works, which is the evidence the Holy Spirit is working in our lives (James) and we need to put this Word into our hearts so it can lead us into all truth and righteousness. The Galatian church operated again on their own strength. Revival starts in the heart of the believer and if we remove the word "repent", there is no salvation. Peter and John were commanded not to preach in His name because even the devil trembles. Our sins were nailed to the cross and are behind us and we are challenged to look at

the genuineness of our faith.

Could we drink the cup which Jesus drank? All the Apostles except John died a martyr's death. The soul does what the spirit has it to do. The evil spirit is in control of this world. Today we are told people are good and don't need to repent. The Lord tried to prepare His disciples but time and again they did not understand. Peter insisted the crucifixion is not going to happen; one night he listened to the Holy Spirit, the next to the evil spirit. The moon reflects the light of the sun; let us allow the light of Jesus to reflect on us to illuminate the world for Jesus. Jesus can save us and we must be willing to serve: "a true servant must be willing to serve when he is treated as a servant." Every person has a soul and God wants it to glorify Him. Be a light and a salt; "blessed are they which hunger and thirst for righteousness, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," which is His promise.

"Hear ye this word" (Amos 5:1). Do we listen, or tune out the Word of God and think of something else? We need to hear in order to learn from the Word of God and do something with it (James 1:22). "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord" (Jer. 22:29). God gave us two good habits: prayer and knowing the Word of God and using it. What are we doing so hearing becomes action-related? Find time and a place to read and pray: "evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Psalm 55:17). We need to set a time and a place and have our Bible open. Jesus healed a blind man in two stages. First he had a blurred picture, later a complete one. It may

not come right away but we need a heart which is open. Don't miss Heaven by the 18 inches from the head to the heart. Speak from heart-knowledge and take the garbage out of your hearts (Bro. Ken Hoerr, 12/6).

Nehemiah 4:1-23 was Bro. Dave Obergfel's text on December 6. God's plan was to rebuild the wall, temple and Jerusalem. Sanballat tried to stop Nehemiah, but he had God on his side. Satan wants to discourage us from whatever God wishes us to accomplish. "The people had a mind to work" (vs. 6) and God gave them the wisdom to do the task at hand with "half my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons" (vs. 16). They built the wall in record time because God said it would happen and He had a plan. "None of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing" (vs. 23).

Bro. Aaron and Sis. Kara Klopfenstein, missed by the Peoria and Champaign congregations, but now an asset to the Indianapolis church, were joined in Holy Matrimony on November 22 by Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart. We wish them God's richest blessings as they travel life's pathway together.

Hospital patients were Fred Aeschleman (now at the Skylines), Bros. Harold Herrmann, Todd Hoerr, Ken Plattner, Rolland Scholl and Sis. Dorothy Hohulin. A hospital stay gives life a new dimension and what comfort to know the congregation and many loved ones are praying for our well-being and healing mercies of God.

Sis. Doris Bahr (68) passed away

at Topeka, KS on November 7 after battling leukemia for three years. She was the sister of Bro. Bob Miller and we extend our sincere sympathies to him and her family. Anna Leman (87), wife of Harold Leman, went to that better home on November 22 from the Skylines. May God comfort the hearts of her husband and family. On December 4, Henry Binkele (93) departed this life at Proctor Hospital and we wish the soothing mercies of our loving God for his family.

All-church caroling with subsequent potluck dinner on December 13 at the Fellowship Hall and the presentation of the Christmas story by our Sunday School on December 20 were lasting blessings.

"HOPE"...what an appropriate topic at the threshold to a New Year. Bro. Glen Braker (Princeville, IL) compared his references to Scriptural hope to a stone skipping across a water surface, which causes ripples in our hearts and, as the rings go farther and farther, may each blessing we receive remain with us. Hope becomes the confident expectation that God will fulfill His promises. We put hope on as a helmet to protect our minds and thinking. It can only be seen with the spiritual eye of faith as hope, which can be seen, is not hope. It needs to be maintained and preserved. It has its source in the Scriptures, comes from God and brings forth fruit. The enemy tries to weaken and shake our hope through questions and doubts. Prayer, even through others, helps the most and we have failed if we give up hope. Don't let Satan give us a false hope, which is worse than no hope at all because we then no longer search for

what God has for us. We reach the end of hope when we reach Heaven and eternal bliss. If we have the full assurance of hope all the way to the end, we will see the result of that hope, or the lack of it. Thanks, Bro. Glen and Sis. Audrey, for your visit and showing us the importance of hope in our lives.

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### ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE Sheryl Martin

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this saith the Lord."

*Malachi 4:2-3*

The Lord will protect all of those who follow after His righteousness. He will provide for their every need even as the calves grow up in the stall. He will protect them from the evil surrounding if they will follow Him.

Bro. Jim and Sis. Helen Knobloch moved to the Princeville area and are making Princeville their home church. We welcome them to our congregation.

If it be His will, may the healing hand of God touch Bro. Duanne Elsasser, Sis. Edith Martin, and Sis. Helen Schick as they have been sick this past month.

Our friends, Brett Endress (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Luann) and Aaron Menold (Bro. Fred and Sis. Nancy), have made a beginning in the Lord through repentance. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John 7:37)

As another year dawns, may it



be the goal in each of our lives to strive to be more faithful to the Lord and be more fervent in our prayers.

*Another Year is Dawning*

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

Another year of mercies,  
of faithfulness and grace,  
Another year of gladness  
in the shining of Thy face.

Another year of progress,  
another year of praise,  
Another year of proving  
Thy presence all the days.

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

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

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**ILLINOIS, ROANOKE**

**Lisa Leman  
Boni Stoller**

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

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

Another good year has come to a close and we are so thankful for the many blessings God has be-

stowed on us. Now we begin a fresh new year. What will it hold for us?

We appreciate so much the labors from our visiting ministers and their families. Bros. Greg Lehman and Mark Streitmatter were with us November 23; and on Thanksgiving Day we had Bros. Will Schieler, Don Braker and Glen Braker. God bless you for your willingness to serve.

We rejoice, along with the angels in Heaven, for Betsy Braker and Wendy Hodel, two young souls who have found the grace to follow our Lord in repentance. Betsy is the daughter of Bro. Jim and Sis. Marge and Wendy is the daughter of Bro. Chuck and Sis Rita.

We spent a wonderful evening of singing praises of thanksgiving to our Lord on Sunday, November 23. The fellowship was a real blessing to all.

November 20 was a special day for Tammy and David Baietto of Crystal Lake as they welcomed their firstborn son, Anthony David. His happy grandparents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Sharon Neukomm of Roanoke and Mike and Adeline Baietto of Crystal Lake.

We've had many hospital patients and shut-ins to pray for. Sisters Carol Schwab and Dot Sauder and Bro. Bob Luginbuhl have spent time in the hospital as well as our friends from Haiti, Sanol Cerizie and Lynda Menard. Also, Bros. Charlie Kupferschmid and Larry Aeschleman and Sis. Ruth (Slim) Hodel have not been able to assemble with us for some time.

The funeral for Clarence Herbst was held December 10 at Knapp, Johnson, Harris funeral home. We extend our sympathy to his wife and daughter and pray that they

can know God's peace.

We were saddened by the death of our dear Bro. Gustav Baum and yet rejoice that he can now be in Heaven with his beloved wife, Sis. Alma. Funeral services were held here December 17. Our prayers and sympathy are with his daughters, Lois (David) Krupp and Lynnea (Leonard) Rosner, and his son, John (Nancy) Baum.

Many gathered together Saturday, December 19, to witness the wedding vows of Jenny Feucht and Jesse Martin. We wish them many happy years together. Parents of the happy couple are Bro. Randy and Sis. Carol Feucht and Glen and Carol Martin.

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**ILLINOIS, TREMONT**

**Barb Dill  
Barb Kaeb**

Our congregation has been blessed with several new additions. Heidi Marie was born on November 20 to Bro. Dave and Sis. Joanna Sauder. She is their firstborn child and her grandparents are Bro. Dale and Sis. Joann Sauder and Bro. Howard and Sis. Mary Ann Herrmann (Princeville, IL).

On December 1, Bro. Gregg and Sis. Cindy Sauder welcomed Andrew James into their lives. He joins a sister, Jeni, and three brothers, Timothy, Nicholas and Benjamin. Grandparents are Bro. Earl and Sis. Glenna Sauder and Bro. Glenn and Sis. Marilyn Dill.

Bro. Mark and Sis. Colleen Moser are new parents to Anna Joy. She was born on December 10 and is welcomed by grandparents, Bro. Alvin and Sis. Carol Beutel and Bro. Bob and Sis. Barbara Moser (Morton, IL).

Mark and Sis. Fern Wagenbach

recently adopted a little 3-year-old boy, Guito John. They welcome him into their home, as do grandparents, Bro. Karl and Sis. Velda Glueck and Bro. Don and Sis. Marie Wagenbach (Washington, IL).

Believing that it is God's will, Bro. John Rassi and Sis. Heather Stuber announced their engagement on November 26. Their parents are Bro. Curt and Sis. Kathy Rassi and Bro. Todd and Sis. Beth Stuber.

Daniel Wagenbach and Jeanne Leuthold (Lester, IA) recently announced their engagement. They are planning a May wedding. Their parents are Si and Sis. Lavonne Wagenbach and Bro. Bob and Sis. Cindy Leuthold (Lester, IA).

We wish both of these couples God's guidance as they undertake this important step.

We are grateful to the visiting ministers who have shared God's Word with us this past month. They are Bros. Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL) and Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL).

Carl Endress recently spent some time in the hospital. May he feel God's love and care.

May God extend His grace and comfort to Christine Austin in the death of her sister, Louise Youle.

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### **ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON**

**Denise Romersberger  
Sue Ruppert**

December is a busy time of year, and the Washington congregation has enjoyed many activities and visitors. Everyone had the opportunity to go Christmas caroling on December 6. Even though the rain took the place of snow, it was an enjoyable time to share the hymns

of Christmas. A barbecue supper was heartily partaken of after the singing was over.

The children presented the Christmas story on December 16. Though it is still the same old story, it is good to be reminded of the reason for the season. Thank you to all the students, teachers, song leaders and parents who put forth effort towards a successful program.

We have been blessed with many visiting ministers this month. Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville), and Bros. Ken Weerts (Cissna Park), Jim Vierling (Eureka), Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City), Ed Sauder (Roanoke), and Tim Hohulin (Roanoke) all ministered to us through the power of the Spirit. Bro. Marshall Heinold also came home from Ixtlan, Mexico for a short period and lent himself. He also brought us word of the work God is doing in that community, for which we are thankful. May God continue to uphold Bro. Marshall and Sis. Jan in the work they are doing.

We have also enjoyed having Jennifer Kellenberger home from her studies in Mexico for a short time before she returns back for another semester.

The Washington congregation is also excited about two upcoming weddings. Bro. Dean Martin, son of Bro. Roland and Sis. Delores Martin of Eureka, was announced to Sis. Becky Martin, daughter of Bro. Lester and Sis. Ruth Martin, also of Eureka. Bro. Dean has worshipped with the Washington congregation for some time. Sis. JoEllen Wettstein, daughter of Harold and Loretta Wettstein of Washington, was announced to

Bro. Todd Martin, son of Bro. Nelson and Sis. Mary Ellen Martin of Eureka. We pray for the Lord's richest blessings on both of these couples as they start new lives together.

As we look forward to a New Year, we know that many changes will occur because change is the only constant in the world we live in. Some may get married, some may be born, some may die, some may experience changes in health, or in employment, and some may move away or into our lives. The world around is always changing too, many times it seems for the worse. The thought of all these changes we may face can be very frightening. But we know that the God who created us; the One who loves us far more than we understand; our Father who is omnipotent, never changes. We can rest assured in His promises to us, even as our lives swirl around us. What a comfort that is to us!

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### **INDIANA, BLUFFTON**

**Kim Maller**

**Trudy Eisenmann**

1998 is quickly coming to a close, and 1999 is ready to take its place. We have celebrated many holidays, weddings, anniversaries, and even birthdays, but none so important as Christ's birth on December 25 long, long ago. What a precious gift we have received.

One family here in Bluffton received a gift of a daughter. Bro. Wayne and Sis. Jeanne Steffen was given Lydia Marie on November 17. Now brothers, Josiah and Aaron, will have a sister to play with. Grandparents are Bro. Terry and Sis. Gloria Steffen and Bro. Walter and Sis. Lillian Bertsch.

