



# *The Silver Lining*

*Winter, with great fury, giveth test and trial to the creatures of Earth.*

January 2001

## “STREETS IN HEAVEN ARE PURE GOLD”

*Sermon by Bro. Andrew Klaus, Tokyo, Japan*

Isaiah 9:1-7 and Matthew 1:18-2:23

This is a familiar story and perhaps we can go through and look at it in a little more detail. “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise:” This is how it came to pass. “When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example...” We know in Moses law, if something like that happened, Joseph could publicly put Mary away and say, “She won’t be my wife.”

“But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying,...that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:18-21. Joseph, being a just man, believed also and he did exactly as the angel told him.

In a couple of places where we just read, It says, “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet,” Matthew 1:22. Just as we read in Isaiah, there are many places in the Old Testament that talks about the birth of Jesus. “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel,” Matthew 1:23. Emmanuel, we know, means God is with us. God Himself came down here to be born in a man’s body and took on Him all the limitations that a man has, even though He was God Himself. He just did all the angel told him and took

Mary for his wife.

Between chapter one and chapter two, we know there is a lot more that went on. We can read about it in Luke chapter two. Before the wise men came, angels also appeared to the shepherds as they were watching their flocks outside of Bethlehem and they came and found Jesus lying in a manger. We know they put Him in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn, which I take that as being probably Mary and Joseph were perhaps not from a very rich family. Maybe they got to Bethlehem late but they also probably didn’t have too much, and the stable was the only thing left where they could lay down their heads.

After He was born (we don’t know how much after), or at about the time He was born, a special star appeared in the sky. That was something that was out of the ordinary. This week we were supposed to have a very special moon. It was supposed to be brighter than it has been for seventy years. I went out one night to look at it, but to me, it didn’t seem any brighter than normal. But these wise men here, they saw a special star in the sky and from their studies they somehow, perhaps by the Holy Spirit, knew that this meant that a King had been born in Judea. So they went to look for Him.

Perhaps there were several wise men plus a train of servants (we don’t know how many people came), but they came to the capital in Jerusalem. Of course, they went straight to King Herod. They said, “King Herod, we saw a star in the east so

where is He that is born King of the Jews?”

Obviously, Herod was very troubled. He didn’t want anyone to take his place. He didn’t know of anyone born in his family, or perhaps that was born recently. So he gathered

*Sermon continued on page 44*

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

## Light From The Word



Writings based  
on God's Word

January 2001

### Accountability I

"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more" (Lk. 12:42).

To be held accountable is to be required to give a satisfactory explanation for actions we have committed. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that we will be accountable for what we have done with the time and talents we have been given. Trying to escape accountability is not new. It has been a problem almost from the beginning of time. There is a long list of excuses that have been used over the years by individuals who have tried to escape responsibility for what they have done. Furthermore, the scripture also makes it clear that some people are more accountable than others.

We are stewards, not owners. All that we have (houses, lands, possessions of any kind, and even our lives) belongs to the Lord. He has allowed us the privilege of using some of His possessions. Just as when we use something that belongs to someone else and the time comes to return it or explain how we have used it, we must give an account of what we have done with God's possessions. The unjust steward is not the only one who must "...give an account of thy stewardship;" (Lk. 16:2), "for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Ro. 14:10).

The first excuse used in trying to escape accountability was to blame someone else. When Adam was confronted for eating of the forbidden fruit, he responded: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12). Adam was not only blaming the woman but he also tried to place an element of blame on God as he reminded God that He had placed the woman in Adam's life. When confronted about the accusation from Adam, Eve replied "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat" (Gen. 3:13).

Both were guilty. Both knew they had done wrong, and both tried to blame someone else. The serpent was not given an opportunity for defense and had a curse placed upon him. Adam and Eve, of course, were both required to live with the consequences of their behavior. They were driven from the garden of

Eden and required to earn their bread by the "...sweat of thy face..." (Gen. 3:19). Even more seriously, of course, was the separation from God and the death that they faced as a result of their sin.

Denying knowledge of the problem is also used as a method of avoiding the consequences of inappropriate behavior. When God asked Cain about his brother Abel, he lied and said "...I know not: am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9). Cain not only knew the situation, but he also knew that he was guilty of wrong doing. His claim of ignorance did not save him from the consequences of his behavior.

Likewise many people try to avoid accepting the consequences of their behavior by claiming that their unacceptable behavior was something they felt required to do. King Saul believed that it was necessary to offer a sacrifice to God before going to battle. He sincerely believed that sacrifices would bring the blessings of God to the Israelites.

King Saul was told to wait for Samuel who had promised to come to meet him and offer a sacrifice before Saul led his army to battle against the Philistines. When Samuel didn't appear, Saul offered the burnt offering. Samuel soon arrived and asked Saul what he had done. Saul said "Because I saw...that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash;...I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering" (I Sam. 13:11-12). The king tried to blame Samuel for not coming at the appointed time to offer the sacrifice but that did not prevent him from facing the consequences of sin. Saul was told that he had done foolishly, he had not kept the Lord's commandment, and that his kingdom would not continue. Therefore, much of the remainder of Saul's reign was filled with sorrow and difficulty.

Finally, feelings of inadequacy are also used from time to time by those who are trying to avoid accountability. In the parable of the talents we are reminded that the time will come when "...the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them" (Mt. 25:19). All of those servants were required to give an account of

how they had used their lord's money. Those who used it wisely were told: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant:" (Mt. 25:21). The one who hid his lord's money was called wicked and slothful and was "...cast...into outer darkness:" (Mt. 25:30). The unprofitable servant believed his master was so harsh that he could not possibly do as his master expected. His assessment was wrong and his sentence for not doing his duty was harsh.

When we make errors or commit sin it is necessary that we confess our sins and that we go to those we have wronged, sincerely apologize and offer to make restitution. We know that "...every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro. 14:12). We know that if we take care of a mistake as soon as possible, we can keep the situation from getting worse and we can restore peace with those whom we may have wronged. Generally, the people of the world do not understand this: "...they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead" (I Peter 4:4-5).

In legal matters, the first bit of advice that attorneys often give their clients is to keep quiet and admit to nothing. They seem to think that if their client is found not guilty in a court of law that there will be no consequences. The Bible tells us otherwise: "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Mt. 12:36).

All of us will be held accountable for what we do with the time and resources the Lord gives to us. Although God's mercy and compassion are great, excuses for unacceptable behavior will be of no value. Blaming others, claiming ignorance of a situation, feeling pressure to do wrong, and feelings of inadequacy cannot make wrong behavior right.

In part II of this series, attention will be focused on a variety of reactions to being held accountable, to whom we are accountable and the degree of our accountability.



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

## Distribution Centers and Material Aid

### Coordinators

**O**ur God has continued to bless the World Relief Committee that is an arm of our Apostolic Christian Church. As gifts of funds and goods have increased, so has the necessity to govern them wisely and properly.

### New board created

The national World Relief Committee (WRC) has now changed the former Distribution Centers Coordinators Committee to a full-fledged Board functioning under their direction. This action reflects the increasing responsibilities that are coming to our organization as time progresses. The necessity for good stewardship of money, material goods, time, and effort is quite apparent. We are trying to respond in a way that will be acceptable to our great God as well as to our brotherhood. The ongoing efforts at the level of the local congregations are the basis of what finally is sent through our organization to the needy around the world.

### Examples of useful items

Some examples of goods made and packaged by brethren and friends include: Comforters, layettes, home-made soap, motel soap, health kits, sewing kits, pre-natal kits, edible beans, etc. Companies often donate surplus or outdated goods to our local churches. These are appreciated, but must be properly handled, stored, and finally sent to those who can make the best use of them.

### Always ask before accepting

Over the years, experience has taught that if an item has value to us it could

be of value to others. However, shipping and distributing costs are real, and becoming greater, and this increases the necessity of good stewardship throughout our entire organization.

For this reason we ask that anyone who learns of items available should seek the counsel of a Distribution Center Coordinator before accepting the goods. In the past we have often accepted nearly anything that became available, but sometimes it is simply not cost effective to do so, even if the products are free.

### What kind of clothing?

Clothing should have at least six months of good wear left. It should be clean and mended. Children's clothes are always in high demand. Most families pass these clothes to others, and for that reason not too many come to our Distribution Centers. Undergarments are also vitally needed, but these should be either new or nearly so. Sometimes our loyal supporters find such items at sale prices, and donate them to the work. Even in cases like this we have found it well to ask in advance before purchasing a large quantity.

### New Distribution Centers

The Bluffton Distribution Center (BDC) has been expanded through the purchase of an adjoining building. A new Distribution Center is now under construction in the Rittman/Smithville, OH area. It is hoped that with God's help a new Distribution Center can be built in Wolcott, IN in the coming year.

With thanks to God, we can report that not one ongoing project has had to suffer from a shortage of funds. Thanks also to our loyal supporters who have cared enough to share with others as the work goes on.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us... Ephesians 3:20

## Coordinators

### Distribution Center

Bay City – Kurt Munsel  
Phone & Fax: 517/671-2109  
Work: 517/686-5681

Bluffton – Gerald Fiechter  
Phone & Fax: 219/597-7494

Fairbury – Glen Steidinger  
Phone: 815/692-2374  
Work & Fax: 815/657-8786

Goodfield – Marvin Wagenbach  
Phone: 309/925-5628

### Regional Aid

Haiti – Bob Honegger  
Phone: 219/622-4186  
Fax: 219/622-4183

Jamaica – Kurt Munsel  
Phone & Fax: 517/671-2109  
Work: 517/686-5681

Mexico – Cheryl Hermann  
Phone: 309/385-1082

### Items

Beans – Kurt Munsel  
Phone & Fax: 517/671-2109  
Work: 517/686-5681

Kits – Les Fehr  
Phone: 815/646-4536

Soap – Glen Steidinger  
Phone: 815/692-2374  
Work & Fax: 815/657-8786

Soup – Bob Steffen  
Phone: 219/565-3383



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

### Rural Gospel and Medical Missions of India (RGMMI)

Thirty years ago in 1970 the first visit was made to India by Elder Bros. Joseph Waibel, Carl Kinsinger and Bro. Jim Hoerr to review the work of RGMMI. After the demise of the founders, Mr. and Mrs. Bhagwat, our Apostolic Christian Church responded to their plea that we assume the full oversight of the Mission providing spiritual counsel and guidance as well as material support.

#### Many visits over the years

Over the years, sixteen more trips under the auspices of the Mission and World Relief Committees have been made to inspect and review the work and to teach and encourage the RGMMI staff and congregations.

After several postponements because of the uncertainty of the political atmosphere in India another trip was undertaken during the month of October 2000. Five years had passed since the previous visit. Two couples and two other brothers were blessed to be able to participate. Spending fifteen days in India, they were able to visit the two Mission Compounds and seven of the twelve tribal church congregations.

#### Warm welcomes from the staff

They were welcomed by Dr. Parkhe and the other twenty-five members of the staff. It was striking to see a number of changes in the infrastructure of the urban areas, while in the tribal areas the Bible-time scenes have changed very little. More importantly was the growth seen and felt in the spiritual warmth, unity and love among the 600 or more believers.

#### Persecution is becoming a factor

It was evident that God has heard the many prayers for protection of the Christians who faced persecution by militant Hindus for many months. The RGMMI churches suffered no injuries nor destruction of churches but had to endure the intimidating presence of policemen during worship services. They have since been removed, much to the relief of the believers.

The Spirit of God, however, continued to work in the hearts of hearers of the Word as there were nearly forty baptisms in the last year.

#### Three days of convocation

As in past visits, three days of convocation were held as the visiting Brothers gave topical spiritual presentations to the staff and their spouses. They centered around the basic plan of salvation through Jesus Christ; growing in the spirit and love for one another; living sanctified lives; encouragement to continue steadfast in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ; Apostolic Christian doctrines and practices; church order; and several other spiritual topics. The believers welcomed this counsel and advice and had a number of beneficial questions. God's direction could be felt in strengthening the spiritual leadership through identification of two faithful men to become ordained as Pastors, hopefully in January 2001 They are Dr. Parkhe and Evangelist Raju Kasbe.

#### Labors are being accepted

It is believed that along with God's hand of protection, the Mission's medical and orphanage programs which are helpful to the surrounding community and villages, provided a measure of acceptance by the Hindus.