Nicholas Bertsch (Bro. Stan and

Sis. Cindy) began a new walk in faith during this special time of the year.

Waling together into the new year will be Bro. Eric Craighead (Bro. Mike and Sis. Kay) to Sis. Annie Reinhard (Bro. Steve and Sis. Renee) as they were engaged on December 13.

Celebrating 50 years together we have three couples. Bro. Harry and Sis. Lula Baumgartner, Bro. Howard and Sis. Beulah Schwartz and Bro. Chuck and Sis. Doris Neuenschwander, "Congratulations, and we wish you many more years together."

On November 29, we witnessed the baptism of five dear souls: Brooke Giltner (Bro. Rocky and Sis. Melinda), Chris Steffen (Bro. Bill and Sis. Donna), Amy Fiechter (Bro. Don and Sis. Suzie), Brenda Girod (Sis. Carla), and Phillip Steffen (Bro. Craig and Sis. Jean).

Brooke Giltner was fortunate enough to have her grandfather, Bro. Al Langhofer (Wichita, KS), here during this special event. Other visiting ministers were Bros. Dennis Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL), Howard Plattner (Alto, MI) and Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN). Another weekend we had Bro. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL) deliver us the message. Thank you all and your families for traveling to Bluffton and lending yourselves to glorify the Lord.

In the hospital we have had Sis. Lucinda Steffen (Bro. Ralph), Sis. Esther Kipfer and Sis. Lucile Frauhiger (Bro. Herb).

Our sympathy goes to Sis. Goldie Steffen as her brother was laid to rest. Also Bro. Harry Aschliman was called Home on November 16. Our sympathy goes to his

family; son, Rex, and daughter, Kay, we well as to the many friends and relatives that touched their lives.

Our time for writing the Silver Lining is now complete. Trudy and I want to thank you for your prayers. We invite you to come and visit Bluffton often. Your future writers will be Sis. Beth Aschliman (Bro. Kevin) and Sis. Catrina Rinkenberger (Bro. Linc). God bless you all. Farewell.

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### INDIANA BLUFFTON NORTH

Lori Steffen  
Rhonda Maller

Our congregation was thankful to have Bro. Ben Manz (Sis. Carolyn, Junction, OH) and Bro. Ron Kipfer (Sis. Linda, Bluffton) with us to share God's Word with us and encourage us in our daily walk with Him. Daily we need to strive to "make a difference" and remember to keep building on that firm foundation, which is Jesus Christ.

We rejoice that two souls have begun repenting and have a desire to live for the Lord. Sunday evening, December 13, Benji Jolloff (Bro. Bob and Sis. Bev) and Jenny Bynum expressed a desire to give their life to Christ. May we pray for them and encourage them in this most important step.

We also have the privilege to share the engagement of Bro. Eric Craighead (Bro. Mike and Sis. Kay) to Sis. Annie Reinhard (Bro. Steve and Sis. Renee) of the Bluffton congregation. May they feel God's direction as they plan their wedding and begin a new life as one flesh.

As we travel from the Thanksgiving season into this special sea-

son of the year, Jesus' birthday, may we strive to keep our focus on the true meaning of Christmas.

Let's daily be willing to be "available" to be used by our Saviour and listen for His voice to guide us.

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

*Colossians 3:4*

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### INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE Lily Pelsy

Our joyful praise we sing to Thee,  
O Lord of glorious majesty!

Through Jesus Christ to Thee  
we pray

And bring our thanks to Thee  
today

Before Thy throne!

*Zion's Harp #200*

We had the blessing of giving thanks as we partook of Holy Communion on November 29. We thank Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman and Bro. Steve Gutwein for serving us. We also are grateful for the Bible Study on "Glory" that Bro. Steve presented to us on a Wednesday evening.

May God comfort Sis. Carol (Bro. Phil) in the loss of her father, Bro. Harold Schieler (Sis. Lorene). "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." (Psalm 37:37)

Sis. Evelyn Pelsy (Bro. Vernon) had to be hospitalized again for her hip. Through this test, may they feel the Lord's nearness.

The engagement of Bro. Kevin Gutwein (Bro. Steve and Sis.

Linda) to Sis. Laura Schieber (Bro. Mike and Sis. Mary, Congerville, IL) was announced. We rejoice with them and ask God's blessings.

We appreciated the ministry of Bros. Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN) and Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL). May God bless them.

As we begin a new year, let us rejoice in Ephesians 6:24, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

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### INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS Gail Bradford

"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*

Bro. Chad Keever and Sis. Laurie Schafer were united in marriage on November 29. Blessing their day were many family members and friends from throughout the country. Ministering brothers present were Bros. Greg Rassi and Lenny Meyer (Chicago, IL), Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL), Fred Domka and Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH). Chad and Laurie will make their home in Rantoul, IL. We hope they will visit us often!

Sis. Melinda Vogt experienced a milestone in her life, graduating from Indiana University. She will continue her work here in Indianapolis as Business and Events Director of the Central Indiana Crisis Pregnancy Center.

Young people from preschool to high school praised the Lord in word and song during the Christmas program. The congregation

appreciated the special efforts of pupils and teachers in presenting the message of Christ's coming and His eternal significance in our lives.

We sang hymns and distributed gifts to the residents of the local nursing home that we visit each month. In a small but important way, sharing our blessings with these precious souls demonstrates our gratitude to God for the gift of His Son. From the very young to the elderly, we have daily opportunities to witness to a dark and weary world the warm glow of our Father's love.

As the New Year opens, let us seize these moments! How will we recognize them? By being daily in the Word, by praying without ceasing, and by living with an "attitude of gratitude".

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

*Matthew 26:40*

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### INDIANA, LACROSSE Anna Marie Stoller

By the time you receive this report, the Christmas programs, caroling and family gatherings will be history. These events are blessings that we thank God for.

On a recent Sunday, our congregation seemed to hold an air of sadness and concern as we heard of illnesses among us and other crosses being born. The true comfort of the Holy Spirit was keenly felt as the brethren leaned upon one another for support. The evidence of God's plan at work was such a blessing.

Just as we experience those moments of concern and sadness, God gives us other times of great joy. The engagement announcement of Bro. Ron Nuest to Sis. Jeanie Hangartner of the Roanoke, IL congregation gave us reason to rejoice. We welcome Sis. Jeanie to Indiana and wish her and Bro. Ron the best God can give.

Another brother in our congregation has been blessed with a helpmate for his life. The engagement of Bro. Ned Stoller to Sis. Heidi Kaeb from Alto, MI has been made known, and they have our wishes for God's abundant blessings as they establish a home with Christ as head.

Visiting ministers have been Bro. Dan Stoller (Remington, IN) and Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH).

Bro. Jeremy Freed graduated from Purdue University this month and has accepted employment in Minneapolis.

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### INDIANA, LEO Ethelyn Schlatter

I had a 1998 calendar with monthly reminders "Making a difference in HIS time." Are we ready to make a difference in 1999?

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up...A time to weep, and a time to laugh...a time to keep silence and a time to speak; A time to love and a time to hate, a time of war, and a time of peace...Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see

what shall be after him?"

*Eccles. 3*

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness; reap in mercy, break up your fallow ground for it is time to seek the Lord, 'til he come and rain righteousness upon you."

*Hosea 10:12*

Welcome Sis. Jodee and Bro. Tom Bauman. May you find fulfillment in your services at Gateway Woods and love in our church family.

We were encouraged by visiting ministers and their wives and families, Bros. James Ramseyer (Bay City, MI), Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN), Mark Gerber (Bluffton, IN) and Elder Bro. Phillip Stettner (Bluffton North, IN).

Many met at the Fellowship Center to divide into five groups to carol to the shut-ins and elderly. The air was invigorating, adding to the season's joy. On another evening, the youth group went caroling at the Byron Health Center.

On December 16, we enjoyed the Sunday School children as they presented a program "No Room" and portrayed the trip to Bethlehem. Bro. Lynn Stieglitz read the story of a little boy, Harley, who changed the part he was playing as inn-keeper in their Christmas Pageant. He offered his room in the inn, to Mary and Joseph, rather than send them to the stable.

Elder Bro. David Bertsch was greatly surprised at The Cedars family Christmas dinner on December 9. On behalf of Indiana Governor Frank O'Bannon, State Senator Richard Worman presented him with the "Sagamore of the Wabash" award. The award is

the highest honor which the Governor of Indiana bestows. Bro. David was recognized for his active volunteer labor at The Cedars and Gateway Woods, as well as commitment to church projects, including trips to Haiti and India and Bible distribution. Congratulations, Bro. David.

*Note of Thanks:*

Our special thanks to everyone for their prayers, visits and cards during Mother's recovery. Also for the love and time each one put into their scrapbook page for Mother's 92nd birthday. Thank you and God bless you all.

*In Christian Love,  
Maudie Greuter and Ruth*

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#### INDIANA, MILFORD Linda Beer

"My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments; For length of days, and long life and peace shall they add to thee."

*Proverbs 3:1-2*

Jim Price, Rockford, IL (Bro. Tom and Becky) and Angie Groves (Dick and Marilyn, New Paris) are engaged to be married. May they feel the blessings of God as they make plans.

Tom and Jody Haab and Cody welcome Dalton as a new member to their family. Grandparents are Bro. Don and Sis. Martha Haab and Keith and Carol Heffelfinger. May they feel God's wisdom as they raise their little ones.

We thank Bro. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL) for sharing God's Word with us. We appreciate his giving and pray God will fill him with wisdom in God's ways.

*When There are No Answers*  
Life will bring us questions  
without answers;  
To live is to encounter silent  
seasons of the soul,  
When every prayer will seem to  
go unanswered  
As we face events beyond our  
understanding or control.  
Yet in the quiet darkness, Christ  
is working.  
His silence in the shadows  
doesn't mean He doesn't care;  
A part of faith is trusting  
without reason,  
Believing, when He can't be seen  
or heard, that He's still there...  
So when answers fail to come,  
don't be discouraged  
Keep leaning on His steadfast  
love and trusting in His will,  
For knowing why won't really  
make a difference—  
But growing close and knowing  
Jesus will.  
—B.J. Hoff

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#### INDIANA, REMINGTON Patti Bahler

"In the beginning God created  
the heaven and the earth."  
*Genesis 1:1*

Talk about great opening lines! You can't do better than the Bible does. In just ten words, Genesis 1:1 answers the age-old question of the origin of the universe. But what's even more important, that opening verse introduces us to the majestic One who is behind it all.

As another new year begins, it seems appropriate to turn to the beginning of the Bible and read the account of how God spoke the world into existence. Of course, God as Creator is just one of the

many descriptions of the Almighty that the Bible reveals to us. It would be a great idea to use the new year to study God—to find out more about who He is. The best way to do this is to read the Bible every day. In Genesis 1 we know Him as the majestic, Almighty Creator, but He is so much more. Let's use this year to get to know God as never before.

On December 13, our Sunday School children presented their Christmas program for us. They are truly a blessing to us and we thank God for each one. Thanks to all the teachers who did a wonderful job of putting this together. Later that day the church went caroling in our local community.

*Note of Thanks:*

We want to express our thanks for all the comforting words, love, cards, calls and prayers on our behalf during the loss of our loved one. May God bless each of you.

*The Harold Schieler family*

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**INDIANA, SOUTH BEND**  
**Jennifer Mangold**  
**Sue Beebe**

I'm certain that schedules across the land are as busy as they are here this holiday season. May we remember the Truest Gift given for all as we hustle about.

This past week our church gathered for Christmas caroling and a chili supper afterward. Since we don't ordinarily eat supper at church, our sons were curious. I explained that we were having a special supper to remember Jesus' birth. The three-year-old excitedly said, "Is He here for supper, too?" I reminded him that Jesus is always with us in our hearts. But in his young head, I could see the

wheels turning. "Mom, He doesn't fit in there. He's big up in the sky." As his mother, I felt a pang of failure but was quick to remember how true the words of Paul are in Hebrews 5:12-14.

Illness has been rough on a few in our congregation. Sis. LaVilla Langhofer (Bro. Marty) and Sis. Carolyn Frank (Bro. Tom) have been missed. Sis. Mildred Meister is now recovering in the Bremen Healthcare Center. Andrew Mangold (Bro. Matt and Sis. Jennifer) had out-patient surgery. We trust and pray the Great Physician will tend to each of them.

Our sympathies go out to Sis. Pauline Laidig and her family in the passing of her brother, Henry Binckley, of the Peoria area.

Micah Frank (Bro. Tom and Sis. Carolyn) and Mark Beebe (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sue) have taken employment in the Indianapolis area. We hope they will remember us and visit home often.

Bro. Craig and Brad Langhofer (sons of Bro. Marty and Sis. LaVilla) graduate this month from college with degrees in Business and Vet Technician.

We also want to thank and ask God's blessings on our dear Elder Bro. Jesse Beer for his service to us this past year and recently as a visiting minister.

In closing, all of us in South Bend's congregation hope all of our brethren across this land and in others had a blessed holiday season.

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**INDIANA, VALPARAISO**  
**Cheryl Bucher**  
**Hope Bucher**

We wish to congratulate Dale Meiss (Bro. Rollie and Sis. Josephine) and Sherry Cowsert

(Lacrosse, IN) on their November 20 wedding. The couple will reside in LaCrosse. We wish them God's blessings in their new life together as one.

The busy Christmas season began early as we enjoyed our church Christmas Dinner on the evening of December 4. After a catered meal in our fellowship hall, we sang Christmas carols. Bro. Lyle and Sis. Marilyn Zeltwanger reminded us through a poem to set our hearts on the true "reason for the season". We wish all God's blessings throughout this holiday season.

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**INDIANA, WOLCOTT**  
**Beckie Lehman**  
**Jody Bahler**

We have been blessed with many visitors throughout this holiday season. Among them have been several visiting ministers. We appreciate Bros. Vernon Wettstein (Congerville, IL), Dwight Stoller (Latty, OH) and Doug Harmon (Toledo, OH) who brought the gospel message of salvation to us. May God bless them for their willingness to give of themselves.

Many thoughts and prayers have been uttered on behalf of our dear Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler, as he underwent back surgery. Thanks be to God for watching over him as he experienced some complications while in the hospital. We are thankful that he is able to be home now, and we pray that God will bless him with a full recovery.

On December 16, the Sunday School children brought forth the beautiful story of Jesus' birth through verse and song. We trust that the true meaning of this holy season will be instilled into their

hearts at a young and tender age.

Bro. Jeff and Sis. Heidi Bahler are thankful parents to little Chloe Anne born on December 24. Chloe joins her older sisters, Abigail, Emily, Hannah, and Sarah. Grandparents are Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karla Bahler and Bro. Leonard and Sis. Nancy Baumgartner (Bern, KS). May God provide every parent godly wisdom, grace and much patience as we nurture and mold these little ones that He has blessed us with.

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### IOWA, BURLINGTON

**Karla Gerst  
Judy Gehring**

Our dear Sis. Pauline Heiniger is back in the hospital again. We need to pray for our loved ones who are getting up in age and going through the trials of life.

Our Christmas program and caroling was well attended. Our Elder Bro. Ed Lanz spent Sunday afternoon with us as some of his grandchildren were in the program.

We had a chili supper in the evening and our Sis. Lorna Knapp and Verna Woodward did a wonderful job making it possible for us all to enjoy the chili.

Bro. Brad Funk (Garden Grove, IA) was with us and preached in Revelation. Much food for thought.

May we all enjoy the Christmas season with our loved ones and remember the birth of our dear Saviour who made it all possible that we could have eternal life.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

I wish to thank everyone who remembered me on my 95th birthday with gifts, lovely flowers, cards and well wishes. It was all very

much appreciated. May God bless you all.

*Sis. Tillie Frank*

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### IOWA, ELGIN Gloria Frieden Heidi Butikofer

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

*Luke 2:7*

As Christmas draws near, may we remember God's unselfish gift of sending His only Son to die for mankind. Do we invite Jesus into our hearts, or are we like the keeper of the inn who turned Him away? May we remember the Gift that was sent from our Father in Heaven and thank Him year around by living our lives the way He would like us to. Is it too much for Him to ask?

We recently went Christmas caroling to those shut in in our community. It was such a blessing to sing to others and visit with them. It's also a blessing when we all can get together and fellowship.

Our children held their annual Sunday School Christmas program. It was nice to be reminded of Christ's humble birth and to hear the children say and sing it so simply. May they and their parents, who prepare for this event, feel a blessing.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

*Matthew 18:20*

We would like to thank Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA) and his family for coming to min-

ister to our small congregation. Many of us were absent, but we are thankful for his willingness to travel the many miles.

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### IOWA, GARDEN GROVE Laura Funk

Visiting ministers this past month included Bros. Paul Messner (Winthrop, MN), Bob Stoller (Lamar, MO) and John Steiner (Oakville, IA). A special thank you for coming and sharing God's Word with us.

#### *New Year's Wish*

Through Almighty Providence  
We start another year,  
And bring to Thee our grateful  
praise  
For things that we hold dear.

Cheer, Almighty Providence,  
At the dawning of this year,  
Those with crosses for a season;  
Bless each sorrow and each tear.

Come, Almighty Providence,  
And in our home abide,  
That all who enter thru its doors  
May feel Thy Love inside.

Bless, Almighty Providence,  
As we seek to do our part.  
Weak is the flesh, but spirit  
willing,  
We will serve Thee from our  
heart.

Give, Almighty Providence,  
That which for us is best.  
If we should choose, 'twould not  
be good  
For we cannot stand the test.

Provide, Almighty Providence,  
The things we daily need.  
For body health and freedom's  
land.

We bring Thee thanks indeed.

Remind, Almighty Providence,  
The sinner of the price  
That Jesus paid to ransom him  
Through willing sacrifice.

Watch, Almighty Providence,  
That nothing will us part.  
And the end finds us nearer  
Thee,  
Than when the year did start.  
—Henry Kipfer

We wish all a blessed holiday  
season and coming year.

Another year is dawning,  
Dear Master, let it be,  
On earth, or else in Heaven  
Another year for Thee.  
—Hymns of Zion #150

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### IOWA, IOWA CITY Sharon Gerst

We were grateful to have visitors to join us in the worship of God. We appreciated each and every one who came. A special thanks goes to ministering Bro. Dale Frank (Oakville, IA) for breaking the Bread of Life with us. May he feel God's richest blessings.

On December 12, the Sunday School shared the story of the prophecy of Christ and His birth. They asked us: "What will you do with Jesus?" In this blessed holiday season we rejoice not only in Christ's birth but also in His atoning salvation. May each one of us remember to thank God for the most special gift we can ever have—His Son.

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### IOWA, LESTER

### Sue Warner Cindy Leuthold

We rejoice with Bro. Myron and Sis. Beth Knobloch with the birth of their new baby son, Darin Paul. He arrived on December 8 and is welcomed home by the loving arms of his brothers and sisters, Laura, Brett, Clark and Amy. His happy grandparents are Bro. Ezra and Sis. Marie Knobloch and Bro. Howard and Sis. Lollie Mogler.

As Marti and Martha Knobloch begin their new married life together, they also begin a new walk of life as they have found grace from our Heavenly Father to seek their souls' salvation. We rejoice with them and their parents, Bro. Glen and Sis. Joyce Metzger and Bro. Nick and Sis. Mary Kuenzi (Silverton, OR). Also many prayers have been answered to learn that Rick Metzger (Bro. Dale and Sis. Chris) and Benji Kellenberger (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Shirley) have begun repenting. May they build a firm foundation in Him.

We are always grateful to our brothers for preaching the Word of Life. Visiting ministers who have lent themselves recently have been Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA), and Bros. Roy Koehl (Morris, MN), Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL), Trent Meiss (Eureka, IL), and Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS).

Jason Metzger and Jodi Devitt exchanged wedding vows on November 21. Jason's parents are Bro. Art and Sis. Kristy Metzger. Our congratulations to the couple and may God bless their marriage.

We bid a fond farewell to Bro. Dave and Sis. Pauline Teubel as they move to the Peoria, IL area after living here for many, many years. We are happy that they will

live closer to their children, but will miss their presence here in Lester.

Several in the congregation have been ill and we wish to remember them. Having surgery recently were Bro. George (Sis. Charlyn) Meyer, Mike (Sis. Donna) Barber, and Bro. Art (Sis. Elgeva) Knobloch. Grant Metzger, the little son of Bro. Jerome and Sis. Jana, spent time in the hospital as well. Our friend, Eric Knobloch, was seriously injured in a farm accident but is now recovering with his family. Also, Bro. Fred (Sis. Esty) Metzger and Bro. Denis (Sis. Jill) Meyer and Sis. Ella (Bro. Ernst) Metzger are being treated for serious illnesses. Our concerns, thoughts, and prayers are with them, as well as all who endure afflictions of the flesh. We pray for grace to help us all to put our trust in Him.

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### IOWA, OAKVILLE Debbie Wagenbach Melody Steiner

We are thankful for the safe arrival of two little blessings from Heaven this month.

Amy LaRae is the 8th child and 7th daughter born to Bro. Roger and Sis. June Schulz. Also welcoming home their new little sister are Sis. Bethany, Mitchel, Betsy, Janae, Wendy, Marie and Brianna.

Their grandparents are Bro. Myron and Sis. Dorothy Schulz and Bro. Phil and Sis. Donna Mogler (Lester, IA), and the late Sis. Lydia Mogler.

Alexandria and Joshua Lanz are excited about their new baby sister, Bailey, along with their parents, Bro. Ron and Sis. Timna Lanz. We are thankful Sis. Timna is feeling herself once again. The



rejoicing grandparents in this family are Elder Bro. Ed and Sis. Joan Lanz and Bro. Dick and Sis. Dorothy Taeger (Burlington, IA).

May the Lord bless and direct each of these dear families as they strive to raise the precious souls God has entrusted to their care. Our prayers are with each of them.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bros. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA), Jeff Thames (Washington, IL) and Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL).

May the Lord bless them each one for their labors of love on our behalf.

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**IOWA, PULASKI**  
**Lisa Knecht**

*Walk Beside Me*

Walk Thou beside me, Precious Lord  
Let heaven's sunlight flood my way,  
I know not what the future holds  
I ask for light just for today.

Walk beside me day by day  
Take Thou my hand and guide me home,  
Though narrow be the path  
From Thy blest side I'll never roam.

What will the New Year hold for each of us? Surely we do not know, but as the hymn states, we need to ask "for light just for today".

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

way."

—*M.L. Haskins*

A special thank you to Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther and family, Lester, IA) for visiting our congregation in November and sharing God's teachings with us.

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**IOWA, WEST BEND**  
**Eunice Fehr**  
**Berniece Banwart**

Visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Lawrence Luthi (Sis. Sandra, Lamar, MO) and Bros. Dale Moore (Sis. Cheryl, Elgin, IA) and Mark Streitmatter (Sis. Sara, Bloomington, IL).

Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH) spent the weekend of December 6 and assisted Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr and Bro. Wayne Grimm with the testimony and baptism of Betty Mogler (Bro. Art and Sis. Eula). We welcome Sis. Betty as a new sister in faith.

We held our annual business meeting the beginning of December. Bro. Neal Schmidt (Sis. Angela) replaces Bro. Wendell Schmidt (Sis. Karen) as usher, and Bro. Jim Fehr (Sis. Sharon) will serve on the Retirement Village board replacing Bro. Norman Zaugg (Sis. Polly). May God bless Bro. Wendell and Bro. Norman for giving their service during the past six years.

On November 21, our Bible Class students and teachers traveled to Lamar, MO to spend a weekend together with their Bible Class. A wonderful time was experienced by all and we want to thank the Lamar church for all they did for us.

Several loved ones have been under doctors' medical care. Those

who spent time in hospitals were Sisters Helen Zaugg and Anne Schmidt and Bros. Kent Banwart and Rick Kellenberger. We are thankful they are at home and wish them a complete recovery, Lord willing.

Bro. Larry and Sis. Marvella Wickman welcomed another grandchild on November 13, when their daughter, Joni, gave birth to Avri Ann. Sis. Helen Zaugg is the great-grandmother.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Judy (Bro. Jerry) Schmidt in the loss of a sister, Mrs. Mae Schuller, of Mallard, IA.

*New Year's Wishes*

What shall I wish thee?  
Treasures of earth?  
Songs in the springtime,  
Pleasures and mirth?  
Flowers on thy pathway,  
Skies ever clear?  
Would this insure thee  
A Happy New Year?

What shall I wish thee?  
What can be found  
Bringing thee sunshine  
All the year 'round?  
Where is the treasure,  
Lasting and dear,  
That shall ensure thee  
A Happy New Year?