The two doctors and three nurses

treated more than 21,000 patients last year. Plans were laid to enhance this work with improvements in facilities and provision of X-ray equipment. In the orphanage/



Village Congregation

boarding mission the seventy-two boys at the two compounds and thirty-eight girls at the Manoram Sudan girls' facility are always a joy to behold. Their enthusiastic welcome songs and many Bible verse recitations were heart warming. What a blessing to see the fruits of the good support provided in the form of clothing, food, lodging and especially spiritual teachings. Their appreciation for these things was expressed by many smiles.

#### Strong faith continues

Dr. Parkhe continues strong in his faith that God will continue to protect him from the aggressive efforts of those who would want to diminish the fruitfulness of the Mission. Upon departure, many expressions of love and greetings to the churches in America were voiced. Thankfulness for their many prayers and support was expressed. The visitors were blessed with good health and God's protection. They were also thankful for the many prayers offered throughout their journey.

## APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

“Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.”

*Psalm 51:7*

The winter white blanketing the earth is a vivid reminder of the magnificent cleansing of a sin stained soul accomplished only by the power of the blood of our dear Jesus.

Many groups braved the cold and snow to come to Christmas carol for us. The beauty of the songs and knowing that others remembered us in a busy time helped us focus on the celebration of our Saviour's birth. Also, thanks to those of you who sent us Christmas cards.

The winter weather presents extra challenges here just as it does at each of your homes. On very cold mornings, decisions are made by nursing and social services staff regarding the ability of our physically fragile residents to go away to their work and Day Programs. If they are unable to go out, this break in routine is quite difficult for some of the people living here. Extra activities must be planned to occupy the time normally spent away from home.

The maintenance men must come in the wee hours of the morning to clear snow making it possible for the night shift nursing staff to go home, and the day folks to get in. The flexibility of the dietary department is evident when everybody gets snowed (or frozen) in, and they must prepare many extra meals. Can you imagine unexpectedly having to set 70 extra places for a meal? Extra assistance in feeding people is needed at a time when staff is short due to impassable roads. There are times when nursing and activities staff have to stay over for an extra shift to cover for those who are snowed in at their own homes. During a snow-

storm, nearby motel rooms have been rented by the agency for nursing staff to sleep between shifts so there would be sufficient staff to cover for their co-workers who are unable to get to work.

But these challenges brought about by the weather also create a spirit of camaraderie as everyone works together to turn the unplanned and unchangeable winter storm into a time of safety and security for everyone.

FEBRUARY birthdays at **TIMBER RIDGE** are: Matt Pumphrey (17); John Kamm (18), Lee Anne McKay (19), Ernest Perry (27), Guy Masinelli (28). None of our other homes have residents celebrating February birthdays.

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### GATEWAY WOODS APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME Danielle Wirtz

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

*Luke 2:14*

Imagine the praise of the angels as they came to worship the newborn Son of God! Is this the attitude of our hearts as we celebrate another Christmas and move into a New Year?

This time of year can become so busy, attending parties and social gatherings, rushing here and there in search of the “perfect gift”. Do we remember that God gave us the most perfect gift of all? And do we glorify and praise God for all things as the shepherds did (Luke 2:20) when they came to worship the King of the world?

Let us remember that we can give the most “perfect gift” to others not only at Christmas, but all year long. It is the gift of God's love in the form

of His Son, Jesus Christ, that we can share with everyone. This love has been evident to Gateway Woods through those who have given of their time, contributions and generous gifts at this time of the year. We pray that God will richly bless you.

In this season of celebration, we rejoice with Sis. Melissa Frieden as she was united in marriage to Bro. Travis Bussel, Bluffton, IN, on December 17. We are thankful that Sis. Missy will continue to teach at Gateway Woods School.

It is also a season of change here at Gateway Woods. We said farewell to Houseparents, Bro. Tom and Sis. Jodee Bauman, and their children, Breana and Noah, on December 15, as they moved back to Illinois. We cannot express how thankful and grateful we are to them for their willingness to share God's love by serving children and families for over two years at Gateway Woods. We will miss them.

God is always faithful to provide in a time of need as Alternate Houseparents, Bro. Clint and Sis. Bethany Plattner, became full-time Houseparents taking over Bauman's duties in the East House. Please pray that God will grant them wisdom, patience, and understanding as they face new challenges.

Bro. Chuck and Sis. Naomi Wiegand have also announced that they will be departing from Gateway Woods in March 2001. We are very grateful and thankful to them for their willingness to serve as Houseparents for over 3 1/2 years. We will miss them and their children, Demetrius, Sebastian and Gabriella, and pray that God will direct their future as they move on.

We said good-bye to Amanda C. and Tom K. as they went home to their families, and to Kenneth W. as he moved on from Gateway Woods. We pray that God will help them to

make wise choices as they return home.

We want to offer a warm welcome to Rebekah P. in the East House and Jason W. in the West House.

Gateway Woods staff members were able to enjoy a few hours away from the regular routine at this year's Christmas party as they sampled a Greek meal and learned about the celebration of Christ's birth in that culture. Kids in the houses were also able to enjoy fun and games at the campus Christmas party which is just in time for school vacation that may come sooner with canceled school and snow days!

We praise God that we continue to be fully staffed and we thank all those who are faithful to remember us in their prayers.

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**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
PRESCHOOL  
Athens, Alabama  
Tom Schrenk**

The Christmas and holiday season is past and a new year has begun. We have so many reasons to be thankful. God has blessed us with so many things during the past year and we look forward to a new year of serving God. May it be that our hearts and minds will be ready and willing to do His will. Please pray for the Staff of the Preschool that what we do, as we work with the children, will be for their good as they grow older and that the teachings of Jesus and God will always remain with them.

The month of January is a time for us to get back into a regular schedule again. Over the holidays we take a break from our regular routine to practice for our Christmas play, and then the Preschool was closed for two weeks.

We are pleased to have Bro. Sam and Sis. Linda Schlatter come from the Junction church to spend some

time helping us at the Preschool. Sis. Joan and I will spend some time in Zapata, TX, while they are here. We are thankful for all the response that so many have shown to us here. We cannot begin to mention each one and what you do, but God knows and we just say "thank you".

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**ALABAMA, ATHENS  
Joan Reinhard  
Louise Hall**

November 18 was a day for rejoicing as Bro. Andy and Sis. Erin Witzig became first-time parents just a little after midnight. Samantha Anne arrived safe and sound and grandparents, Bro. Dennis and Sis. Beth Mott (Morton, IL) and Bro. Ted and Sis. Cindy Witzig (Morton, IL) rejoiced over the good news. We rejoice with them and are very thankful to God for the latest addition to our congregation. Both sets of grandparents have been here and visited their latest grandchild, and we want to thank Bro. Ted for having the service on November 26 and sharing from God's Word with us.

Thanksgiving flew by and Christmas is here with all its hustle and bustle. On December 9, the church got together for our Christmas Dinner and Secret Pal exchange. It was a very enjoyable evening and we always have a good time fellowshiping together.

December 13, we went Christmas caroling instead of having our Wednesday evening service. We had a large group so we split into two groups and then met back at church after caroling for a chili supper. Young and old alike had a good time and it is a highlight of the season to go and sing praises to God about the birth of His Son.

On Sunday, December 17, the verse was read in church that "...God loveth a cheerful giver." (II Cor. 9:7). Then the question was asked, "Is

God a cheerful giver?" We then went on to hear about the good tidings of great joy that was pronounced to the shepherds in the field that night and the joy that was professed at the birth of God's Son. God knew He was giving His Son to mankind to be persecuted and to be killed on the cross, but He was still a cheerful giver. It made me wonder, am I a cheerful giver, when it hurts?

December 17 was also the date for our Sunday School Christmas program. We were thankful for each young person who participated in the program and it was good to hear the message of Christ's birth again.

Please continue to pray for Bro. Lavoyd Moore as he has again spent some time in the hospital this month. He has appreciated and does need the many prayers offered on his behalf.

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**ARIZONA, PHOENIX  
Ron and Ev Hoerr**

"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you. That ye walk honestly toward them that are without and that ye may have lack of nothing."

*I Thess. 4:11-12*

Our beloved Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach passed into God's presence on November 29, 2000. We missed his handshake, but his warmth and loving countenance were very much present at his memorial service to a full and overflowing church. "I come to the garden alone" was sung by the choir as Bro. Richard's casket was brought to the sanctuary. Four generations of the Schupbach family found solace and comfort as the third generation softly sang "Surely the presence of the Lord is felt in this day." Elder

Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Bro. Richard's nephew) read the obituary before Elder Bro. Joe Braker and Elder Bro. Phil Stettner had the service. Burial was in East Resthaven Cemetery. Sis. Barbara and family had everyone for dinner afterwards. Our sympathy to Sis. Barbara and family. We know Bro. Richard wants us to keep our church strong in faith and love. His smile and warmth will be with us forevermore.

Our visiting ministers this past month were Bros. Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO) and Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN) and we thank them.

Our Phoenix World Relief workers had many helpful works in progress including filling stockings with fruit and candies for children who would have done without. What love! During the past month work teams (Bros. Jeff Steffen, Sam Hohulin, Erick Langhoffer, Joe Greenbank, Jerry Tooley, and Dick Beery) were in Casa De Elizabeth in Imuris, Mexico, replacing the pump in the well, repairing the water system, leach lime, etc.

Sis. Shirley Blunier is improving and was released to a care facility on December 2; on December 16 she was readmitted to the hospital. We pray that she will recover soon.

Irene Horvath needs our prayers. She is still not able to come to church.

Sis. Geraldine Beyer had cataract surgery and is doing nicely.

On a very, very cold day in Chicago (3 degrees), Bro. Scott Klopfenstein and Sis. Katie Gudeman exchanged wedding vows on December 17. Bro. Dave and Sis. Lou Ann Klopfenstein are his parents. May God bless them as they make their home in Phoenix (where it was 72 degrees).

On a lovely Sunday evening, December 17, our Sunday School children sang songs, recited pieces and Scripture. Parents, grandparents, relatives and friends were thankful for a lovely program. God bless our willing teachers, too.

*Notes of Thanks:*

Dear Ones,

We would like to thank everyone for your prayers, support, food, cards, gifts of love, phone calls and visits over the past year and during his passing. We pray God will richly bless all of you for your many efforts and love.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (II Cor. 1:3-4)

*The Family of Richard Schupbach*

We thank you for your prayers, calls, gifts, love, and quilts during Sis. Shirley's extended illness and hospital stay.

May God bless you all.

In His Love,

*Sis. Shirley and Bro. Gaylord Blunier*

**ARIZONA, PRESCOTT  
Jane Hodges**

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

*Psalm 116:15*

Our dear retired Elder Bro. Richard Schupbach has passed from this life into the joys of eternity with our Lord. When we think of Bro. Richard, the verse in I Peter 3:4 comes to

mind: "...the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." His humble and quiet spirit was an example to all of us. We extend our sympathies to Sis. Barbara and family. We will all miss him greatly and look forward to seeing him in Heaven.

The ministering brothers from Phoenix served us the last month, including Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich, Bros. Ken Lawson, James Emch and Herbie Knochel Jr. It is a two hour drive from Phoenix to Prescott, so we thank all of them for taking the time to bring us God's Word. God's blessings to all of them and their families.

**ARIZONA, TUCSON**

**Lisa Knapp**

We gathered on December 8 to visit several local nursing homes and spread some Christmas cheer through song. We caroled together at three nursing homes and the children passed out flowers which brought smiles to the faces of many elderly people. Afterwards, we gathered back at church to enjoy some chili and other goodies. I'd like to say we gathered back at church and "warmed up", but that wasn't really necessary. Many thanks to Bro. Brad and Sis. Sandy Bauer for their efforts in making the evening special for everyone.

Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix) traveled to Tucson on Sunday, December 17, to offer some welcome relief to our Bro. Curt Kaufman on the pulpit. We thank Bro. Jon for making the trip down, especially during the busy holiday season. May God bless your willingness, Bro. Jon.

That evening, we enjoyed the Christmas Program put on by the Sunday School students and teachers. This is always a special evening



as the children remind us why we really celebrate December 25 as a special day. As always, we followed these delightful reminders with the usual assortment of holiday treats. We appreciate the efforts of the teachers, students and parents in putting together this wonderful evening.

I know I speak for the entire Tucson church when I wish everyone a blessed New Year!

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### CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

**Jim Klotzle**

Greetings from Altadena!

With the start of a new year, we are reminded of the new start offered to each one of us through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

*II Cor. 5:17*

The beginning of a new year is an exciting time; we make resolutions, plan our schedules and reflect on the years past. As new creatures in Christ, we don't have to wait a whole year for a new beginning because we get one every day! Every day, we should clear up our conflicts, take up our crosses, and pray continually:

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”

*Eph. 4:26*

“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”

*Luke 9:23*

“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing.”

*I Thess. 5:16-17*

We were privileged to host the December 2000 World Relief Meeting this month. Our thanks goes out to all who volunteered their time, talents, and resources to make that weekend possible. Let us take this available opportunity and serve our Lord and fellow men through World Relief.

Our Sunday School's Christmas Program was a blessing, both to the congregation and to the students who sang to us and shared the story of our Saviour's birth. Thanks to all of our Sunday School teachers, our superintendent, and the parents who participated and worked with the students towards this annual program.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bros. Jerry Bauman (Rittman, OH), Roger Sauder (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO), Frank Sauder (Roanoke, IL) and Greg Lehman (Wolcott, IN).

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### CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

**Peggy Jevremov**

Once again, we have been blessed with visitors, which we surely appreciate. Among them were Elder Bro. John Klotzle (Sis. Lois, Altadena, CA), Elder Bro. Marvin Leman (Sis. Jane, Bradford, IL), Bro. Roger Sauder (Sis. Judy, Ft. Lauderdale, FL) and Bro. Todd Zollinger (Sis. Michele, Silverton, OR). We pray the Lord's blessings upon these brethren as they willingly served our little flock.

The Sunday School children have been working very hard on their Christmas program. We are looking forward to listening to them remind us of Christ's birth and His message to mankind on December 24.

As our thoughts turn to a new year, may we pause to reflect upon the year just past. Have our trials

and sorrows brought us closer to our Lord? Have our blessings caused us to be more thankful to Him? Have we grown in the spirit? Are we ready to meet our Lord? Matthew 28:20, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” is a precious promise as we face a new year with many unknowns. Let us remember that we must draw near to God for Him to draw near unto us.

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### KITCHENER, ONTARIO CANADA

**Nathan Reutter**

At the time of this writing, we are nearing Christmas. Let us all pause to ponder the significance of the baby Jesus' coming to the Earth. And let us not forget that it is the shed blood on the cross of Calvary that makes Jesus' appearance special, not His birth.

We apologize for a missed month, but with a new Silver Lining reporter and a three week mailing delay, a month slipped by without anything we could do. Anyhow, during these two months we have had some exciting news.

We have enjoyed and appreciated the ministry of six ministering brothers. They were Elder Bros. Mark Bahr (Sis. Beverly, Detroit, MI), and Andrew Virkler (Sis. Maxine, Bay City, MI) and Bros. Glenn Riggerbach (Sis. Louise, Smithville, OH), Paul Gasser (Sis. Joyce, Akron, OH), James Ramseyer (Sis. Marlene, Bay City, MI) and John Laukhuf (Sis. Marcia, Latty, OH). We also appreciated the other brethren the ministers brought with them. Our heritage offers a fellowship of believers we rarely elsewhere see. May we strive to preserve this and the many other precious aspects of our faith.

We also greatly enjoyed the testimonies of Vinny and Justine

Piticaru. We welcome them into the fold with open arms. With the addition of their family to our church, we have doubled our Sunday School. Bro. Andrew Virkler assisted Bro. Mark Bahr with the testimonies.

We welcome all visitors to worship with us. Please contact Bro. Mike Ursu (519) 669-8515 or Bro. Tim Tomic (519) 634-1185 for information and directions.

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### COLORADO, DENVER

#### Mike and Heather Katanic

A new year and a new beginning for three souls who were baptized this month. We were encouraged to sit, listen and witness the testimonies and baptisms of Brit Steffen (Bro. Larry and Sis. Sue), Tom and Theresa Katanic. What a wonderful weekend for all who were there to stop and reflect on our own testimony. We enjoyed all the visitors who attended with us and especially Elder Bros. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Peter Petrovic (San Diego, CA).

We also extend sympathy to Bro. Louis Bikadi (Sis. Kathy) as he traveled to Hungary to be with his family for the funeral of his father this month.

We also said a sad farewell to Bro. Eric and Sis. Erica Schambach and their children, Joseph, Kathleen, Jack and Kaelin, as their family is relocating back to Elgin. We will miss them and hope to see them visiting us often.

Our Sunday School children also taught us to be truly appreciative of what Jesus did, being born King of kings in a time when He was not treated as a true king. How precious to see these children learning the true meaning of Christmas. After the program, we went caroling at several homes in the community and delivered quilted projects and

stuffed animals to the less fortunate at a shelter in downtown Denver. How humbling to be so vividly reminded of just how much God has blessed us.

We wish each one a blessed New Year.

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### CONNECTICUT ROCKVILLE Cherie Galat

Streams that from Thy wounds  
are flowing

Bless for us this water bath;  
With the Word in union growing  
With the pow'r that Jesus hath.

*Zion's Harp #162*

Before a cloud of witnesses, two dear souls were baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus. We welcome Bro. Derek Reutter (Bro. Duane and Sis. Kay) and Bro. Jacob Virkler (Bro. Terry and Sis. Cindy) into the fold. Assisting our Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan in the work was Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH). Also ministering unto us was Bro. Art Mueller (Belvidere, IL). May God bless these brothers for their service unto us.

We gathered together to sing songs unto our Heavenly Father and to entreat God's blessings on newlywed Bro. Everett and Sis. Nancy Gerber. May He guide them as they walk as one in the Lord.

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body."

*Ephesians 5:23*

We rejoice with Bro. Chad Virkler (Bro. Terry and Sis. Cindy) and Sis. Jenn Hufnagel (Michael and Debra) as they were united as one in Holy Matrimony.

Our song of praise to God ascend,  
And there with angels' voices  
blend.

*Zion's Harp #7*

We shared the true meaning of Christmas to some of our shut-ins and also to the residents of our Longview Village. What a joy it is to be able to have this blessed privilege to raise our voices in song to our Heavenly Father.

Our prayers are with those of our loved ones who have been sick or hospitalized in the past days: Bro. Corbin Bahler (Sis. Virginia), Sis. Louise Ballasy and Sis. Leah Zahner. May we be even as the apostle, "...For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;" (Romans 1:9). May the Lord be with these dear loved ones and grant a speedy recovery according to His will.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

As another year closes and a new one begins, may we continue in our walk with Him that we would ever be ready and waiting for the call that summons us Home to be with our Saviour.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:"

*I Thessalonians 4:16*

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**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
WASHINGTON  
Henrietta Meyer**

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

*Phil. 3:14*

As we begin the new year, we often set goals or make resolutions. May we always use this verse as a reminder of how we are to live our lives here on earth.

We extend our sympathy to Barbara Rapp-Cardwell and her family at the death of her brother, Bro. Phil Rapp, from the Congerville, IL, congregation.

Our visiting ministers the past month were Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI), Bro. Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN) and Bro. William Waibel (Bay City, MI). Other visitors this month were from Philadelphia, PA; Rockville, CT; Bluffton, IN; Elgin, IL and Annapolis, MD.

We are glad Ken and Roberta Belsley are able to assemble with us once again following Ken's surgery.

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. (Virginia Department of Transportation has changed the Exit Number from the one that is in the Ministers Book, but it is still the same Route number.) 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. Barry Steffen (410) 569-3635 or Bro. Matt

Fetter (703) 860-5749.

**FLORIDA  
FT. LAUDERDALE  
Gretchen Webb**

We rejoice with Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz Jones as they welcomed Nathanael Lajos into their home on December 16. Nathanael joins brothers, Lee and Tristan, and sisters, Adriana and Rebekah. We pray that God will bless their family with their new addition.

The annual Christmas Program was held on Sunday evening, December 10. It was a blessing to see our future church deliver the true meaning of Christmas. The program was followed by an evening of fellowship.

The following Sunday, our congregation went caroling to several nursing homes in the area. During the Christmas season, it is a blessing to be able to share with others.

We would like to thank our visiting minister this month, Bro. Chuck Kellenberger (Sis. Debbie, Elgin, IL). We pray that God will bless him or his efforts while he was here.

Sis. Elena Zurz was hospitalized this past month. We are thankful that she is now at home and doing much better. We pray that God will continue to strengthen and heal her.

**FLORIDA  
NORTH FT. MYERS  
Dorothy Beer**

In a few days we will celebrate Christmas. Let us never forget the reason for the season. The year 2001 will soon be here. The years pass by so quickly it seems. Our prayer is for God's blessings to all. We also need to pray for our new President and leaders of our nation that they will call on God for wisdom and direction.

Our November visiting ministers were Elder Bros. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) and Doug Sabo (Sarasota, FL). December ministers were Elder Bro. Lavoyd Moore (Athens, AL) and Bro. Hartzell Kaisner (Detroit, MI). We thank each of the ministers for sharing God's Word with us. We especially pray for God's healing on Bro. Lavoyd Moore who has not been well.

Our Sunday School has increased by four! We're delighted to have Bro. Sam and Sis. Rachel Beer (Milford, IN) living here for the winter months. We welcome all our winter residents and visitors.

**FLORIDA, SARASOTA  
Carol Koehl**

Sarasota was blessed with three visiting ministers this past month. We wish to thank Bros. Paul Gasser (Akron, OH), Hartzell Kaisner (Detroit, MI) and Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL).

Our precious Sunday School students presented "The Prophecy and Fulfillment of Christ's Birth." The Christmas program was followed by refreshments in the dining room. Many thanks to all who gave of their time and talents.

Sis. Hermine Miller (Gridley, IL) fell and broke her hip. She is temporarily at Manor Care in Venice.

We will surely miss Bro. Dan Knochel (Detroit, MI) as the Lord has taken him Home. Our prayers and sympathy go to his dear wife, Sis. Ruth, and family. Bro. Dan and Sis. Ruth have been especially close to our young group.

We also wish to extend much love and sympathy to Don and Sis. Millie Bigger in the double loss of Sis. Millie's mother and brother-in-law.

**GEORGIA, ATLANTA****Keith and Carol Kaufman**

As one year comes to a close, and another begins, let us remember that our Lord and Saviour remains the same. His Word is never changing. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only...Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." (Matthew 24:35,36,46)

We are so thankful that we have the freedom in this land to freely assemble around God's Word without having to fear what others will do or say. Also, that brethren can travel from near and far to assemble with us. Among those who were able to come were Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Morris, MN) and Bro. Marvin Stieglitz (Leo, IN) to minister the Word. Thank you, dear brothers, for speaking the truth loud and clear and for bringing your wives with you. May God richly bless you and grant you grace to continue speaking the truth.

December 17 was a very blessed day. After church, the children told the story of Christ's birth in word and song. Then we all went Christmas caroling and had a chili supper. After supper we made one more stop to sing at a retirement center. Our prayer is that each person we sang to could truly feel God's love. Some of the people in the nursing homes didn't look like they knew what was going on, but when they heard the songs, their faces would light up and their lips would move as they would try to sing along. May we keep Christmas in our hearts and remember that these people need company throughout the year, not just in December.

As the weather turns cold up

north, we look forward to seeing those who come south. We truly appreciate each one who takes time to stop by for the weekend or during the week. Please feel free to call for an evening of fellowship. Sunday services start at 10:15 and 12:30. Song service is held the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. If you are in the area, please plan to worship with us. The church is located at 6225 Campbellton -Fairburn Rd. (Highway 92), Fairburn, GA. Take I-85 south to Exit 64. Go west four miles and the church is on your left. Please contact one of the following brothers to let us know of your plans. This helps us to plan our Sunday lunches and Sunday School. Bro. Linn Stoller (770) 631-4554, Bro. John Brewer (770) 463-0701 or Bro. Keith Kaufman (770) 304-8335. Thank you.

**ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE****Sheila McCoy  
Doreen Moser**

"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

*John 8:12*

As we enjoy all the twinkling lights of the Christmas season, let us reflect on the true Light. Our Sunday School Christmas program was December 10. Through verses, poems and hymns we were reminded that "Jesus is the reason for the season". Our congregation then went caroling at various nursing homes and retirement centers. That was followed by a delicious chili dinner at church.

Bro. Dave Jepson presented a topical Bible study on "Christian Attitude Toward Money." Bro. Art

Mueller was our minister this month at our Bible study in Madison, WI. Bros. Gary Anliker and Edwin Strahm (Elgin, IL) were our visiting ministers. We want to thank them all for their stewardship to our Heavenly Father.