FAITH that increaseth,  
Walking in light;  
HOPE that aboundeth,  
Happy and bright;  
LOVE that is perfect,  
Casting out fear;  
These shall ensure thee  
A Happy New Year.

PEACE in the Saviour,  
Rest at His feet,  
Smile of His countenance  
Radiant and sweet,

JOY in His presence!  
 Christ ever near!  
 This will ensure thee  
 A Happy New Year!

—*Frances Ridley Havergal*

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**JAPAN, SHIODA**  
**Willis Ehnle**

Toshiaki Asakawa died yesterday evening at about 8:30 p.m. in the hospital in Chiba Prefecture west of Tokyo. We received a telephone call from his wife, Junko, a little after 10:00 p.m. I am writing this at about 12:00 noon, Monday, December 21, which means it is 9:00 p.m. Sunday in Chicago, since we are 15 hours ahead of Central Standard Time.

It was 47 years ago that Toshiaki invited me to visit his parents who live in a place called Yamanashi Prefecture. We came out by train one Sunday. One thing led to another and now Lois and I are happily living in Yamanashi, pretty well surrounded by beautiful mountains, some of them snow-capped at this time of the year, although we have had a mild winter so far where we live, which is not as high as the mountains.

Tomorrow, Lois and I will travel to Chiba, have a pre-funeral meeting tomorrow evening at the funeral place, stay over night in that very building, and the following day, December 23, we will have the funeral from 12:00 to 1:00. We will be short of singers so we plan to take a cassette tape of hymn singing, to augment our own singing. It is about a three-hour trip by bus and train, so I think Lois and I will be the only ones there from our church. We have a special Christmas service here at Shioda that day because it is a national holi-

day, the Emperor's birthday, and fortunately, Bro. Akito will come to lead the singing and to have the service, at 3:00 p.m., which will be followed by a buffet style Christmas dinner. Things sort of piled up on us.

Last week on Tuesday, December 15, I visited Toshiaki in the hospital in Chiba. I prayed with him and read various scriptures for him and to him, hoping he could hear. He was on a life support system without which he could not breathe. He was not able to respond to my presence in any way, but we hope our merciful God will be gracious to him. When able, he would come to our Shioda church every couple of months. His mother was a member of our church.

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**JAPAN, TOKYO**  
**Marie Inoue**

Since our reporters, the Klaus', are spending the Christmas holidays in the U.S., they asked us to write the news this month. Another family, the Aberle's, are also with family and home churches in IL. How we miss these families, their smiling faces, and look so forward to their return next month.

Our church remembered the birth of our Lord on December 20. After our regular morning services, our Christmas program was held in the afternoon followed by an evening meal and short song service. A very blessed day was enjoyed.

Christmas in Japan is similar to most developed countries—quite commercialized with department stores luring customers with bargains, lots of decorations and music. Here and there homes have a simple wreath on their door and

some do baking.

Some do think and ponder Christ's birth as we talked about Luke 2:2-20 at our recent ladies' meeting. One of the ladies mentioned that she could easily believe the middle of Christ's life, His lifestyle and many teachings, but the unusual events of His birth and death stands in the way to believe in Him. At home we talked about her comments and then on Sunday I was pleased when she came to church, as she is not so regular in attendance.

The song service had already begun so she wasn't able to meet many before the service, but I was trusting in God that He would provide some answer for her, and He sure did. After the service, Sis. Onoda told me she nudged her and said, "Now I found the answer to my question." I was with the Sunday School children that morning so I wasn't present, but someone said the morning message contained the following: God is righteous and was seeking a people who would follow Him. In Old Testament times, those deemed righteous were those who kept the law. In New Testament time, they are those who obey with the hope of Messiah. It reminds us a little of being accepted into college. The first plan was a PAPER TEST (knowledge). Then the authorities felt that a better way to measure a student's qualification was that an INTERVIEW (personality) could be added to the process. In this way they can better determine who would be the best applicants. After Jesus was born, faith and belief in Him became the requirements to belong to God's family. His birth and death are not as easily to believe as the middle part of Jesus'

life. There are many situations where we have to ask for faith to believe in God's plan for us. Matthew 17:15, "...Lord increase our faith." This situation was a vivid reminder to remember our ministers in prayer that the needs of the brethren and friends can be met through message inspired of God.

Visiting us in November were Bro. Greg and Sis. Sharlene Moser (Roanoke, IL). We enjoyed their fellowship and our Bro. Greg's helping our services. Sis. Sharlene (a sister to Sis. Jana Klaus) was also able to visit a long time pen pal in Kansai Area.

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**KANSAS, BERN**  
**Lori Baumgartner**  
**Holly Meyer**

We were greatly blessed this month by the ministry of Bro. Wayne Laubscher (Cissna Park, IL). He was here for a Bible study at Kansas State and we sure appreciated his efforts to stay for the weekend and spend Sunday with us!

Sis. Darlene Stoller (Bro. Arden) and Sis. Helen Meyer (Bro. Leroy) were both surgery patients this month. We are so thankful for God's healing powers and that they are both feeling better and able to worship with us again.

Many from our church enjoyed an evening of Christmas caroling on Friday, December 11. It was a beautiful, warm (for December!) evening and a chili supper capped off the night for everyone.

Our church also participated in Newton Day on December 7, with a van load of men going to help in the Lord's work there.

Congratulations go to Bro. Tim Lehman (Elder Bro. John and Sis. Connie), Bruce Stoller (Bro. Dar-

rel and Sis. Gloria), and Carmen Baumgartner (Bro. Leonard and Sis. Nancy) as they are all December college graduates. Bro. Tim and Bruce are graduating from Kansas State and Carmen from Peru State (NE). May they seek the Lord's will, whether it be more schooling or employment, as their future unfolds.

On Thanksgiving Day, services were held as we joined together in praise for God's bounteous gifts—what a special time of year to gather with our brothers, sisters and friends in the Lord. After Thanksgiving, we always go back to our Wednesday evening services alternating with Sabetha. May this hour of worship be a bright spot in our week as we go forth in service to the Lord!

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**KANSAS, FORT SCOTT**  
**Joleen Sinn**

Bro. Wayne and Sis. Juanita Sinn are thankful that their new granddaughter has arrived from India. Melanie Aradhika came to live with Bro. Gene and Sis. Linda Banwart (Lamar, MO) the week before Thanksgiving. We are all thankful she has arrived and is adjusting well after almost two years of waiting.

Bro. Lyle and Sis. Lillian Fischer are also new grandparents. Bro. Jeff and Sis. Lynne Streitmatter III (Sarasota, FL) welcomed little Caleb Steven into their hearts and home.

Bro. Raymond Banwart (Sis. Katheryn) has successfully undergone eye surgery. How thankful we are that we can lean on the great Physician for His healing.

Sis. Marie Zaugg was able to assemble with us for the Sunday School Christmas program. She

had a stay at the hospital and is now recuperating at home. We thank God for being with Marie. Everyone knows that Marie is a big help Sunday mornings getting ready for church lunch, but until we have to do it without her, we just don't realize how much.

We enjoyed listening to our Sunday School students as they told us the love of God through the gift of His Son. It is good to see the Christmas story through their young eyes.

Bro. Bob Stoller (Lamar, MO) and his family spent a Sunday with us. May God bless him for sharing the Word with us.

As the new year is upon us, let's use it as a reminder to review our walk with Christ and renew our commitment to Him. It is too easy to get carried away with the things of this world and forget to lean on Him.

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**KANSAS, KIOWA**  
**Janice Bahr**  
**Darcy Kisling**

Oh, sleeping town of Bethlehem  
Beyond your hills afar,  
There sounds the holy angel's  
song  
And burns the shining star!

What wondrous gift has blessed  
this night  
What brought this celebration?  
The birth of Christ the King it  
was,  
The dawning of salvation!  
—*Kate Watkins Furman*

The dawning of another New Year is upon us, but let us reflect a little on the past month. We are so blessed to have God as our Heavenly Father! He not only

loves us unconditionally, but wants to walk with us, talk with us, and be our Friend. This last few weeks, as we remembered the birth of our precious Lord through carolling, special services, programs, and singings, our spirits were again uplifted and renewed. God sent us the ultimate Gift, His Son Jesus. Not as a king is born, but as a Babe in a manger; of lowly birth, that all men, regardless of skin color, whether rich or poor, might be included in His wonderful plan of salvation, to thwart the plans of Satan, and give us the opportunity to live forever with our Lord and our God. Will we open our hearts, and let Him in? Or will we be like the world, and "x" Him out? Our choices now will affect us eternally!

Our very dear friend, Verda Tanner, is in the hospital in Enid, OK recovering from a stroke she suffered recently. We sincerely miss having her sweet smile and gentle ways in our midst. It is our fervent prayer that God will grant her His healing hand and Spirit of love. Sis. Edna Reed is still in the hospital, but back in Alva, and though very ill, is always so thrilled to have visitors. It is hard to watch our loved ones suffer, but we are thankful we can hold them up on the wings of prayer and supplication to our God who cares and understands.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Debbie Aberle, who passed away quite suddenly this past month. May God be a comfort in their sorrow.

1999! What will it hold for us? Whatever, may the beautiful words of Hymns of Zion #150 be our song.

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

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

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**KANSAS  
LAMONT-GRIDLEY**

**Julie Bahr**

Another New Year is here. "Lord, when You see us in times of trials and temptations, carry us! Let others see, that together in Your arms, we create only one set of footprints."

The engagement of Sis. Melissa Frieden was announced recently to Bro. Tadd Gerst (Bro. Steve and Sis. Bonnie) from Goodfield, IL. Sis. Melissa moved from here to teach in our Leo Children's Home. She is the daughter of Bro. Jeffrey and Sis. Debbie Frieden from here. Joy and blessings fill our hearts as we wish them true happiness walking together in Christ.

Every Christmas season we look forward to having our ministering brethren who were raised here, return home to warm our hearts in sharing God's most precious Holy Word. We were privileged, once again, to have Bro. Jeff Bahr (Sis. Janice, Kiowa, KS) lend of himself during the time he came to celebrate the Christmas holiday with his dear parents, Bro. Rudy and Sis. Eileen Bahr.

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**KANSAS, SABETHA**

**Brenda Grimm**

**Mary Kay Wenger**

We want to thank Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) for com-

ing this month to minister God's Word to us.

Bro. Carl and Sis. Sharon Strahm are happy first-time grandparents with the arrival of Payton Lee on November 28. His parents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Carrie Strahm (Morris, MN).

We pray for God's healing touch on Sis. Tillie Wenger who has spent time in the hospital this month.

As another new year is approaching, may we be thankful for the many blessings God has given in the past year. May we always strive to live according to His will in the New Year and as the following hymn states, to become more faithful, loving, kind and true each day, no matter what lies ahead of us.

Be true; be true! The Lord is by  
thee standing;  
Joyful with Him at last will be  
the ending!  
Tho' hard the strife and long the  
conflict be,  
Through faithfulness the Lord  
will honored be!

Be true; be true! Those who in  
all temptation  
Have proven true, deserve our  
commendation.  
Were there no test, how should it  
proven be,  
Who weak, who strong, who true  
or untrue be?

O, faithful Lord, Thy love and  
truth sincerely  
Thou dost bestow on us each day  
so clearly,  
So grant that we also each day  
anew  
Become more faithful, loving,  
kind, and true!  
*Zion's Harp #172*

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

On November 19, Sis. Gussie Wullsleger became grandmother again when Amber Elaine was born to Bruce and Wanda Wullsleger. Sis. Gussie was privileged to be in California to welcome the newborn home. Then on November 25, Bro. Max and Sis. Judy Reimschisel became grandparents again when Rhea Lyn was born to Andrea and Stuart Nelson. And on December 3, Sis. Kathleen Galatin became a grandparent when Hans Josef was born to Bro. John and Sis. Sara Schrader. Bro. Steve and Sis. Dorothy Schrader of the Lamont-Gridley congregation are the paternal grandparents.

Bro. Derek Funk spent several weeks at home in Wichita after completing his training in the military. He left on December 13 for assignment in Hannu, Germany. We sang the parting hymn, "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" with his leaving us in mind. What a comfort to know that God is able to do that!

On December 13, Bro. Al Langhofer began the afternoon meditation by saying that he was preaching his retirement from the ministry sermon. He read from Ecclesiastes 3 in which the writer speaks of a time for nearly every event in our lives. As he later meditated from I Corinthians 15, he quoted verse 58 for our special consideration. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Bro. Al has served in the pulpit ministry for 35 years and we know that this was a

sacrifice of personal and family time. The brother who gave the closing prayer asked God to continue to bless Bro. Al and Sis. Judy as He has blessed them in the past.

**KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON**  
**Doug and Rebecca Germann**

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth..."

*Eccles. 12:1*

Turning to the Lord, in the days of youth, another soul has made known her desire to escape the many consequences of sin which Satan so eagerly presents us. We wish our friend, Andrea Neukomm, God's richest blessings. She is the daughter of Bro. Jan and Sis. Glenda Neukomm.

Visitors the past month include Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL) and Bro. Dwight Stoller (Sis. Lori, Latty, OH). Many thanks to these brothers for lending themselves in God's vineyard.

**MICHIGAN, ALTO****Kristen Plattner****Michelle Oesch**

*The Bridge Builder*

An old man, going a lone  
highway,  
Came, at the evening, cold and  
gray,  
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and  
wide,  
Through which was flowing a  
sullen tide.  
The old man crossed in the  
twilight dim,  
The sullen stream had no fears  
for him;  
But he turned, when safe on the

other side,  
And built a bridge to span the  
tide.  
"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim,  
near,  
"You are wasting strength with  
building here;  
Your journey will end with the  
ending day;  
You never again must pass this  
way;  
You have crossed the chasm,  
deep and wide—  
Why build you the bridge at the  
eventide?"  
The builder lifted his old gray  
head:  
"Good friend, in the path I have  
come," he said,  
"There followeth after me today  
A youth, whose feet must pass  
this way.  
This chasm, that has been  
naught to me,  
To that fair-haired youth may a  
pitfall be.  
He, too, must cross in the  
twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building the  
bridge for HIM."  
—Allen Dromgoole

The thought came to my mind after reading this poem that we are all, like this old man, building bridges in our daily walk of life. Whether it be our children, our friends, or others who observe the path we walk, we are leaving an impression that is lasting. How careful we must be that our bridge is not shaky, laid with blocks of criticism, judgement, or self-righteousness, but instead, with a strong foundation of kindness, patience, and a love that sees only the good things in others. As we begin another new year, may we all seek to follow the bridge that God has laid with the gift of His Son, a man

who ate with sinners and gave His life with a compassion and forgiveness for all mankind.

Our thoughts are with two families who have recently lost loved ones. Bro. Noah and Sis. Marguerite Blough said their earthly farewell to Sis. Marguerite's brother, Phil Kroph, who leaves behind his wife, Marilyn, and four children.

Sis. Helen Steffen has recently grieved the loss of her brother, Raymond Foreman, and her sister-in-law, Opal Foreman.

Tanya Steffen's grandfather, Roy Carlson, also passed away. May each of these families feel the Lord's comfort in their sorrow.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance."

*Eccles. 3:1,2,4*

We have cause to rejoice at the birth of little Elizabeth Louise to Allen and Jenny Grile. Big sister, Allison, welcomed her at home. Excited grandparents are Bro. Fred and Sis. Donna Oesch and Robert and Virginia Grile.

Special blessings are wished to Sis. Heidi Kaeb at the announcement of her engagement to Bro. Ned Stoller (LaCrosse, IN). Their parents are Bro. Curt and Sis. Luanne Kaeb and Bro. Steve and Sis. Anna Marie Stoller. As they make their wedding plans, may they seek the Lord's guidance and feel the prayers of family and friends.

This past Sunday evening we sat and watched with delight as the youngest to the oldest child sang songs and recited pieces they

had learned in preparation for their Christmas program. It is heartwarming to hear these little ones tell the story of Jesus' birth, an event that happened almost 2000 years ago, but still has the wonderful power to change the lives of men.

We wish healing to those who have been sick or in the hospital this month: Sis. Michelle Blough (Bro. Martin), Bro. Lloyd Blough (Sis. Elouise), Sis. Pat Schlatter (Bro. Otto) and Sis. Sandy Schutte (Steve).

Bro. Tom Schrenk and his wife, Sis. Joan, were here recently to visit and we are thankful to Bro. Tom for bringing us the Word.

Just a thought: Treat a stranger to a smile and off-hand kindness. Life is hard at times for everyone and many are lost in a sea of oneness.

#### MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

**Rhonda Knochel**

**Peggy Jackson**

We here in Bay City have the privilege of operating a World Relief Distribution Center. One of the many duties involved is bagging several varieties of edible beans, produced by our nation's farmers, into 5, 10 and 20 pound bags. These bags are then sealed, boxed and shipped all over the world depending on need. It is a source of food for those in crisis. Recently, during an evening of bagging beans, we ran out of bags that were the appropriate size so we took some of the larger ones and cut them shorter using a paper cutter. By accident we managed to cut off some of the sealed ends of the bags, so when it came time to fill them, 5 pounds of beans would end up on the floor. Need-

less to say, this was slightly frustrating to those filling the bags.

This reminded me of people. As believers we try, in a variety of ways, to draw unbelievers to the Lord. We tell them of Him, we put action to our words by helping those in need, and we portray Him in how we live. What an awesome responsibility we have to point the way to Jesus! Often, however, I think we forget this responsibility, and as the bags which were open at both ends, carelessness can undo all the good we may have done. Often our love and treatment of one another isn't as it should be, and as unbelievers watch, they don't see God's love and forgiveness in us. They think we have nothing better to offer than they already have. So in this New Year, please remember that "the greatest of these is charity" (I Cor. 13:13) and that the world is watching.

We had the opportunity of hearing the Memorandum read this past month. We appreciate the effort of Elder Bro. Ken Sauder and his wife, Sis. Suzanne (Mansfield, OH), in coming to help our Elder Bro. Andy in the evening and we pray God's blessings will be upon them.

Also visiting us this month was Bro. Don Gudeman and his wife, Sis. Mary (LaCrosse, IN). We were thankful for his ministry to us and pray that God will bless Bro. Don and Sis. Mary for their labor of love.

Our thoughts and prayers were with Sis. Mabelle Wackerle and Sis. Marcie Cowen (Stacy) as they both experienced the frailty of the body. We sincerely hope that in the days ahead, they will be fully restored to good health and will

feel the hand of their loving Saviour resting upon them.

We were very happy to hear of the engagement of Bro. Greg Wackerle to Sis. Carol Dietrich (Silverton, OR). We rejoice with Bro. Greg's parents, Bro. Sam and Sis. Lorraine Wackerle. We pray that God's blessings will be with Bro. Greg and Sis. Carol as they prepare for marriage.

May God go with you in the month ahead.

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### MICHIGAN, DETROIT

**Manuela Denes  
Kristie Meyer**

We closed out the month of December with Christmas activities. The Sunday School children and choir shared a night of Christmas carols and scripture which reminded us of the true meaning of the season. It seems as though the world begins preparing for the holidays sooner each year, reinforcing the commercialism and rush of decorations and gift purchasing. May we be able to rise above all of this and remind those around us that the "Reason for the Season" is the birth of our dear Lord Jesus Christ.

We were also able to go carolling and sang to those who could not go out either due to illness or old age. Prayers go out to Sis. Esther Orcsik (Bro. John) who recently underwent surgery. May the Lord send His healing power to all those who are in need of it.

It is a wonderful blessing to be able to close out 1998 worshipping with our brothers and sisters on Christmas and New Year's Eve. I can't believe that soon we will be celebrating the arrival of 1999! We've all heard so much about what that year will mean to us,

especially since it brings us into a new millennium and much uncertainty and speculation. May the Lord grant to each and every one of us the faith and the strength to see ourselves into this new century with our Lord Jesus Christ as our guide.

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

*Psalm 145:2*

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

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

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

Thank You, Father, thank You  
For this day fresh and new,  
A chance to grow, a chance to  
show  
My boundless love for You!  
—*Alice Joyce Davidson*

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### MINNESOTA MINNEAPOLIS Delores Sauder

As a new year is beginning, may we pause a moment and ask ourselves how we may live a more dedicated life in the service of the Lord.

Our Sunday School children put their "whole heart" into bringing

forth the birth of Jesus in verse and song. We thank the teachers and parents for their efforts.

Bro. Ben Moser (Bro. Carl and Sis. Norene, Morris) is attending school here and we welcome him into our fellowship.

Business travels bring brethren to our area during the week. Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL) gathered with us for mid-week services and shared with us God's Word.

Our Elder Bro. LeRoy Messner (Winthrop, MN) has brought forth God's Word to us this past month. We thank him for his dedicated service.

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### MINNESOTA, MORRIS

**Nancy Wulf  
Dianne Kellenberger**

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

Truly what a blessing it was to be present November 21-22 for the testimonies and baptisms of Kari Koehl (Bro. Karl and Sis. Marilyn) and Rose Schott (Terry). God grant them the grace to remain steadfast and unmovable in this world of sin and darkness.

Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO) assisted Elder Bro. Art with this sacred occasion.

Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) was here for our Thanksgiving service. We were reminded to be thankful for all things always. He said the most important way we can show our

thankfulness to God is to repent, and be converted, and live a lifetime of obedience.

Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) also shared God's Word with us this month. He said to receive that blessed inheritance we need to become a child of God.

Another visiting minister who pleaded the call to repentance was Bro. Darrel Stoller (Bern, KS).

Elder Bro. Gene Marti (Kansas City, MO) said all prophecy has been fulfilled. We are now awaiting Christ's return.

Ye sinners come;  
Be healed of your transgression!  
O come both great and small,  
Here you will find remission,  
Salvation help and grace.  
Here is the cleansing flood.  
Each sinful stain efface,  
Immersed in Jesus' blood.

But hasten; tarry not  
Lest you should be forsaken!  
If you would find the cure,  
From sinful sleep awaken!  
The Lord has conquered death,  
And with His mighty hand  
He'll wash you from your sin,  
With Him in grace to stand.

Zion's Harp #42

"Our song of praise to God ascend, And there with angels' voices blend." (Zion's Harp #7). We were spiritually uplifted December 13 as we went Christmas caroling. Christmas is a very joyous time of year for many people. It can also be a very sad time for those who have had their circle broken.

"The blessed story of the Christ, the babe of Bethlehem," was brought to us in song and praise on December 20.

Be not content this babe to know,  
nor stay at Bethlehem,  
But go with Christ to Calvary's  
brow,  
Beyond Jerusalem.

'Tis there men learn to know the  
Christ,  
For there He bore man's sin.  
Then open wide the door of  
heart,  
And let the Saviour in.  
*Hymns of Zion #36*

As we gather together with  
loved ones this Christmas season,  
let us be thankful for God's most  
precious gift of salvation. We pray  
many more souls will yet answer  
His call.

On November 28, a tiny jewel,  
little Payton Lee, came into the  
lives of Bro. Tom and Sis. Carrie  
Strahm. First-time grandparents  
are Bro. Dale and Sis. Rachel Zelt-  
wanger, and also Bro. Carl and Sis.  
Sharon Strahm (Sabetha, KS).

Mark and Lori Mattson also had  
their first child, Sabrina Paige.  
She was born December 10.  
Sabrina's grandparents are Bro.  
Aldean and Sis. Charlotte Luthi  
and Roger and Patty Mattson.

We pray these families will raise  
their children in the nurture and  
admonition of the Lord.

We are thankful for God's heal-  
ing touch on Terry Schott (Sis.  
Rose) and Steve Metzger (An-  
nette).

Bros. Zssolt Vida' Kovies and  
Zolten Srekgzdrd from Hungary  
came to worship with us and meet  
the family and friends of Sis. Re-  
becca Schaefer who is still in Hun-  
gary. Though they were so many  
miles from home, we pray they felt  
the same likeness of mind and  
Spirit. God watch over them  
throughout their travels in Amer-  
ica.

As another year draws to a  
close, let us be mindful of all that  
God has done for us, and let us  
strive to serve Him more faith-  
fully.

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**MINNESOTA, WINTHROP**  
**Carol Ann Messner**  
**Becky Braulick**

"Therefore I will judge you, eve-  
ryone according to his ways, saith  
the Lord God. Repent and turn  
yourselves from all your trans-  
gressions; so iniquity shall not be  
your ruin."

*Ez. 18:30*

This Bible verse should be in  
our thoughts as we enter the new  
year of 1999, Lord willing. Are we  
prepared for eternity, are we  
ready to meet the Lord if He re-  
turns for His own? We also need to  
offer many prayers on behalf of  
our government and country as we  
enter a new year. Our focus should  
always be on the preservation of  
the faith of our fathers in these  
troublesome times.