Our congregation joined with the Elgin congregation to go Christmas caroling at the correctional facility for young men in St. Charles, IL. "...I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Matt. 25:36

We want to thank our volunteers who have been helping us on our new church. We are hoping the dry wall will be completed by the end of January. In February, we hope to prime and paint and build cabinets. We certainly will appreciate any volunteers for the many remaining projects. Our projected completion date, God be willing, is the end of May. Please contact Bro. Clint Heinold at 262-695-8108 or heinold@prodigy.net.

The following poem is from our A.C. E-mail:

*Whose Hands?*

A rod in my hands will keep away  
a wild animal  
A rod in Moses' hands will part  
the mighty sea  
It depends whose hands it's in

A sling shot in my hands is a  
kid's toy  
A sling shot in David's hand is a  
mighty weapon  
It depends whose hands it's in

Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in  
my hands is a couple of fish  
sandwiches

Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in  
God's hands will feed thou-  
sands

It depends whose hands it's in

Nails in my hands might produce  
a birdhouse

Nails in Jesus Christ's hands will  
produce salvation for the en-  
tire world

It depends whose hands it's in

As you see now it depends whose  
hands it's in. So put your con-  
cerns, your worries, your  
fears, your hopes, your  
dreams, your families and  
your relationships in God's  
hands because it depends  
whose hands it's in.

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**ILLINOIS  
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL  
Dana Knapp  
Shawn Masters**

"I can do all things through  
Christ which strengthenth me."

*Philippians 4:13*

We were reminded in our Family  
Night service to think of what it is in  
each of our lives that we think we can  
never do; and to realize if we surren-  
der totally to God through Christ, we  
can do all things.

We wish to thank all our visiting  
ministers this month for their la-  
bors; we were truly blessed by hav-  
ing each of them with us. Our thanks  
to Elder Bros. Wayne Banwart  
(Champaign, IL), Chuck Hemmer  
(Peoria, IL), Dale Eisenmann (Chi-  
cago, IL), Joe Braker (Morton, IL)  
and Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL) and  
ministering Bros. Mark Gerber  
(Bluffton, IN), Jeff Thames (Wash-  
ington, IL), Darren Plattner (Cham-  
paign, IL) and Garry Bucher  
(Valparaiso, IN).

We rejoiced with Sis. Rebecca  
Kaufmann (Bro. Dennis and Sis.  
Bonnie), Bro. Mike Bates (Bro. Steve  
and Sis. Diane, Roanoke) and Bro.  
Tim Mueller (Bro. Jim and Sis. Jan,

Roanoke) as we heard their testi-  
mony of faith and witnessed their  
baptism on November 26.

Brianna Rose is the precious bun-  
dle of joy given to Court and Joyce  
Sauder on December 8. Her thank-  
ful grandparents are Bro. Curt and  
Sis. Beth Rocke (Eureka, IL) and  
Gary and Sis. Phyllis Sauder  
(Roanoke, IL).

We extend our sympathy and  
prayers to Bro. Dennis Brummitt,  
Bro. Scott Meiss, and Bro. Amos  
Funk for each having lost loved ones.

We pray God's healing hand upon  
Sis. Wilma Kieser having had sur-  
gery and Joyce Sauder for spending  
time in the hospital.

Our Christmas program was on  
December 17. We were blessed once  
again by our children as we enjoyed  
hearing them tell us of the story that  
never grows old. May it have been a  
time for each of us to get our hearts  
focused on the true meaning of  
Christmas.

This was a very special month for  
us as we were blessed by the Open  
House and Dedication of our new  
church. We were reminded that our  
church and each of us individually  
should be used for the service and  
glory of God. We extend a sincere  
thanks to those of you who came to  
be with us.

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**ILLINOIS, BRADFORD  
Chad and LauraLee Plattner**

We are thankful to have Rich and  
Paula Gillespie and their children  
(residents of the town of Bradford)  
assembling with us for the last cou-  
ple of months. Rich and Paula have  
begun seeking peace through repen-  
tance and conversion. We rejoice  
that they have chosen to make our  
church their home and it is encour-  
aging to see a true desire to follow  
the doctrine and traditions we hold  
so dear.

Don and Jennifer Moody wel-  
comed Faith Ann born on November  
16. She is also welcomed by her big  
sister, Alexandria, and grandpar-  
ents, Bro. Dennis and Sis. Becky  
Pyles.

Bro. Ben and Sis. Katie Endress  
are also thankful for the safe arrival  
of their second child. Marissa Ruth  
was born on December 3. Corbin is  
thrilled with his little sister, as are  
grandparents, Bro. Larry and Sis.  
Becky Endress and Bro. Richard and  
Sis. Marilyn Slutz.

On December 17, Bro. Roy Ehnle  
(Sis. Donna) announced to the con-  
gregation his retirement from the  
ministry. May God richly bless him  
for his countless labors over the past  
36 years.

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

As the year comes to a close, we  
have some changes taking place in  
the lives of a few people. Bro. Darren  
Schambach of Elgin has been a stu-  
dent with us and completed his pro-  
gram at UI. He is returning to his  
home area where he will be em-  
ployed by Caterpillar in Aurora.  
Darren was one of our students who  
seemed to really become a part of our  
church, and we will miss him. Bro.  
Chad and Sis. Laurie Keever and  
their always-cheerful toddler, Joel,  
are also moving on for other employ-  
ment opportunities. Chad came to  
Urbana from Mansfield and worked  
at one of the local hospitals, he met  
and married UI student Laurie, and  
they established themselves as a  
family here. Now they have moved  
on to live in Tremont and Chad will  
be on the staff at Timber Ridge in  
Morton. They, too, have been very  
involved with many aspects of our  
church. While we are sad to have  
them move on, we know that God

has work for them in their new setting and they will be a blessing to their new community. We always have room for a new person or a family to come take the place of someone who moved on.

"We Would See Jesus" was the title of the Sunday School Christmas program. The teachers and children did a fantastic job of telling how five different groups desperately sought Jesus. Each group who sought Him had their own motivations, and we as the audience were encouraged to renew our seeking of the Saviour. The five groups who sought Jesus were Mary and Joseph; shepherds and wise men; Herod; Simeon and Anna; and Greeks, Jews and contemporary man. Following the program, the church had its annual afternoon of caroling at care centers and returning to the church for a chili supper.

We were blessed to have visiting ministers this past month. They were Elder Bro. Wesley Knapp (Goodfield, IL) and ministering Bros. Steve Baner (Gridley, IL) and Paul Zimmerman (Forrest, IL). We're always glad to have visitors with us, and we thank these brothers for sharing their time with us.

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## ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

### Jill Rager

One of my favorite parts of our Christmas traditions is receiving cards from friends and family. It is nice to get caught up on news with those we do not see often. I always have the impulse to sit down and write back questions and responses on the spot, but the time it would take versus the added activity of the season makes it unfeasible. It can make me a little sad, and yet it encourages me to instead take these dear people to the Lord in prayer. I do not need to know all the details

because God knows them and better yet, is in control of them.

God orchestrated the details of the marriage union of Sis. Katie Gudeman (Dan Gudeman and Sis. Rebecca Gudeman) and Bro. Scott Klopfenstein (Bro. Dave and Sis. Lou Ann) of Phoenix, AZ, on December 17. We wish this dear couple warm congratulations and many happy returns to visit us as they will be establishing their home in Phoenix, AZ.

Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) conducted the wedding service and Bro. Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN) preached the morning service. We express our gratitude for their efforts.

Other visiting ministers this month were Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL) and Bro. Walt Rager (Toledo, OH). Our own Bro. Virgil Metzger presented a topical Bible study. Many thanks to them as well.

As family ties seem to become more evident at this time of year, we extend our sympathy to Bro. Boyd and Sis. Lois Metzger and Bro. Virgil and Sis. Mary Metzger and their families at the loss of Bro. Boyd and Bro. Virgil's mother, Sis. Ella Metzger of Lester, IA.

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## ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

### Darlene Walder

### Cheryl Eisenmann

Children are indeed a gift from God. We rejoice with Chris and Lynette Rudin on the birth of their daughter, Miranda Rose. Thankful grandparents are Gary and Elizabeth Rudin and Bro. Sid and Sis. Sandy Kaufmann. Bro. John and Sis. Jennifer Fehr rejoice with the arrival of Brian Lee. He is welcomed home by Aaron, Stephanie and Michelle. Grandparents are Bro.

Larry and Sis. Shirley Ifft (Forrest, IL) and William and Helen Fehr (Fairbury, IL).

All church Christmas caroling for our congregation was December 3. We divided up into groups and sang at various nursing homes in our area as well as to those who are shut in.

Our Christmas program was December 20. Our children brought us the Christmas story. We thank our teachers and students for their efforts.

Our congregation received a blessing from visiting minister, Bro. Glen Braker (Princeville, IL). May God give you a special blessing for your willingness to share God's Word with us.

Franklin, Bro. Lester and Sis. Lorene Rocke have moved to Fairview Haven Assisted Living Apartments in Fairbury. We will miss seeing their smiling faces.

"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. Matt Waldbeser (Bro. Fred and Sis. Joan) and Sis. Jerilyn Knobloch (Bro. Larry and Sis. Sherryl, Lester, IA) were joined in Holy Matrimony on December 10. We welcome Sis. Jerilyn to our congregation.

Hospital patients this month were Bro. Bob Greiner, Bro. Clarence Maul and Sis. Jennifer Fehr. Julie Edelman (Urban and Sis. Judy) cut her finger and had to have a few stitches.

Sis. Gladys Winger passed away on December 14. We extend our sympathy to her husband, Bro. George, and her children, Sis. Irma Jean Knapp, Sis. Lila Winger, Sis. Marilyn Winger and Gordon (Aldine)

Winger. There is a time to weep and mourn but when all this is past, the precious memories will linger on to comfort your hearts.

We would like to extend a special thanks to Sis. Darlene Walder for her three years of writing the Silver Lining.

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### ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE Glenna Rinkenberger

"Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord; and thy law is my delight."

*Psalm 119:173-174*

We rejoice with Bro. Fred and Sis. Mary Ellen Zimmerman as their daughters, Becky and Julie, have found peace with God and man and now await baptism. Our prayer would be that they would continue to seek His guidance and truly find delight in His law. We look forward to their testimonies and baptism January 20-21.

"If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."

*Job 14:14*

None of us know how long that wait may be or how soon it may end. These were part of the words spoken as our deepest heartfelt sympathy was extended to the Dietrich and Rapp families in the death of their loved ones in such a short time. Our Bro. Phil Rapp (Sis. Sadie) passed quickly and unexpectedly from this earthly life November 18. Our prayers continue with his dear wife and daughter, Allison.

On December 8, our precious Sis. Sarah Dietrich was released from her vessel of clay to await the Resurrection Day we all hope for. She

walked faithfully with her Lord for over 74 years. We will miss her happy presence sitting in her wheelchair at the back of church offering gum to all the children. Many families brought their children to the visitation to pay their last respects to Sis. Sarah. In our congregation she leaves behind a son, Bro. Bill (Sis. Sheri); a daughter, Sis. Sadie Rapp; and grandchildren, Bro. John (Sis. Renae) Dietrich, Bro. Tim (Sis. Sandy) Dietrich, Sis. Deb (Bro. Jim) Roth, and Allison Rapp; and several great-grandchildren.

"For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."

*Matthew 10:20*

Visiting ministers who spent Thanksgiving with us were Bros. Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN) and Tim Zimmerman (Lamont-Gridley, KS). Bro. Gene Lehman (Wolcott, IN) also lent himself for the Lord's use. We always appreciate each one so much.

Our Sis. Jeanette Knapp (Bro. Glenn) spent several days in the hospital and is recovering at home. We would also like to be prayerful for Bro. Richard Hasty who is home-bound and his wife, Sis. Kathe, who faithfully takes care of him day after day. There are also many elderly who no longer come to midweek services. Our prayer would be that they could feel the Lord's blessing for their desire to be among the brethren, for surely they are with us in the spirit.

We wish God's blessings upon David McClure (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sharon) who plans to be married to Kristin McIlrath on January 26.

All-church Christmas caroling was enjoyed again. The fellowship and the smiles of the people we sang

to are always a blessing.

Bob Wettstein (Bro. Vern and Sis. Judy) has completed his schooling in Omaha, NE. We look forward to having him assemble with us again soon as he looks for employment back here at home.

We have had significant snowfall already. As we consider the inconvenience and at the same time the beauty of it, it reminds us that we are not in control.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

Thank you for the cards, food, memorials, countless acts of kindness and especially the prayers on our behalf, following the sudden death of our dear husband, father and son. May God bless you all.

*The family of Bro. Phil Rapp*

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### ILLINOIS, ELGIN Amy Gasser Kay Kellenberger

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*

Many hearts were encouraged and uplifted as the Holy Word was brought forth by the following visiting ministers: Bro. Alan Schambach (Remington, IN) and Elder Bros. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) and Ron Messner (Washington, IL). We thank them for their willing service.

We rejoice with Bro. Greg and Sis. Joni Anliker as they begin their family. Darren Michael was born on November 25. His grandparents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Edith Anliker and Bro. Robert and Sis. Jeanne Schambach.

We extend our sympathy and prayers to Ella (John) Martin, Sis. Ida (Bro. Keith) Kellenberger and their families in the loss of their mother and grandmother, Sis. Ella Metzger (Bro. Ernst).

On December 16, Twila Schambach (Elder Bro. Ron and Sis. Nancy) and Jason Lahey were united in marriage. May they seek God's faithful guidance as they begin their new life together.

We ended the year with many events commemorating Christ's birth. December 10 was our annual Christmas caroling followed by a chili supper. Many families and friends gathered to sing carols to the elderly and shut-ins. At our Christmas program on December 17, we heard the Christmas story told by the Sunday School students. The story of Christ's birth rings strong in our hearts as we think upon that one silent night.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,  
and a light unto my path."

*Psalms 119:105*

May we all seek God's guidance

throughout the new year.

### ILLINOIS, EUREKA Janet Zimmerman

As with gladness men of old,  
did the guiding star behold,  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
leading onward, beaming bright,  
So, most gracious Lord, may we  
evermore be led by Thee.

*#856 Gospel Hymns*

As we begin the year 2001, may we put our trust in Jesus and He will guide us to our Heavenly Home.

November 26 our Sis. Rachel Stoller and Bro. Kurt Domnick (Morris, MN) were united in Holy Matrimony. We rejoice with them along with their parents, Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Sherry Stoller and Bro. Gary and Sis. Velma Domnick. Our love and prayers are with them as they make their home in Morris.

We are thankful another soul has turned against the world and all its allurements. We are happy for Rachel Zimmerman (Bro. Dale and Sis. Sue) and we pray that God will grant her grace to establish a firm foundation.

We express our heartfelt sympathy to Sis. Clara Hunzicker and Harley Hartter on the death of their sister, Sis. Dena Hunzicker. She died December 8. We also sympathize with Sis. Loretta Wiegand (Bro. Elton) on the death of her mother, Sis. Grace Strahm, of Sabetha, KS. Also to her brothers, Henry, Bro. Sam and Bro. Lewis Blunier. She died December 14. May these families find comfort in knowing that their loved ones are safely Home and free from all pain and sorrow and earthy toil.

We appreciated our visiting ministers we had this past month. On Thanksgiving day Bro. Floyd

Frieden (Elgin, IA) and Bro. Randy Mogler (Washington, IL) ministered to us. Our other visiting ministers were Elder Bros. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO), Art Nohl (Morris, MN), Bob Walder (Congerville, IL) and Bros. Mike Rinckenberger (Congerville, IL), Beirne Messner and Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN), Lenny Meyer (Chicago, IL) and Byron Stoller (Gridley, IL). May God bless each one.

Five-month-old Tamara Edelman was hospitalized for open heart surgery recently. We are thankful that her surgery was successful and that she is now at home. Her parents are Bro. Keith and Sis. Nadine Edelman.

Bro. Darin and Sis. Tami Kupferschmid welcomed their first child, Caleb Michael, born November 28. His grandparents are Glen and Sis. Becky Bauman and Bro. Rich and Sis. Maribeth Kupferschmid. Also, Bro. Gary and Sis. Gail Getz have a new boy, Trevor Andrew. He was born December 1 and has a sister, Jennifer, and brothers, David and Brandon, to help love and care for him. His grandparents are Bro. Allan and Sis. Nathalia Getz and Bro. Lawrence and Sis. Elaine Wagenbach of Princeville.

Bro. Trent and Sis. Lucy Meiss have a baby girl, Natalie Ann, born December 16. At this writing, their baby is hospitalized. We pray for God's healing hand upon her. She has two sisters, Amelia and Serena, and one brother, Cade. Her grandparents are Edwin and Sis. Barb Meiss and Bro. Lee and Sis. Janet Kuenzi (Silverton, OR).

Sunday evening, December 10, we had our Christmas program. Our church was full as grandparents, aunts and uncles came to hear their loved ones sing and recite scripture verses of Jesus' birth. We trust each



one received a special blessing.

Bro. Brian Leman (Bro. Terry and Sis. Shirl) has moved to Lamar, MO. We wish him God's blessings in his new job and as he makes his home there. We will miss him, but look forward to his return visits.

### *The New Year*

The years that come, the years  
that go,  
As volumes written plain,  
Are stored upon the shelf of time  
Where memories remain.

Each year is like a little book  
With leaves and covers bound,  
our deeds and acts are written  
there,  
The year's events are found.

The great Librarian keeps the  
books;  
our records are all true.  
And from the pages written plain  
Our lives we may review.

To childhood days our thoughts  
return;  
There memories abound.  
The life once free from care and  
toil  
Within these books are found.

Within these books of youth we  
find  
That toil and cares increase;  
The doubting heart and wavering  
mind  
Yea, less of joy and peace.

Our youth is filled with joy and  
mirth,  
And, lest we would forget,  
The books record our wayward  
life;  
There's much we do regret.

When manhood days come into  
view,

our strength will scarce suffice  
To give us courage, purpose true,  
In trials, toil and strife.

And then the year eventful came,  
Most precious to achieve,  
When on the great Librarian's  
name  
We truly could believe.

The record of the past events  
Was all removed by grace.  
He then a book with pages fair  
Within our hearts did place.

We trust that He may now record  
Some deeds of truth and light!  
May goodness in our life abound  
To make the pages bright.

He knows the weakness of our  
frame,  
Our failings all, no less.  
And for His love and mercy's  
sake  
Our hearts' book He will bless.

When once the Records all are  
made,  
Though few our deeds may be:  
If to my own these deeds you've  
done,  
You've done it unto me.

This year will come, the grand  
New Year;  
No bounds shall mark its days.  
Eternal life by merits won,  
We'll join in endless praise.  
—Henry Beer

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### ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY Sally Fehr Joann Zehr

"...That in all things He might  
have the pre-eminence."  
*Colossians 1:18*

"Would it not be a wise thing,  
here at the threshold of the New  
Year to walk through the rooms of  
your home, to search the chambers  
of your soul, and find if there are not  
things which should be submitted to  
the flames? God's power, in limitless  
abundance, is waiting to come into  
the souls that are willing to accept  
the fire test by surrendering all to  
Him."

—Mountain Trailways For Youth

Three new little babies will bring  
joy to their families in the new year.  
Born to Bro. Brian and Sis. Kara  
Stoller was Kate Leanne on Novem-  
ber 28. Kate has a brother, Derek.  
Her grandparents are Bro. Carlos  
and Sis. Jane Meiss and Bro. Dale  
and Sis. Sandra Stoller.

Bro. Michael and Sis. Holly  
Steidinger were blessed with a new  
baby boy, Wyatt Joseph. He was  
born on December 8. His brother,  
Colton, and sister, Katelyn, as well  
as his grandparents, Bro. Dennis  
and Sis. Jane Steidinger and Bro.  
Joe and Sis. Kathy Rokey (Bern,  
KS), welcome him.

Bro. Eldon and Sis. Darlene  
Steidinger have a new granddaugh-  
ter. Kaylie Ann was born November  
25 to Andy and Kim Travis. Other  
grandparents are Martin Travis and  
Cheryl Travis.

"And thou hast also appointed  
prophets to preach of thee..."  
*Nehemiah 6:7*

We were blessed by the visits of  
brethren appointed of God to preach  
His Word: Bros. Paul Schmidgall  
(Morris, MN), Al Schambach  
(Remington, IN), Jerry Wagenbach  
(Oakville, IA) and Gary Brown (For-  
rest, IL). We appreciate your faithful  
service to the Lord and to us.

We extend our sympathy to Sis.

Ruth and Sis. Roberta Meyer in the loss of their brother and uncle, Bro. Alphai Witzig (Gridley, IL).

Hospital patients this month included: Bro. Dick Wiegand (Sis. Betty), Sis. Louise Hartman (Bro. Warren) and convert, Ralph Hoffman. Our prayers are with you.

*Thoughts for a Holy New Year*  
I resolve by the grace of God:

1. Never to discuss the faults and failures of absent ones. — Prov. 16:28
2. Never to divulge secrets. — Prov. 11:13
3. Never to repeat a matter. — Prov. 17:9
4. Rather to remain silent when there is nothing that I can say to another's advantage. — Titus 3:2
5. To set a watch upon my lips. — Psalm 39:1
6. Always to attribute the best motives. — I Cor. 13:7
7. Never to judge others. — I Cor. 4:3-5
8. To talk less and listen more.
9. To take time to be friendly.
10. To be uniformly courteous.
11. To shun debt.
12. To do an hour's solid reading.
13. To cultivate patience.
14. That should I fail in any one of the above resolutions, to repent and confess it immediately, and if necessary, to ask an injured brother's forgiveness.

—Anonymous

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**ILLINOIS, FORREST**  
**Jean Knapp**  
**Linda Anliker**

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward."

*Psalm 127:3*

First-time parents, Ryan and Tabby Honegger, welcome Kara Lynn into their hearts and home. Kara's grandparents are Ron and Lori Franz (Pontiac) and Bro. Lloyd and Joyce Honegger.

Putting their trust in he Lord, Bro. Kyle Walter (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Karen, Silvertown, OR) and Sis. Trisha Young's (Bro. Terry and Sis. Peggy) engagement was announced. As they make wedding plans, may they continue to look to Him for guidance.

Dan Eisenmann (Bro. John and Sis. Bev) and Abby Rinkenberger (Bro. Terry and Sis. Deb Nussbaum) were married in November. May their love continue to grow as they walk together as husband and wife.

We are thankful for Elder Bro. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN) and ministering Bros. Tom Stock and Sid Kaufmann (both of Cissna Park, IL) who lovingly brought us the Gospel of salvation during this past month.

Spending time in the hospital were Sis. Donna (Bro. Larry) Bachman, Sis. Emma (Bro. Elmer) Ifft and Sis. Irene (Bro. Ben) Traub.

*Note of Thanks:*

Our humble thank you to all our loved ones for your prayers and many deeds of love on our behalf. May God bless each one.

*Bro. Bill and Sis. Jean Aberle*

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**ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD**  
**Heather Hohulin**

How thankful we are to have welcomed three souls into our family. They are Sis. Emily Zeltwanger (Bro. Loren and Sis. Rhonda), Sis. Christy Wiegand (Bro. Ron and Sis. Barb), and Sis. Jenni Grimm (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Ruth). We hope and trust that God will continue to pro-

vide for their every need as they continue serving Him. Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman was here to serve us as well as Bros. Rick Plattner (Peoria, IL), Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN), Brian Huber (Francesville, IN) and Byron Stoller (Gridley, IL).

What a miracle it is when God unites two souls. We were excited to hear of the wedding announcement of Sis. Melissa Leman (Bro. Ben and Sis. Janet) to Bro. Matt Kaufman (Linda Kaufman and Warren Kaufman). We wish them God's blessings as they plan for a wedding and a new life together.

Our prayers are with Ray Wagner (Sis. Vi) as he had surgery this last month. We pray that God will be with him in his recovery.

Bro. Rob, Sis. Kelly and Kambria Wiegand welcomed home a new baby girl, Kerigan Rae. How thankful we are for another precious miracle from God.

As we welcome in the New Year, may we strive to keep our relationship with Jesus number one. The whole year stretches out before us like a new white snow. What will we do with it? May God be our Guide as we live each day.

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**ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY**  
**Perry A. Klopfenstein**

In sorrow and pain  
Thy trust do retain  
In Jesus,  
the merciful Saviour.

He'll shield and defend  
His child to the end.  
No suff'ring or death  
Shall appall thee.

Keep Him for your gain,  
Earth's pleasures are vain;  
Sweet rest is found

only in Heaven.