This past month it was a bless-  
ing to share the beautiful Christ-  
mas carols with the senior citizens  
and those in the local nursing  
homes. As we listened to the Sun-  
day School children tell the beau-  
tiful Christmas story in song and  
verse, we were reminded once  
again of the miracle of God's love!  
We thank the children and their  
teachers for their efforts put into  
the program.

We extend our sympathy and  
prayers to the family of Bro. Verl  
and Sis. Jamie Schmidt in the  
passing of her mother, Orpha  
Lueck, of Glencoe, MN.

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### MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY Brent Kellenberger

Last weekend, December 13, we were privileged to see and hear the Sunday School children present the story of Christmas. As usual, the children did a wonderful job in portraying the birth of Jesus, and even more importantly, the reason for His coming. The entire Sunday was a special blessing, as we went caroling to three nursing homes and returned to church for a chili supper. Since it was warm, we didn't even have to bother with putting on and taking off our coats!

Bro. Don and Sis. Eileen Braker are the happy grandparents of Andrew James, born to Jeff and Lynn Bennett of Austin, TX. Paternal grandparents are Jim and Kaye Bennett.

We are thankful for a visit from ministering Bro. Roger Aberle and Sis. LaVonne this month. We appreciate your willingness to serve. Please come back and visit soon.

### MISSOURI, LAMAR Martha Kellenberger Carolyn Banwart

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Charles Sinn (Sis. Karen, Fort Scott, KS) and Bro. Bill Gerst (Sis. Judy, Alto, MI) expound God's Word to us this past month. May God bless them for their labors of love.

Bro. Gene and Sis. Linda Banwart welcomed a three year old daughter, Melanie, into their hearts and home. Her siblings are Gary, Jason, Andrea and Emily, and grandparents are Bro. Art and Sis. Ruth Banwart and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Juanita Sinn (Fort Scott, KS).

Nathan Eli was born to Bro.

Calvin and Sis. Jodi Luthi on December 7. His brothers and sisters are Audrey, Jared, Jessica, Ryan and Caleb. Happy grandparents are Bro. Ray and Sis. Violet Luthi and Bro. Orlan and Sis. Mary Kellenberger (St. Louis, MO). May God grant them the guidance to raise these little ones in the nurture of our Lord.

As we enter a new year, may we strive daily to walk a closer life with Christ.

### MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS Betsy Schrenk

The blessed Christmas season is past, and we are now well into the New Year. When I was a child, the year 2000 looked impossibly far away. Now we are in the countdown, and if this year passes by as quickly as the last, it will seem to be a very short time until we, along with the rest of the world, will be finding out just what the Y2K computer problems actually are. With the intense attention so many are paying to this situation, we can lose sight of the fact that disaster could come at any time between now and then. What if God would say sometime in 1999, "Enough," and time will be no more. No man knows if we will even have to deal with the year 2000, but we know that our omniscient God knows. Matthew 6:24 records Christ's words as follows: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

We have enjoyed and been blessed by having God's Word brought to us by the following visiting ministers: Bros. Bob Pflederer (Morton, IL), Glen Funk

(Wichita, KS) and Greg Stoller (Forrest, IL). Thank you.

### MISSOURI, TAYLOR Peg Haerr

A beautiful time of singing and fellowship was enjoyed when the Mortonaires visited Taylor the weekend of November 21-22. We thank them for their willingness to travel and share their talents!

On December 6 after a joyous time of Christmas caroling, a spaghetti supper was held at the Fellowship Center.

The following Sunday our Sunday School children brought forth the wonderful story of our Saviour's birth. It was a blessing to see their radiant faces singing with such enthusiasm!

Our hospital patients this month were Nikki Haerr (Bro. Norman and Sis. Sally), Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan), Ellen Gehring (Bro. Brad) and Bro. James Sutter (Sis. Lois). We thank God for His healing mercies.

We wish to thank Sis. Tina Sutter for her efforts as our Silver Lining correspondent. May God reward her for her labors of love.

### NEW YORK CROGHAN-NAUMBURG Anna Mellnitz

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

*Isaiah 9:6*

Our church and Sunday School children sang Christmas carols at

Hallmark Nursing Home on December 11. On December 13, the Sunday School and church sang at Lowville Nursing Home for Sis. Edna Sturze's birthday.

On December 20, the Sunday School children will be having their Christmas program. It is always a blessing to hear them tell the story of Jesus' birth and the singing of Christmas carols and what the teachers have taught them.

On December 10, the sisters put up Christmas baskets for the elderly and the sick.

Sis. Carolyn Virkler's brother, Bro. Harold Schieler (Francesville, IN), passed away.

Sis. Betty Virkler has moved to Rockville, CT. We will miss her, but we pray that she will be able to adjust to her new home.

Bro. Dave Shamback had heart surgery on December 10. He is getting along good and we pray that he will continue to recover. Gordon Stockburger was hospitalized but is doing good and will be home soon.

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Im-man'u-el."

*Isaiah 7:14*

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### OHIO, AKRON

**Joyce Gasser**

We were privileged to have the National Committee of the World Relief to hold their December meeting at Akron. We appreciated having some of the committee stay to worship with us on Sunday. We were blessed to have Elder Bros. Roy Grimm, Marvin Leman and Ed Schwartz and ministering

Bros. Arnold Gerst, Douglas Grimm, Kent Heimer, Roger Sauder and Jerry Bauman.

Elder Bro. Andy Stoller assisted our Elder Bro. Gene Pamer in the reading of the Memorandum.

Sis. Sarah Bako (Eugene and Sis. Diana) is graduating from high school and has taken a position with Charles Schwab Retirement Plan Services.

We are sorry that Bro. Leo Heib and Sis. Alice Greenbank were hospitalized and are thankful they are out again. Bro. Dave Schamback, who recently moved here from New York, has had bypass heart surgery and we pray for his speedy recovery.

Our Sunday School classes presented an inspiring program on the story of Christmas.

This past year we had 5 new members and 1 baptism. We had 2 marriages, 3 new babies and 3 deaths.

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### OHIO, COLUMBUS

**Nancy Banks**

There's a tie of noble kinship,  
In a soul who loves the Lord,  
There's a friendship warm and  
lasting,  
If he heeds the Master's word.  
There is mutual understanding  
and a sympathy so kind  
In the tie of Christian friendship,  
as on earth we oft times find.

*Hymns of Zion #91*

With tears in our eyes and heavy hearts, we bid a sad farewell to Bro. Duane, Sis. Anne and Cassidy Wulf as they prepared to move to South Dakota where Bro. Duane has accepted a position with the university there. In a small congregation, the loss of one family

leaves such a large, empty space and although we will miss them terribly, we are happy for them that they will be closer to their families now.

Our congregation went Christmas caroling and was able to visit with Sis. Theresa Hunyady (Bro. Andy). It was so good to see Sis. Theresa as she has been unable to worship with us in recent months. Helping us with our caroling that day was a large group visiting from the Junction congregation and Bros. Sam Schlatter and Ben Manz kindly ministered unto us from the pulpit. Other visitors this month have been Elder Bro. Gene Pamer (Akron, OH) and Bro. Bill Brake (Sardis, OH).

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### OHIO, JUNCTION

**Sandra Manz**

Visiting minister, Bro. Mark Steiner (Sis. Sue, Smithville, OH), was our guest for Thanksgiving services. We are thankful that he was willing to lend himself. On this holiday when we traditionally partake of tables laden with the fruits of the earth, Bro. Mark invited us to partake of the Lord's table.

Thanks to a Dotterer reunion, Elder Bro. Henry Dotterer (Sis. Martha, Rittman, OH) and Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest, IL) were here the following weekend to minister to our congregation. We know that all who came hungry were filled with the good news from God's Word.

After several years as foster children, Jessica Helen, 6, and Samuel (Sonny) Paul, 3, have been adopted into the family of Sis. Virginia Manz and Aaron, 6. May God grant special guidance to Sis. Virginia as she raises her dear family.

Once again we can report that we have a convert. Lee (Buzz) Rose (Sis. Inez) has suffered much bodily affliction and feels a need to set his life in order before he meets his Maker. We wish him much grace to find peace with God and man.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

As we contemplate the joys and sorrows of the past year, let us look ahead to the new one, trusting that no matter what may befall us, the Lord has promised His grace for every situation.

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**OHIO, LATTY**  
**Kathy Sinn**  
**Heidi Hackenjoss**

What a joy it was to watch our children and young adults present the Christmas program this year. Each class reminded us of Jesus' birth in a manger with songs and recitations. The old old story was told to us again in such an enthusiastic way. In our hearts let's remember "Tis not the manger, but the cross, that sets the spirit free." (Hymns of Zion #36)

We are thankful for dear brothers who proclaim the Word. Visiting ministers this past month were Bros. Greg Stieglitz (Indianapolis, IN), Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), Earl Beery (Rittman, OH), Bill Waibel (Bay City, MI), Nelson Beer (Milford, IN) and Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL).

We were again reminded of God's unlimited compassion and unending love when our congregation gathered to hear the testimonies and witness the baptism of

Katy Zuber (Brant) and Darin Laukhuf (Bro. Rod and Sis. Edie). We welcome our newest sister and brother in the Lord.

Three of our converts were announced to the congregation as having peace in their hearts. May the Lord watch over Keith and Connie Krzesinski and Gretl Schlatter (Bro. Tim and Sis. Becky) as they look forward to their testimonies and baptism.

We are thankful that our converts, Jeff and Jenny Ross, could be reunited in marriage on December 6 in Elder Bro. Ray Sinn's home. May the Lord bless their home and watch over them and their girls.

Josh Sinn (Bro. Stan and Sis. JaNahn) is engaged to Chrissy Pease (Mike and Julie). May the Lord add His blessing as they plan their wedding.

Charles Yoh passed from life into eternity this past month. Surviving are three daughters, Ellen Allison of Pittsburgh, Mary Hendrickson of Newark, and Louise Owens of Bloomington. We will miss Charles. He and his late wife, Kathryn, attended our church in Latty.

We also want to remember the family of Louis Kupfersmith who passed away this past month. Louis had three sons: Ray of Paulding, OH; Robert of Emsworth, England; Thomas of Broughton, OH; and two daughters, Ruth Ann Brincefield of Citrus Springs, FL and June Orozco of Latty.

May God grant His healing touch to those who were hospitalized or had surgery this past month: Sis. Ann Plummer, Sis. Barb Stoller (Bro. Bill), Bro. Clem Weiland (Sis. Elizabeth), Sis.

Dorothy Stoller (Bro. Wayne), Sis. Joni Wenninger (Bro. Randy) and Bro. Don Wenninger (Sis. Josephine).

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**OHIO, MANSFIELD**  
**John and Marci Pfeiffer**

Matthew Domka (Bro. Dan and Sis. Mary Ann) wants his name to be written in the book of life. We pray that he would turn to God as he repents of his sins.

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

*II Corinthians 7:10*

On November 29, Bro. Chad Keever and Sis. Laurie Schafer became husband and wife. Parents are Bro. Clair and Sis. Beverly Keever and Bro. Bruce and Sis. Laretta Schafer (Indianapolis, IN). Thus united, may they in prayer look up to Heaven.

We appreciate our Elders and ministers.

"For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

*I Timothy 3:13*

We thank Bro. Don Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN) for ministering to us.

Our annual member meeting took place on December 6. Bro. Tim Beer was chosen as trustee and will be replacing Bro. David Sauder. Sis. Beverly Keever and Sis. Kay Rufener will take over for Sis. Barb Tucker and Sis. Linda Webel on the Kitchen Committee. Sis. Connie Domka completed her

three year term on the World Relief Sewing Committee and Sis. Betty Dotterer will begin. May God be their strength and song.

Bro. Jared Hill (Bro. Chip and Sis. Sieda) and Sis. Stephanie Domka (Bro. Dan and Sis. Mary Ann) have announced their engagement. As they begin their life together, we wish them God's sustaining grace.

Ollie LaRue (83 years old) has heard God's Word many times. We are very thankful the door of grace was still left open for him.

O, in misery I would have  
perished,  
Crushed by great affliction and  
distress,  
Had I not by thee been found  
and cherished,  
Had I not by thy grace been  
refreshed.

*Zion's Harp #182*

On Sunday, December 13, Bro. Ollie was baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

It is humbling to see the innocence of little children. It was a blessing to hear the children sing at our Sunday School Christmas Program.

*Note of Thanks:*

I want to thank everyone whose love touched my life during the recent illness and death of my dear sister, Alice. The overwhelming love from each of you will never be forgotten. Thank you so much.