*Zion's Harp #46*

The pain and death has been felt in our Gridley congregation. Two dear souls, Bro. Alph Witzig, 93, and Sis. Lorene Kiefer, 92, went on to their eternal reward. God granted a long life to both of them. Yet, as mortals, our days are numbered and finality faces each of us, if the dear Lord tarries.

Bro. Alph Witzig passed away on December 9. He had lived at the Eureka Home since 1993. He was a grandson of our first resident Elder, Bro. Rudolph Witzig (who died in 1912).

Bro. Alph is survived by his dear wife of 66 years, Sis. Lillian, who resides in Eureka; and three sons, Bro. Bruce Witzig, Peoria; Eldon Witzig, Roanoke; and Duane Witzig, Bloomington; three sisters, Sis. Pauline Witzig, Eureka; Ruth Meyer, Fairbury; and Sis. Anna Schneider, Peoria; a brother, Bro. Elmer Witzig, Gridley. A total of 13 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren also survive.

Bro. Alph was a man of few words. His quietness lent a dignity to his life. On a personal note, I remember that during my repentance (in 1968) he was very encouraging to me. He told me not to get discouraged. He said, "Satan will always try to tell you that you didn't repent right." I appreciated that and often have thought of him when Satan would try to cause doubts.

On the frigid morning of December 20, Sis. Lorene Kiefer was laid to rest. She had died on December 16 after a long stay at the Eureka Home. She had been married for 62 years to Bro. Eli Kiefer, who died on January 24, 1990. Her survivors are four sons: Bro. Larry Kiefer, Gridley, and Donald J. Kiefer,

Minonk; Kenneth Kiefer, North Reddington Beach, FL; and Michael Kiefer, Lees Summit, MO; two brothers, Bro. Amos J. Funk, Bloomington, and Bro. Eugene Funk, Washington; and a sister, Sis. Barbara Meiss, Eureka. Also, 13 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren.

She came from the era of hard work and was an industrious person. Although she has been absent from our local congregation for years, many of us remember her as a gentle and kindly person. She loved her dear children and grandchildren. Sis. Lorene will be missed.

Jackson Wettstein was born on November 25 to Bro. Doug and Sis. Sarah Wettstein. He is their third child. Other siblings are Taylor, 6, and Colin, 3. Grandparents are Bro. David and Sis. Gloria Wettstein and Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida Mueller (Forrest, IL). Great-grandparents are Bro. David and Sis. Mary Kaeb (Fairbury, IL) and Edna Mueller (Forrest, IL).

Sis. Hermine Miller was injured in a fall but is doing better. Bro. Clyde Kuntz was injured when a dump truck he was driving tipped over, leaving him unconscious. He recovered quickly and escaped serious injury, thanks be to God.

Our visiting ministers were Bros. Brace Wieland (December 3) and Tim Hohulin (December 10).

As a new year begins to unfold, our goal should be to draw closer to God. Reading the Bible is one avenue to this end. A Gallup poll reported that those who read the Bible occasionally dropped from 73 percent in the 1980's to 59 percent today. Only 16 percent read the Bible daily; 21 percent weekly and 12 percent monthly. Forty-one percent never read the Bible.

Following God's Word and Spirit

constitutes our only hope for happiness and family stability.

*Note of Thanks:*

We want to thank everyone for your overwhelming love and support shown us during Rosella's battle with cancer and since her passing; for the many prayers, cards, gifts, flowers, food, words of encouragement, and your many "labors of love".

Your love and kindness will always be remembered.

May God bless each of you.

*Bro. Larry, Mike and Mark Knapp*

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### ILLINOIS, MORTON Phyllis Farney Cheryl Wuthrich

December 10 found us rejoicing with Sis. Amanda Zimmerman and Bro. Drew Leman (Roanoke, IL) as they were united in Holy Matrimony. Sis. Amanda is the daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Sue Zimmerman. Bro. Drew is the son of Bro. Bill and Sis. Jeannie Leman (Roanoke, IL). May the Lord richly bless them as they now serve Him together.

Bro. Todd and Sis. Wendy Sauder are first-time parents with the birth of Caleb Todd. Caleb was born December 11. His happy grandparents are Bro. Bruce and Sis. Becky Sauder ((Tremont, IL) and Bro. Ted and Sis. Cindy Witzig. May the Lord grant them wisdom to raise Caleb in His ways.

The announcement of Sis. Rachel Knobloch (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Diane, Bradford, IL) to Bro. Tim Braker (Elder Bro. Joe and Sis. Shirley) was made known on December 10. May the Lord richly bless them during this time of preparing for their marriage and life together.

The congregation always enjoys

the traditional Christmas season activities. On December 10, the all church Christmas caroling was held. The carolers received a blessing as they sang for the elderly and shut-in. Caroling was followed by a chili supper at church. On December 17, the Sunday School Christmas program was held. One never tires of hearing the old, old story as brought to the congregation in song and verse by the young people.

The election for various church positions was held. The new Sunday ushers are Bros. Kip Taufer, Jeff Steffen and Tim Braker; the visiting brother is Bro. Ken Getz; funeral usher, Bro. Al Hunziker; Church Trustee, Bro. Billy Daniel; Restmor Trustee, Bro. Ed Kaiser; Cemetery Trustee, Bro. Lawrence Tanner; and Fellowship Hall Trustee, Bro. Mark Stephens. We thank those brothers whose terms have now expired. We wish the new brothers much grace from God as they fulfill their duties.

We were blessed with many visiting ministers and their families this month. The visitors were Bros. Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL), Ron Heiniger (Bloomington, IL), Dean Steffen (Belvidere, IL), Chuck Kellenberger (Elgin, IL) and Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO). Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO) attended the wedding of his grandson, Bro. Drew Leman, to Sis. Amanda Zimmerman on December 10. May the Lord continue to bless them richly for their labors.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

We would like to express our sincere appreciation for all the prayers, cards, gifts and kind expressions of sympathy we received at the passing of our beloved Bro. Phil. May God bless each of you for your thoughtfulness.

*Sis. Sara and Allison Rapp*

*Bro. Henry and Sis. Bernice Rapp and family*

### **ILLINOIS, PEORIA**

#### **Peter and Mabel Weber**

**THANKSGIVING.** The wind rustles through the remaining leaves and drives a few flurries across the yard. It is easy to be introspective and thankful for God's many blessings: making the earth of 6 sextillion tons (six and 21 zeroes), tilting 23 degrees to give us our beautiful seasons, with a circumference of 25,000 miles, rotating at 1,000 miles per hour without spinning us off and providing Jesus and His righteousness, which enables us to come before God. He rolled out the firmament like a scroll and lit the sun perfectly for us here on earth. If He can light the sun, He can illuminate our path so we know the right way to go. (Bro. Dave Oberghel). We thank our beloved ministers for proclaiming God to us, Who ordains all things while giving us the option of free will and keeping us in touch with our limitations and shortcomings.

We thank Bro. Scott Schafer and his family (South Bend, IN) for their visit on November 26 and his ministry. The light of the Word is "on" all the time...all we have to do is open it. Put thankfulness into action. We can demonstrate the first part of Thanks///Giving pretty well; the giving is more difficult. Jesus gave His love and service to His disciples to the end. How much does He love us? He stretched out His arms and died. We should model ourselves after Jesus because, when we give, we are more like God.

Bro. Marshall Heinold (Ixtlan, Mexico) visited us on November 29 and we thank him for his sermon. Are we willing to make a total commitment to God, with our bodies as a

living sacrifice, prepared to be different and give a testimony, or are we intimidated? Satan can imitate a Christian, but not the work of the Holy Spirit. Five young men from the Ixtlan area, for whom he had arranged four months' work in Peoria in landscaping and maintenance under the H2B Government program, returned with him to Ixtlan on November 30. Bro. John and Sis. Serena Hoerr were especially helpful in looking after them, purchasing Spanish Bibles, bringing them to Church every Sunday and offering other support services. The Hoerr firm and families provided lasting spiritual and temporal benefits for them, which is a true reflection of the spirit of Christ in action.

On December 3 it was 50 years that we moved from the Green Street location, where the congregation had assembled for 54 years, to our present address. God has been so good to us and we hope and pray this will be the sanctuary of the true Word until the Lord comes back (Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer).

"Creation vs. Evolution" was the topic of Bro. Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL) for our family night on December 6. Nobody here doubts the biblical account, but it is easy to become confused with the constant media barrage. Before sin, there was no death. The world did not begin, but will end, with a big bang. Is there a God, Who created all, or are we here by happenstance? Only God is prehistoric. Evolutionists have less evidence today than at Darwin's time. God created the earth in six 24-hour days. When Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980, the same conditions, which evolutionists claim took millions of years to create, were created in a matter of days. Evolutionists search for proof of their theories. The carbon test goes only 1000 years

back. The faster technology grows and the more we study cell structures and DNA's, the more we realize there is a designer, God, and one race from Adam and Eve without any differences. At the beginning, man lived 1000 years; dinosaurs could have grown to large sizes, but only 5% were huge. We know God in our hearts, see Him all around us and must be careful not to embrace anything which is not scriptural. Thanks, Bro. Jim, for a very enlightening and blessed evening.

Reporting, collecting, tabulating, printing, mailing the Silver Lining add up to a long lead-time and occasionally personal news overtake themselves from the time of reporting until you read them (hospital patients have long gone home). It hasn't happened since 1876 that a president-elect wasn't known shortly after the polls closed, but this time we learned about counting chads, dimples, magnifying glasses, legal maneuvers. Bro. Ken Hoerr: chads show a hole was punched all the way through; on dimples there is just a little indentation. With God, there is no election dispute. If we make a commitment to Him, is the hole completely punched out or is part of it still holding on and our commitment is not 100%? Have we allowed the perforation to be knocked out completely or are we like those dimples, showing just a little indentation? Today would be an opportunity to make a clear choice.

Bro. Alph Witzig (93) passed away at the Eureka Home on December 9 and we express our sincere sympathy to Bro. Bruce and his family and Sis. Anna Schneider, his sister.

Luke Aaron joined David, Caleb, Jessica and Logan on July 10 to become their favorite playmate. We congratulate his parents, Bro. David

and Sis. Rachel Sauder, and grandparents, Bro. David and Sis. Rita Sauder and Bro. Paul and Sis. Rhoda Meister (their 35th grandchild).

Sis. Viola Herman was a hospital patient and is now recuperating at the Skylines. We hope she can soon return home. Did you hear of the caller who contacted hospital information to find out how Mr. Smith in 501 was doing? The operator said: "Just a minute" and then "he's doing fine and going home tomorrow; and what is your name?" He replied: "I am Mr. Smith and cannot find out anything from my doctor."

The old, old story of Christmas, which never grows old, was recalled in word and song by the Sunday School on December 17 and we thank all who participated in recreating this blessed event in heart and mind. When Gabriel made the announcement of the Lord's birth to Mary, she became the first human to doubt, but soon replied "Be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). And Jesus laid aside part of His Deity to show us the nature of God and provide the promised way of salvation.

Note: The Silver Lining subscription is still \$11.00 and due now. If unable to put it in the collection boxes, please mail it to Bro. Ken Hoerr, 9619 N Rt. 91, Peoria, IL 61615.

We wish you a blessed 2001.

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### ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

**Mary Ehnle**

**Crystal Streitmatter**

We rejoice with our friends, Andrew Feucht and Brooke Baurer (Roanoke, IL), in their recent engagement. Their parents are Bro. Jordan and Sis. Kathy Feucht and Bro. Brad and Sis. Cheryl Baurer (Roanoke, IL). We wish them God's blessings as they plan their wedding

for June 23.

Our visiting ministers this past month have brought us a special blessing. We thank Bro. Ted Hirstein (Morton, IL) and Elder Bros. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL), Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL) and Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) for their willingness to serve us.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

*I Thess. 4:13-14*

We hope that these verses among many others will bring comfort to our ministering Bro. Glen Braker and Sis. Audrey and their family in the loss of his dear mother, Sis. Clara Braker (Roanoke, IL). How thankful we can be for our hope of being reunited in Heaven!

Our loved ones who have undergone surgery this last month are Sis. Janette Graham (Bro. Richard) and Bro. Bob Scholl (Sis. Arlene). We pray for God's healing hand upon them.

On Sunday, December 16, 2000, our ministering Bro. Art Baurer (Sis. Joy) preached his last sermon, and his wish to retire from the ministry of the Gospel was made known. He has served our congregation for the past 34 years, since March 1966. We thank him for his many labors on behalf of our congregation, and wish him God's blessings in the years to come.