*In Christian love,  
Sis. Lucille Groh*

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### OHIO, RITTMAN

**Lucy Gasser  
Lynda Beery**

"Our song of praise to God as-

pend..." (Zion's Harp #7).

During this special time of year we enjoy caroling to loved ones and hearing our young people sing praises to God at the annual Sunday School program. May we always rejoice in Christ's birth and remember the reason He came.

Several of our brothers and sisters have spent time in a hospital recently. Sis. Roma Rufener (Bro. Chet), Sis. Ruth Hilty, Bro. Isaac Rufener (Sis. Verna) and Bro. Mike Miller (Sis. Norene) have been hospitalized during the past month. We wish them God's blessing of renewed health, but more importantly, His grace and strength for each new day.

Bro. Reinhart and Sis. Betty Keiper have welcomed a new granddaughter into their family circle. Madison Emily was born to Eric and Michelle Keiper on Thanksgiving Day, November 26.

Bro. Gary and Sis. Sandy Dotterer are thankful for a precious baby girl. Carrie Lynn was born on December 9. Kent, Kevin, and Cynthia complete their family.

We extend our sympathy to Janet Hanzie (Larry) in the loss of her mother, and to Bro. Frank Steidl in the passing of his brother, and Charles (Kathleen) Shane in the death of his mother.

We are thankful when visitors come to worship with us. May God bless ministering Bros. Ron Palitto (Akron, OH), Bill Brake (Sardis, OH) and Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH) for serving us recently.

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### OHIO, SARDIS Joy Indermuhle

"Will you be singing of Him in June as you are in December?" This thought-provoking phrase

was seen on a local church sign shortly before Christmas. I had to think of our Christmas Program the previous Sunday and how beautiful the children's voices blended in praise to their Heavenly Father. We are thankful they have the privilege of freely expressing their love for Jesus. Let us not forget to sing of Him all year long, as we do in December.

Sis. Hazel Rigggenbach is still not feeling well and is unable to attend church at this time. Hospitalized for surgery last month were Sis. Doris Miller (Bro. Denny) and Sis. Joy Indermuhle (Bro. Dana). They are recovering and doing well. Several have been ill with a flu virus in our congregation. Our prayers are with each one.

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### OHIO, SMITHVILLE Edith Miller Ruth Gasser

Fear not, I am with thee,  
O be not dismayed,  
For I am thy God,  
and will still give thee aid.  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee,  
and cause thee to stand,  
Upheld by My righteous,  
omnipotent hand.  
*Hymns of Zion #11*

As we enter the last year of this millennium, it is comforting to know our foundation is on Christ, the solid Rock. We are thankful our ministering brothers depend on the Spirit as they serve us faithfully year after year. Elder Bros. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN) and Henry Dotterer (Rittman, OH) were with us for testimonies and baptisms. Also visiting us this month were Bros. Doug Grimm

(Sabetha, KS), Art Ingold (Rittman, OH), and Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH).

November 22 was a very special day for four souls who became our brothers and sisters in faith: Brad Maibach and Katie Maibach (Bro. Rudy and Sis. Barb), Jenny Rufener (Bro. John and Sis. Janice), and Kirby Stoller (Elder Bro. Andy and Sis. Roberta). May our Father guide and protect these dear ones, and help each to remain true and faithful, one day at a time.

We are happy the Lord is still calling souls to work in His vineyard. Katie Fetzter (Bro. Andy and Sis. Elizabeth), Jessica Dotterer (Bro. Dave and Sis. Luanna) and Laura Zollinger (Bro. Ken and Sis. Becky) have begun their journey toward the Heavenly City. May they feel God's direction and peace.

On Thanksgiving morning, Sis. Helen Hartzler was called to her Heavenly Home. May the Lord comfort her family, Sis. Martha Marty (Bro. Dean) and Sue Nickles (Earl). She also leaves several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, brothers, one sister, and nieces and nephews. Although we are thankful when a loved one gains the final victory, we have added responsibility to uphold the faith we were handed from our forefathers.

Kurt and Robin Steiner were blessed with an addition to their family on November 25. Zachery Edward was welcomed by Nicole and Christian, and also grandparents, Bro. David and Sis. Carole Steiner (Rittman, OH).

Hospital patients this month were Matthew Saurer (Bro. Roger and Sis. Sue), Sis. Mildred Hartzler, and Sis. Luzelda Stoller

(Bro. Don). We pray that the Lord will grant healing, and that they are comforted in times of confinement.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

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

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

*Proverbs 25:11*

We appreciated the words spoken to us by our visiting ministers in the past month. Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) and Bros. Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH) and Neil Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) served us from God's Word.

We are happy to welcome Richard and Kelly Chamberlain and their daughters, Stephanie and Marisa, to our congregation. Kelly's parents, Dave and Sis. Connie Sancraint, are also happy to have them close to home. We wish them God's blessings in their new home.

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

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

*II Corinthians 9:15*

Bro. Garth Steffen expounded so beautifully recently on this one short verse. What perfect timing as we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Can we ever

thank God enough for this wonderful gift?

We enjoyed the Christmas program that our young children shared with us. Even though it is a small group, every child from the youngest to the oldest put forth a wonderful effort to share the love of God through the beautiful Christmas story. We then enjoyed an afternoon of fellowship as we sang Christmas carols at the homes of our dear elderly sisters, Sis. Margaret Banwart and Sis. Ann Rumbold. May God be near to them during this holiday season.

We also were able to deliver gifts to a family we sponsored. May God bless them as they struggle to make a living in a new and foreign land. They shared with us that they had moved here four years ago from the Ukraine and have had a struggle finding jobs since their English is still pretty limited. We have to stop and think how God has blessed us so much. We hope we can always be willing to share with those around us who have not been so fortunate, but most important of all that we don't forget to tell them of God's love for them.

We thank Elder Bro. Art Metz and Bro. Ed Knecht (Silverton, OR) for sharing the Word with us this past month.

May you all be richly blessed in the coming New Year!

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**OREGON, SILVERTON**  
**Rosa Lee Kuenzi**

Once again the beautiful Christmas story was brought forth to us in simple purity by our Sunday School children and teenagers. Sunday evening, December 13, we heard through their songs, memorized pieces and readings

how God's only begotten Son came down among men in such a humble way. One class told their story in sign language. Many mentioned how there was no room in the inn and we were reminded not to keep our own schedules so full that we would have no room for Jesus either.

We were thankful to learn that our dear converts, Tyler and Kelsey Kuenzi (Bro. Terry and Sis. Ann), believe they have the peace of God in their hearts. We want to keep them, and all those who are striving to please our Lord through repentance, in our prayers.

The engagement of Sis. Carol Dietrich (Bro. Clarence and Sis. Bess) and Bro. Greg Wackerle (Bro. Sam and Sis. Lorraine, Bay City, MI) was recently announced. May they ever look to our Lord for His guidance and blessing as they and their families make plans. They have chosen January 31 for their wedding day.

Visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) and Bro. Robert Miller (Portland, OR). We sincerely appreciate their efforts on our behalf. May God be their rich rewarder now and much more in all Eternity.

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### PENNSYLVANIA PHILADELPHIA

#### Merle and Bev Rocke

The season is upon us when it seems everyone is hurrying about trying to find the right gift for oh so many on their Christmas list. It is really amazing to go into a store at this time of year and stand back and watch people hurrying about, pushing and shoving to get this perfect gift; and then we have to

stop and ponder that the greatest gift of all that anyone could obtain is from our precious Saviour and there is no pushing and shoving to obtain it. Just ask and we shall receive. Are we all forgetting the true meaning of Christmas?

We were very thankful to have ministering Bro. Duane Reutter and his family with us this past month along with many other visitors from afar, many of which came to visit family members during the holidays. We thank all of our visitors for coming and encourage anyone who may be in the area to come and visit us.

On December 12, Elder Bros. Kevin Ryan and Duane Farney were here to help Bro. Ben Wiegand in the reading of the Memorandum. We again heard how there is so much for us to do and to be on guard against. We are so thankful for our Elders and ministers that labor on our behalf to share these warnings and advice with us so that we may reach that eternal goal. May God bless each of you.

Singing services were held at Bro. Ed and Sis. Marilyn Lanz's home in place of Wednesday night services, as the church is in the process of installing new carpeting. We certainly appreciated their willingness to open their heart and home for all of us. God bless them.

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### TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE

#### Gwen Leuthold

"...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

*Philippians 4:11*

As we begin 1999, may we start the new year by counting our

blessings and being content with what the Lord has given us. May we desire to follow more closely in the footsteps of Jesus to be more like Him and do what He asks us to do. In so doing, we can "Let our light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16). Let us always remember that every day, our lives are impacting and influencing someone else (sometimes more than we can ever imagine). What example are we setting for those whom we come in contact? By following Jesus in His footsteps, we can be and leave the example He asks us. Max Lucado, in his book called God's Inspirational Promise Book, relates the following story: "Watch a small boy follow his dad through the snow. He stretches to step where his dad stepped. Not an easy task. His small legs extend as far as they can so his feet can fall in his father's prints. The father, seeing what the son is doing, smiles and begins taking shorter steps, so the son can follow. It's a picture of discipleship. In our faith we follow in someone's steps. (May that be Jesus) In our faith we leave footprints to guide others."

This past month, we welcomed ministering Bro. Allen Stoller (Bluffton, IN). We ask that the Lord will richly bless him and his family.

Upcoming worship services (Lord willing) are scheduled on the first and third Sundays of each month as follows: February 7 (Detroit, MI); February 21 (Rittman, OH); March 7 (Elgin, IL); March 21 (Athens, AL); April 11 (Cissna Park, IL); April 18 (Tremont, IL). On the other Sundays, we are meeting for a tape service. Please

call if you are in the Nashville area and plan to worship with us. This will help assist us in meal planning, and also, there may be occasions when all of us are traveling, and we may not meet for tape services. Please contact Bro. Don and Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928; Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz (615) 353-8835; or Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 662-2946.

Have a wonderful and blessed New Year!

### TEXAS, CENTRAL Dan and Pam Sauder

So...we close out another year in a chapter of our lives and the new year of our Lord 1999 begins, almost 2000 years since Jesus walked here on earth. We count years, weeks, days, minutes, and even seconds, hardly able to grasp eternity, when we count not time by years.

"Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."

*Psalm 102:25-27*

We are grateful to those who travel many miles to worship and bring God's Word to us. Visiting

ministers this month include Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Sis. Jeni, Bluffton, IN), and Bros. Erik Givens (Sis. Deb, Princeville, IL), Mike Lemman (Sis. Deb, Denver, CO) and Art Ingold (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman, OH).

Central Texas services are held on all Sundays except the first Sunday of the month. The third Sunday we meet in the San Antonio area at the Comal County Senior Citizens Center in New Braunfels. The last Sunday we meet at Bro. Bill Zeltwanger's home at Round Top. The remainder of the month we meet in Austin at the Omni Hotel at I-35 and Hwy. 290.

Visitors are always welcome. For your benefit, please call ahead to confirm our schedule. Contacts are Bro. Bill Zeltwanger (409) 249-5102; Brian and Terri Kaisner (512) 266-0178; Bro. David and Sis. Shella Brummitt (512) 360-3379; Sis. Dorothy Martin (210) 658-1968; and Bro. Dan and Sis. Pam Sauder (210) 651-4996.

### TEXAS, ZAPATA Viola Perdelwitz Melva Messner

With the beginning of a New Year, our minds reflect on "how can we better serve God and mankind." Lately, we have heard so much about giving. This article says it well.

We give of ourselves when we give gifts to the heart—love, kindness, joy, understanding, sympathy, tolerance, forgiveness.

We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the mind—ideas, dreams, purposes, ideals, principles, plans, inventions, projects, poetry.

We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the spirit—prayers, visions, beauty, inspiration, peace, faith.

We give of ourselves when we give the gift of the word—encouragement, inspiration, guidance.

—Peterson

Some more of our winter residents are here. We are glad to have Bro. Tom Schrenk and his wife, Sis. Joan, as our winter residents. We thank Bro. Tom for bringing God's Word. Retired Elder Bro. Paul Fehr and his wife, Sis. Anna, are here also.

Sis. Melvane Stoller has been chosen to be a Sunday School teacher for the smaller children.

We can do little or we can labor in God's vineyard and God will give the increase. What we do with what we have will determine our reward.

We wish everyone a year of good health and God's blessings.