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**ILLINOIS, ROANOKE**

**Linda Hodel  
Boni Stoller**

When a Christian dies  
precious is the prize!  
Lasting joys for days of sorrow,  
Rest from conflict on the morrow  
Follows when he dies.  
When a Christian dies,  
His grief buried lies.  
All distress and tribulation  
In death's slumber find cessa-  
tion...

*Hymns of Zion #248*

This month, three dear souls  
have gained the precious prize and  
their distress and tribulation are  
over.

The oldest brother in our church,  
Bro. Joe D. Leman, passed away No-  
vember 24. His funeral service was  
held Monday, November 27. Our  
sympathy and prayers are with his  
children, Bro. Marvin (Sis. Jane),  
Wallace (Sis. Marilyn), Sis. Karen  
and Sis. Fern; and his two brothers,  
Bro. Irvin and Bro. Wilmer (Sis.  
Lavina). He was a pillar in our  
church and always had a smile and  
encouraging word.

Our dear Sis. Clara Braker was  
relieved of her earthly burdens on  
December 3. Her funeral service was  
held December 6. Her family surely  
has many precious memories of her.  
They are: Bro. Don (Sis. Eileen),  
Bro. Marvin (Sis. Michaleen), Bro.  
Harland (Sis. Martha), Bro. Jim (Sis.  
Marge), Bro. Morris, Bro. Glen (Sis.  
Audrey), Lois (Gary) Phipps, Betty  
(Joe) Vaughan, and Sis. Jane Hilton.

The funeral for Sis. Josephine  
Jeck was held Monday, December  
11. She is survived by a stepdaugh-  
ter, Maryellen (Cliff) Lehman; two  
sisters, Ruth (Joe) Tibbetts and Fan-  
nie Beer; and two brothers, Robert  
Beer and Jacob (Doris) Beer. Sis. Jo-

sephine had been ill and unable to at-  
tend church for quite some time. We  
are thankful that she is now safe in  
the arms of Jesus.

The blessed story of the Christ,  
the Babe of Bethlehem, is worthy of  
our song and praise, and stirs the  
hearts of men. Surely He is worthy of  
our praise and what a blessing it was  
to hear the story of His birth and  
praises sung as our children pre-  
sented their Christmas program on  
December 17. Their joy was evident  
and their faces shone as they sang  
their songs and recited their pieces.

December 3 was an opportunity  
for all who wished to participate in  
an all church caroling. After the var-  
ious groups had gone out and car-  
oled, they returned to church for a  
chili supper and blessed evening of  
fellowship.

December 10 was a very special  
day for Bro. Drew Leman and Sis.  
Amanda Zimmerman (Morton, IL)  
as they joined hand and heart. May  
God bless their union with many  
happy years. Their parents are Bro.  
Bill and Sis. Jeannie Leman and Bro.  
Mike and Sis. Sue Zimmerman  
(Morton).

We are thankful for our visiting  
ministers and pray God will bless  
them for their efforts. They are Bros.  
Will Schieler and Mike Leman. We  
welcome you back any time.  
Our only hospital patient that I  
know of was Carol Whitten. We are  
thankful she is home and recovering  
from knee surgery.

*Note of Thanks:*

I want to thank everyone for the  
cards and gifts. It was so nice to be re-  
membered on my 82nd birthday.  
God bless you all.

*Doris Bowald*

**ILLINOIS, TREMONT**

**Heather Rassi  
LaVonne Wagenbach**

When a Christian dies  
Precious is the prize!  
Lasting joys for days of sorrow  
Rest from conflict on the morrow  
Follows when he dies.

*Hymns of Zion #248*

We are comforted by these words  
as the Lord called Home one of His  
saints, our dear Sis. Ella Schweigert.  
May God comfort her family: Bro.  
Leslie (Sis. Betty), Willard (Della),  
Clifford (Roberta), Sis. Elizabeth  
Sauder (Bro. Robert), Sis. Lydia  
Rassi (Bro. Arnold), all of Tremont;  
Sis. Pearl Rassi (Bro. Elias) and Bro.  
Reuben of Morton; and Virginia  
Frietach (George) of St. Louis; and  
many nieces and nephews. There are  
many fond memories of Sis. Ella as  
she labored many years as a Sunday  
School teacher.

Our thoughts and prayers have  
been with Bro. Leslie Schweigert  
(Sis. Betty), Bro. Walter Aberle (Sis.  
Vera) and Bro. Robert Frank (Sis.  
Rosemary) who were hospitalized  
recently. Also, Bro. Jess Koch (Sis.  
Amy) who is undergoing outpatient  
treatment.

We want to thank visiting minis-  
ters, Bros. Dennis Rassi (Fairbury,  
IL) and John Stoller (Leo, IN) for  
their labors of love.

New grandparents are Bro. Dale  
and Sis. Jane Kaufmann. Bro. Brad  
and Sis. Tonya Kaufmann (Morton,  
IL) were blessed with a little boy,  
Domniq, on October 23. Also, Bro.  
Todd and Sis. Wendy Sauder (Mor-  
ton, IL) were blessed with a son,  
Caleb Todd, born December 11. Bro.  
Bruce and Sis. Becky Sauder are the  
first-time grandparents. A first child  
is a special blessing. We wish these  
dear ones much grace and wisdom as

they train up their sons in the Lord's ways.

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## ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

**Denise Romersberger**

**Susan Ruppert**

Even though the calendar states that winter is not officially here, the several inches of snow outside makes us think that winter indeed is here! As soon as the weather turns cold and snowy, we hear complaints about the awful weather we are having. It is as though we think that we will not get snow in Illinois in the winter, although snow in Illinois in the winter is an annual event. Are we so busy complaining about the weather that we forget to look around for the beauty and the blessings that come along with the snow? (Who hasn't enjoyed a day in a warm home, holed up against the weather?) Do we react this way in our spiritual lives as well? Do we complain when persecutions come? Do we complain when we have trials and tribulations? Do we not remember that Christ has said that trials, tribulations and persecutions will come because we are in the world and not of it? Do we forget that all of these things are things that we should expect? Are we too busy complaining about how tough life is, and then miss the blessing of God's close presence or wisdom gained? Stop and look for the beauty in your life today!

We were glad to have Bro. Marshall Heinold with us as he returned for a visit from Ixtlan, Mexico. It was encouraging to hear of the growth that small church is experiencing and of what the Lord is doing there.

Sis. Lisa Steiner has relocated to California to be closer to her family there. She will be attending the Altadena church. We have enjoyed having her in our Washington

church family for several years and will miss her. We pray that God will continue to guide her in her new endeavors.

Sis. Ella Metzger, sister-in-law to Sis. Pearline Streitmatter and Sis. Lydian Wyss, died in Lester, IA. We pray for God's comforting presence to the family in this time of loss.

The Sunday School children blessed us with a wonderful Christmas program, delayed by a few days because of inclement weather. The theme was "Jesus loves the children of the world", and the children and young adults surprised family members and friends by singing Christmas carols in five different languages. Thank you to all the students, teachers, parents, and others who put time and effort into this endeavor. It was worth the wait!

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## INDIANA, BLUFFTON

**Beth Aschliman**

**Tonia Isch**

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

*Luke 2:11*

Greetings to all this blessed holiday season. We are so thankful for the most precious gift of all, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Giving their hearts to Him this month are Alysa Fiechter (Bro. Steve and Sis. Fonda) and Ashley Miller. Our prayers are with them as they follow our dear Saviour.

Jeff and Jennifer Hudson gave birth to Hailey Nicole on November 12. Happy sister Ashley, and grandparents, Bro. Craig and Sis. Jean Steffen, welcomed her into this world.

On November 19, Sis. Nichole Ploetz (Norbert and Jeanne) and Bro. Ron Aschliman (Bro. Ralph and

Sis. Rosie) were joined together in Holy Matrimony. We wish them God's richest blessings in their walk together as one. Thanks go to Bro. Brace Wieland (Sis. Brenda, Leo, IN) for sharing with us on this special day.

Bro. Chad Lantz (Bro. Jim and Sis. Kathy) and Sis. Stephanie Reinhard (Bro. Steve and Sis. Renee) were announced to be wed. We are so happy for them.

We will miss Sis. Ida Gehring who has gone Home to be with our Lord. Her children are LaVerna, DeWayne, Sis. Betty Baumgartner, and Bro. Clarren.

Spending time in the hospital this month were Sis. Ada Gerber (Bro. Henry), Bro. Curt Tonner (Sis. Jeanette), Bro. Quinn Fiechter (Bro. Jim and Sis. Jenny), Sis. Irene Reinhard, Bro. Todd Reimschisel (Sis. Lori), Bro. Roy Reinhard (Sis. Vergene). We will continue to pray for all of them this holiday season and throughout the new year.

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## INDIANA BLUFFTON NORTH

**Ann Meyer**  
**Rhonda Maller**

Oh holy night, the stars are brightly shining,  
it is the night of the dear Saviour's birth.

Our congregation was blessed with songs of worship and praise by our Sunday School students this past Sunday. From the little ones who sang about the star that led three wise men, to the junior high students who sang and shared memory verses, to the high school rendition of "Oh Holy Night", it was a service of joy.

"And the Lord God said, it is not

good that man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

*Genesis 2:18,24*

Sis. Diane Mason is pleased to announce the engagement of her daughter, Kara Green, to Brian White of Fishers, IN. The special day is set for March 10.

Bro. Travis Bussel (Bro. Dave and Sis. Kathy) was united in marriage (in spite of the weather) to Sis. Missy Frieden (Leo, IN). Missy's parents are Bro. Jeff and Sis. Deb Frieden of Lamont, KS.

Bro. Truman and Sis. Marge Baumgartner celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this December. What a special testimony of Godly love and commitment.

We offer our congratulations to each of these couples and pray that God will continue to bless their lives together.

Bro. Jim Geisel, Sis. Dula Pulver, Sis. Vi Isch (Bro. Roger) and our friend, Ryan Steffen, have all spent time in the hospital. We are thankful to place them in the Lord's loving hands and pray that He will restore them to good health. He is an ever present help in time of need.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

*Psalms 116:15*

Bro. Walter (Jr.) Neuenchwander (Sis. Joyce), Sis. Marilyn Gerber (Bro. Charles) and Sis. Carolyn Meyer (Bro. John) joined hands in sorrow and joy as they said good-bye to their mother, Sis. Edna Neuenchwander. Although they rejoice that she has won the victory and is safe in the arms of Jesus, we

know they will miss her. We extend our sympathy to them and their extended families.

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## INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE

### Lily Pelsy

Finding peace with God and man, Jon Eide (Karen, Chuck and Debbie) has experienced the marvelous power of God in his life.

May God's strength be with Sis. Millie Huber (Bro. Eugene) and Sis. Catherine Neihouser who had hospitalizations.

John Benakovich passed away this past month. We express sympathy to his son, Ron Benakovich (Karen).

Two families are rejoicing in the miracle of a new baby. November 28, Courtney Noelle was born to Bro. Burt and Sis. Karlene Isch. Happy sisters are Keelin and Katie. Grandparents are Bro. Al and Sis. Carole Isch (Bluffton, IN) and Bro. Karland Sis. Donna Westfall.

Megan Jayne was born to Bro. Ben and Sis. Deana Cook on December 8. She has a sister, Michaela, and thankful grandparents, Sis. Debbie Cook and Bro. Roger and Sis. Janet Overmyer. May God's blessings be upon these homes.

Much thanks to Bros. Dan Kilgus (Remington, IN) and Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN) who brought forth the Word of Life.

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

*Psalms 19:14*

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## INDIANA INDIANAPOLIS

### Gail Bradford

Our city earned its reputation as the "Crossroads of America" as we

had many visitors this month, including visiting ministers, Bros. David Obergfel (Sis. Kathleen, Peoria, IL), Jaye Rinckenberger (Sis. Peggy, Goodfield, IL), Brian Huber (Sis. Jacki, Francesville, IN) and Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth, Goodfield, IL).

Bro. Bob Meyer (Bluffton North, IN) gave an interesting presentation on a recent Wednesday night. He shared some very wise words from a life rich with experience and grounded in faith.

Some of our congregation visited the Indianapolis Boys and Girls Schools to share the Good News of Jesus' birth to the struggling young people incarcerated in these facilities. We are thankful that these institutions welcome Christians inside their walls. In December, the Sunday School classes visited needy families, singing carols and distributing gifts to the children. We also visited the residents at the Broad Ripple Nursing Home whom we see each month.