*Sermon continued from page 2*

Babylon was a wicked city. Babylon was known as a city that was crushed, as it is now. We don't hear anything about Babylon. But Babylon (I don't get this from the Good Book here, but from what I hear) is to be rebuilt. This is a great city which will fall in one hour. (See Revelation 18:17).

Now we have to realize that all these things are mentioned, "Cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil..." (Revelation 18:13). She had all those, Babylon had all those things at her disposal. She could ship many of them.

The River Euphrates went right under Babylon...went right under the wall...right through the wall...and on to the other side. As long as the River Euphrates was high, it was safe from any intruders that wanted to get in from the outside.

We know that because the Medes and the Persians conquered Nebuchadnezzar. We know that the Medes and the Persians were the two kingdoms which fought together and conquered Babylon.

How did they conquer her? I don't know whether it was a Persian or a Mede, but they diverted the River Euphrates up the line a ways. They made another outlet for the River Euphrates to go and that dried up the water that went under the walls. Then the Medes and Persians marched in on dry ground.

Now we know that it wasn't Nebuchadnezzar who was in rule then. It was a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, who was Nabonidus' son. Belshazzar was in power and Belshazzar was not the ruler. He was a man who occupied the high authority while

Nabonidus was out fighting.

Belshazzar took the cups, the gold and the things that came out of the temple in Jerusalem and they had a big party. That is when the hand writing was on the wall: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN", which means, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." (Daniel 5:25,27).

Daniel told them the meaning of the rest of the hand writing on the wall, "MENE: God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL: Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES: Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." (Daniel 5:26-28). That is when he found out that very night that he was going to be conquered. He did not know how, but he was going to be conquered.

It so happened that the Medes and the Persians, in the meantime, came in under the wall and they had a battle there. And Belshazzar was slain. (See Daniel 5:30).

Now what does that all have to do with this Babylon here? It can tell us that the Babylon that was there first was the same type of city that will be there afterwards, we think.

We can do like much in the Revelation. We might think that it means something else. We might think that it is a mystic. We might think this means this, and this means that. I don't think this chapter is that way.

I think Babylon is going to be a city, and I think it will fall in one hour. Now you might ask me, "What does one hour mean?" I am not sure what one hour is, but we know that it is shorter than a day. We know it is shorter than a week.

We know that it passed from time into eternity in a very short time.

Here it says, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Revelation 18:4). Now that gives us a clue that there were some of God's people in that city. There were some of God's people who are mixed. Don't ask me whether they were Jews or Gentiles because I think there would be both here during this time. But they were told to come out and not to partake of any of her sins.

"For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you..." (Revelation 18:5,6). We think of the latter part of the tribulation period. I will call it the tribulation period because the first three and one-half years is a tribulation period. The second three and one-half years is not of God. If you don't believe me, you can read in the latter part of Revelation, it doesn't speak about the tribulation period. It talks about the wrath of God.

If we knew what the wrath of God really was, it would sober us a great, great deal. For we have never encountered the wrath of God. We have never come close.

The merchants in the ships that took goods of precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and so forth, they warned the falling of Babylon because they were rich by her, and they "cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!" (Revelation 18:18).

Now I don't know but I believe and I heard it spoken by elders who are not on this earth anymore,



that Jerusalem will be the great city that will endure and be God's city. This is a great city, but it isn't God's city.

"And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate." (Revelation 18:19)

Now I ask you, will you put a meaning to that? Can you divert from the words here and use other words? I don't believe so. I think it is just the way it says.

"Then there was a great rejoicing for God said they should rejoice." (Revelation 19:20)

He compared the fall of Babylon with a millstone that is cast into the lake. (See Revelation 18:21)

Babylon will be utterly destroyed, "and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee." (Revelation 21,22)

This is not talking about the millstone that is cast into the lake because they used millstones at that time.

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived." (Revelation 18:23)

Now the last verse means something. They all mean something, but it is evident here, "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Revelation 18:24). We ought to recognize the ones that die in Christ a martyred death. They were slain on the earth...the prophets and the saints. It is pretty hard to put ourselves in that position.

Have you ever been confronted with someone who wanted to kill you? It is not an easy thing. To stand facing God, that is worth more than what all this world has to offer, only to await the time when the dead in Christ shall rise.

Then what will it be? It will be glory for ever and ever.





# REMEMBERING

## Our Spiritual Heritage

*The Geistlich Diary continues. This is the next-to-last issue.*

*Thursday, September 13:* We are on the sea. The weather is pleasant. Today was another fine day. I can hardly believe that it can go so good for us, yet we can well accept it if the Lord gives it to us. Oh, that He will also give us grace to be thankful for all His love and goodness, which He shows to us. We were created to praise Him and glorify His Holy Name, which is high in Heaven and on earth.

Today my thoughts went back to New York City where it is like Babel, which means confusion. We find of Jehu in the book of Kings (Chapt. 2:9-20), "The driving is like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously." Yet the driving of Jehu was not without purpose for the Everlasting. But this confusion and driving is as if they were without a mind for all the values and riches of this world. I was glad when I could leave this city, so much did I dislike it.

Most all large cities in America are the same. How much patience does God have with these people, who are hurrying and running toward the end when all will be accomplished, as the Lord says, "When you see the abomination of desolation, then you know that the end is nigh." I believe that the time is near and that we stand close to the end, near to that great day, for soon will the six great world days be over and the seventh as a day of rest appear. Today our ship made 290 miles.

*Friday, September 14:* The weather is rainy and windy today. Often I have heard it said that the morning hour has gold. This fable has come true in me, for if early in the morning I open my heart and mouth to God, I am more delighted than I am in the evening. It is as the Psalm reads, "The night comes with weeping, but the morning is joy again." Yet in the evening, when the afflictions and the longing for home is the greatest, I feel more need of the patience which we all must have. It is as I said the first time, the sea is a real test for measuring our pa-

ience. Today the trip went well. Thanks be to the Lord for this. Our ship made 285 miles today.

*Saturday, September 15:* On the ocean. The weather stormy and unpleasant. Today I awoke to another new morning. When will the time come when I will awake on that Eternal morning? Today I read in Chapter 11 of Hebrews about the faith of our forefathers, how the spirit of faith made them holy. This is very important and strengthening to read. They, too, only saw the promises from afar. In faith God did wish to accomplish this in us, for that we are thankful. Today our ship made 298 miles.

*Sunday, September 16:* Today is a stormy day. Last night it was so rough one could hardly sleep. Today is Sunday, when others can refresh themselves in the Lord, we must fast. But in this we are not alone, for in the time of the Apostles, Paul and the other brothers had the same experience on their trips. They were humbled in many sorrows.

The Apostle writes in the Acts how on their trip to Rome they were in many dangers on land and on sea. And if the storm is wild and dark on the outside, if only we are clear and light inwardly, for by God darkness is not dark, night is light as day. The city of God where the mansions of the ransomed are, will be fine and merry. God will be in the center of it and, therefore, it is well protected.

Every time I went to bed on the sea, it seemed as if I laid myself in a casket, first because the bed was so small, similar to a casket, and secondly because one does not know if he will be swallowed up and buried in the deep from the waves during the night. On the sea it is only a step between life and death. Here one should give his life entirely into the hands of God, for Him to do as it is pleasing to Him.

In such a place, a true Christian has many advantages, for he can turn to God his Heavenly Father in full satisfaction and confidence, knowing that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, not

made with hands, eternal in the heavens (II Cor. 5). Often it is my desire and longing to be pleasing to Him. Today our ship made 313 miles.

*Monday, September 17:* On the ocean and the weather is pleasant. The sea was quiet and all was well, yet I had a great desire to be on land. On the sea one becomes very lonesome, although I am satisfied for the Lord has helped until now. I noticed several times a passenger beside me, who had a nice photograph of someone. I presume it was his beloved one, which he looked at eagerly. At last this became interesting to me, taking from it a lesson for myself, thinking that I too shall have such a desire for Jesus, my Beloved one, with Whom I am eternally united and obligated and spiritually carry His picture and image deep in my heart, which this man does with his picture (which is all in vain, as it is only a shadow).

But Christ is no shadow to us. He Himself is the life; therefore, His image and life shall be in us. This all the apostle truthfully and plainly describes in such a manner that we do not have to be in doubt about it. We only shall be concerned as to how we can become more like this image of Christ. Today a longing came over me for the church, like David when he had to pass his time in the desert. One can read the Word of God, yet it is not as if we were in church and worshipping therein.

There is no doubt that our churches and assemblies are appreciated far too little. Those that can partake or enjoy them continuously appreciate the assemblies most when they have them no more. Therefore, we have the important admonishment of the Apostle Paul. He writes in Hebrews 10:25, "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much more, as ye see the day approaching."

*By Perry A. Klopfenstein*

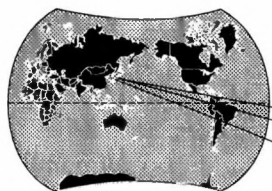
### Next Issue:

The Last Entries of the Geistlich Diary

# The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

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## "In Remembrance"

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

Concerning the Lord's Supper, Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19). Thanksgiving Day helps us remember to be thankful, Christmas helps us to remember Christ's birth, and Easter is to remind us that Christ arose. Jesus said in John 14:26, "But the Comforter...shall...bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The Passover Feast, which preceded the institution of the Lord's Supper, was itself in remembrance of deliverance from the slavery the children of Israel endured in Egypt. It is written, "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial." (Exodus 12:14).

Clearly, the Bible teaches us to remember certain things and our culture teaches us to remember certain things. It is commonly believed that we should remember our wedding anniversary, if we are married, and also our birthdays. If we remember the special days of our family members and friends,

they are very happy to have been remembered.

At a recent Holy Communion service in our Tokyo Church, I emphasized "In remembrance." Later I thought, "But I often teach that we should forget, based on the scripture, 'Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.'" (Philippians 3:13). For sure, the Bible teaches us to remember, but it also teaches us to forget. Evidently, we have our hands full figuring out what to remember and what to forget. Even after we have decided what to remember and what to forget, we may not be able to forget some things as we would like to, and we may not be able to remember some things which we should remember. For instance, we would all like to remember names better, but we forget. If you can associate something like a person's name, with something familiar, like another well known person with the same name, it is much easier to remem-

ber. If we can associate Christ's resurrection with Easter, we can remember the resurrection almost without thinking, although it may be rather shallow thinking.

About forgetting those things which are behind, the Apostle Paul was speaking about unpleasant things, I do believe. We simply must put behind us our own failings of the past, and also the failings of others toward us. If Satan can get us to stew about things which can no longer be changed, he might even get us to become depressed. It is better to think of those things which are, "Honest, just, pure and lovely." (Phil. 4:8).

Obviously, there are some things which we should remember, such as Christ's death on the cross for us. We should also remember with thanksgiving, how hard our parents worked for us. At the same time, let's at least try to forget all those unpleasant things which can no longer be changed. Let's smile and start over.

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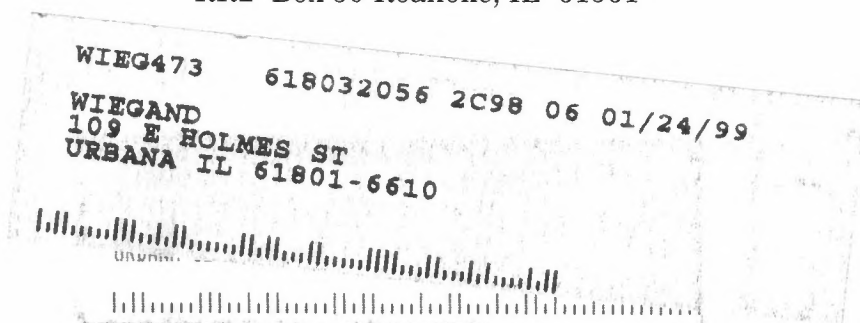
## Harper, KS -1885

Cheap land and the pioneer spirit drew brethren from various established locations to Harper, KS. The living conditions of the South Central Kansas area during the 1880's were harsh. One room homes, made of sod, which formed the walls. Boards were placed across the walls to form rafters on which was placed tar paper. Sod was then laid on the tar paper.

There are many stories of the trials of our brethren as they braved the challenges of the day. One couple wrested with the severe conditions for nine years as crop failure from drought and hail plagued their brave hearts. They were also plagued by diseases prevalent on the frontier, such as malaria and typhoid.

Hardships caused a gradual decline in membership until finally in 1959 services were terminated.

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