Last Sunday, a snowfall and high winds caused our church services to be canceled. This rare event was an occasion to reflect on how much we appreciate worshipping God together, and how much we miss the fellowship when we can't assemble for whatever reason.

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

*I John 1:7*

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## INDIANA, LACROSSE Jeremy and Natalie Freed

The Gift of this Night  
Oh, Jesus our Saviour,  
The Gift of this night,  
Below a star shining



So peaceful and bright.  
Born of a virgin  
From the womb of God's seed,  
In the midst of a time  
With so many in need.  
The Son of our God,  
The Spirit He gave,  
To love and forgive  
That we may be saved.

—Michael B. Smith

Is your heart open to Christ Jesus, sent by God to redeem your soul? He was born of a virgin, lived as a man, and arose again to be with God. His promise is to return again, this time in the clouds, to take His children to Heaven. Are you ready? The Sunday School hosted a nice program reminding us of the Christ Child.

Sis. Jessica Feller testified of her conversion and readiness to meet God. Our congregation enjoyed hearing how God used family to express His love for her. We rejoice to greet her as a sister in Christ.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Marshall Heinold, and Elder Bros. Bill Schlatter and Aaron Steffen. We appreciate the inspired Word.

Those in need of prayer for healing are John Ailes, who had double knee surgery and our Sis. Lizzie Pfladderer.

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### INDIANA, LEO Ethelyn Schlatter

On Thanksgiving Day we were blessed with two visiting ministers, Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City, MO), Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL) and their families. They both have relatives here. They encouraged us to pray for our national leaders. We praise God for His choice of a president; we need to continue praying. Bro. Greg Stieglitz

(Indianapolis, IN) visited us on the following Sunday. His messages are so clear and plain. May the Lord bless them all. They also need our prayers.

A baby girl, Hayli Rose, gladdened the home of Bro. Dave and Sis. Jodi Kieser and their son, Zachary. Grandparents are Sis. Shirley Kieser and Bro. Al and Sis. Vicki Hartzler all of Princeville, IL. Congratulations and God's blessings.

Bro. Steve Schrenk had surgery on his hand following an accident while putting away farm machinery. Bro. Paul Fischer had surgery on his foot after injuring a tendon in a fall. We rejoice that the Lord is granting healing and continue to pray for complete recovery for both of them.

On December 10, the Sunday School classes took us on a journey to Bethlehem in song and scripture verse. It is a wonderful time of year as we rejoice in the gift God gave. May we retain His love, joy and peace in the coming New Year.

We gathered at church to organize into five groups to go Christmas caroling. We then all returned for a light lunch. We had more snow this year than the last couple years.

It was very blustery on the wedding day of Sis. Melissa Frieden and Bro. Travis Bussel, but it did not hinder her parents, Bro. Jeff and Sis. Debbie, from traveling from Lamont-Gridley, KS. Bro. Dave and Sis. Cathy Bussel (Bluffton North, IN) and many other family and friends braved the winter storm on December 17. We pray the Lord grant them much happiness and many blessings in their future walk together.

Congratulations to Brooke Souder (Mark and Diane) and Jeffrey Lyons on their marriage the same day. She is the granddaughter of Sis. Irma Souder and Sis. Helen

Zimmer.

### *Life's Path*

He who lives must choose a path,  
A path twixt right and wrong,  
A path which carries happiness,  
A path of joy and song.  
Though every path has evil ruts  
To test the strength of man,  
Still man can win if he has faith  
And works with honest plan.

—Everett Wentworth Hill

May the New Year bring blessings to all, as we choose God's path laid out in His good Word, and the counsel of our Elders.

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### INDIANA, MILFORD Pam Beer

When peace, like a river,  
attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows  
roll;  
Whatever my lot, Thou hast  
taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.  
My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious tho't  
My sin—not in part, but the  
whole,  
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it  
no more.  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
oh, my soul!  
*Hymns of Zion #55*

Julie Beer (Bro. Dan and Sis. Deb) was announced as having peace with God and man and we are anticipating hearing her testimony and witnessing her baptism sometime in the future.

Our prayers have been with Trevor Michael Haab (infant son of Mike and Christy Haab) who was born four months prematurely. Doctors are saying Trevor is doing ex-

ceptionally well, although he must stay in the hospital until March, which was his original due date. Grandparents are Bro. Don and Sis. Martha Haab and John and Peggy Cole.

We appreciated the visit and gospel messages from Elder Bro. Ray Sinn (Latty, OH) and Bro. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH) on a Sunday in December. Thank you and come back often.

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### INDIANA, REMINGTON

**Beth Virkler  
Rochelle Ward**

Another year has ended, another one begins and time marches on. So much has happened here in Remington in this past year: the move to our new church, 4 new babies born, 7 weddings, 2 of our loved ones laid to rest, 2 baptisms, 4 start repenting, and now the continuing work on our new fellowship hall. In all this we have felt the nearness of the Lord and thank Him for blessing us.

Bro. Harold Waibel (Sis. Arleta) and Sis. Jody Waibel (Bro. Bruce) both had outpatient surgeries and are on the road to recovery.

On December 17, despite the weather, we were still able to have our Christmas program. What a wonderful way to begin the Christmas season by hearing the true story of Christ's birth told by our youth. A special thank you to the teachers, parents and students for all the effort that was made to make the day so special. We would also like to thank Bros. Gene and Greg Lehman (Wolcott, IN) for sharing God's Holy Word with us.

In this new year may we look to the Lord for guidance in all things and follow His commandments that we may be found worthy of His kingdom.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

*Romans 8:14*

*Note of Thanks:*

We wish to thank everyone for their love expressed to us on our 50th wedding anniversary. Everything was greatly appreciated. May God bless each one of you.

*Bro. Elmer and Sis. Marilyn Bahler*

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### INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

**DeAnn Schlatter  
Lavilla Langhofer**

Right now we are being blessed with an abundance of snow. Watching it fall reminds us of the manna God sent from Heaven to provide for His children. As the frosty flakes pile higher and higher, we pause to count our blessings over the past year and rejoice in God's goodness. We are thankful for those who use their talents to serve God and the congregation as we reviewed the past year in our annual business meeting, and elected new offices.

To add to the joy of the season, we celebrate the safe arrival of Otto Kenneth Schlatter, firstborn son of Bro. Otto and Sis. DeAnn (Beebe) Schlatter. Grandparents are Bro. Ot and Sis. Pat Schlatter of the Alto, MI, congregation and Bro. Bob and Sis. Sue Beebe.

We also rejoiced in the announcement that one of our dear converts, Kara Beebe (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sue), is at peace and stands ready for baptism. How precious it is to see the Lord call souls unto Him; to watch Him transform lives even as He has changed ours. May the blessedness of the season rest upon you, and the grace of God go with you as you prepare to serve Him in a new year.

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### INDIANA, VALPARAISO Hope Bucher

We rejoice again this month with the birth of another little baby! Bro. Brandon and Sis. Christine Moser welcomed their first child, Kayla Anne, into their home. Grandparents are Bro. Andy and Sis. Diane Moser and Bro. Ed and Sis. Caroline Lester, all of Valparaiso. We are so thankful for the blessing of this new life!

We were blessed to have the Sunday School children present a program called "Room in my Heart" this month. It reminded us of how many people and angels worshipped the newborn baby Jesus and made "room in their heart" for Him. The children encouraged each of us to also make special room in our hearts for this Christ child who became the Saviour of the world. We are thankful for the efforts of all the children, their teachers and their parents.

We want to thank Bro. Arnold Gerst (Taylor, MO) for worshipping with us for a Sunday. It is always a blessing to have him come and minister to us.

This month also completed another year of our ACTIVE (Apostolic Christian Training in Virtues Education) program. Over the past year, the children participated in assembling care packages for children/adults in Haiti, Jamaica, Chicago and our local homeless shelter.

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### INDIANA WEST LAFAYETTE Geoff and Angie Ginzel

"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

*I Cor. 2:5*

As another Purdue semester comes to a close, it is time to recognize our graduating seniors: Sara Huber and Vince Leman from Francesville, Justin Scheitlin from Remington, and Nate Kelson from Forrest, IL. May God bless them in their future endeavors.

Our local gathering continues to flourish as God works in our hearts and in our church. A joyful spirit was felt last Sunday when 40 people braved a winter snowstorm to worship in West Lafayette. Sitting under God's Word and fellowshiping with brothers and sisters warms the heart and soothes the soul.

We would like to thank the following ministering brothers and their wives for visiting us in the past month and allowing God to use them to bring forth His message: Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda Gutwein (Francesville, IN), Bro. Carroll and Sis. Louise Gerber (Bluffton North, IN). A rotation has been established so we look forward to our visitors, and thank God for them.

If you are in the area, please join us on the first and third Sundays at 10:00 a.m. For local correspondence, contact our trustees, Bro. Dick Meister (765) 567-4704, Bro. Duane Schieler (765) 567-2922, or Bro. Neil Widmer (765) 497-4709. Our counseling Elders are Bros. Wendell Gudeman and Curt Frank.

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### INDIANA, WOLCOTT

**Beckie Lehman**

**Mary Beth Lehman**

The busy holiday season is past and we are now in the grip of winter. We enjoyed our Sunday School Christmas program in spite of bad weather. We were thankful to be able to gather and hear the wonderful story of Christ's birth and even the reminder that the true gift was

the cross and the resurrection of our Lord.

We rejoice with Brad Widmer (Bro. Neal and Sis. Kris) now as he has made the choice to turn his heart to God in repentance. What an encouragement to each of us as we see more souls turning to Him.

We were encouraged to witness three baptisms last month as well. We are glad to welcome three new sisters into the fold, Sisters Tiffany and Brandi Schwab (Bro. Jon and Sis. Wendy) and Sis. Mindy Ames (Bro. Tim and Joyce). Sharing in this day were Elder Bros. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) and Jesse Beer (Milford, IN). We appreciated their efforts and pray that God would bless them for serving us from the pulpit.

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### IOWA, BURLINGTON

**Karla Gerst**

**Brenda Schulz**

This past month we had the privilege of hearing the testimonies and witnessing the baptisms of two dear souls. We welcome Bro. Jonathan Eberhardt (Bro. Fred and Sis. Kathy) and Sis. Laurie Schulz (Bro. Gary and the late Sis. Karen) into the fold. Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) came to assist our Elder Bro. Ed Lanz. Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville) was also here. We thank all these brothers for their efforts.

*Note of Thanks:*

I wish to thank everyone who remembered me on my birthday with cards, gifts and phone calls. It was very much appreciated. God bless one and all.

*Sis. Tillie Frank*

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### IOWA, ELGIN

**Heidi Butikofer**  
**Gloria Frieden**

"And she brought forth her first-born 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 we think of that long ago day when Christ was born, it is recorded that there was no room for Him in the inn. If the innkeeper would have known this was the Christ child, would he have made certain there was room for Jesus at the inn? Do we, who know Christ, make room for Him in our heart? Would we send our own children somewhere where they might not be welcome and later be put to death? As Christmas draws near, let's each one remember God's sacrifice of sending His Son from His home above. May we ever be thankful to God for His wonderful gift to us that Christmas day.

At the time of this writing, we are looking forward to hearing the sweet story through song and verse from our Sunday School students. It's such a precious time to hear the story through the innocent voices of our children. We also are looking forward to caroling to those shut in in our community. May this be a blessing to them and those participating and a glory to God.

Misfortune happens to many and we want to remember Doug Schupbach (Jill) as he spent three weeks in the hospital after taking a tumble and breaking his leg.

As we look forward to the new year, may we renew our commitment to God to serve Him and be a light and example to those around about us.

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

Greetings to all! Our special thanks go to Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA) and his family for traveling to share the Word with us. I'm sure sometimes it seems you travel so far for so few, but we do so appreciate it!

We thank our Sunday School children and teachers for their efforts in sharing the Christmas story with us at the annual program. May the greatest gift ever given to mankind be precious to each of us.

We thank our God for taking Home our friend, 7-year-old Jessica Simmons, who finally was able to end her struggle with cancer. Mourning and missing her are her parents, Kim and Jerry Knoke, Uncles Kelly, David and Steven Simmons, grandparents, Kerry and Brenda Simmons, sister Samantha, and the entire Iowa City congregation. While all of us would have rather seen Jessica healed, we know her new Home will be one free from suffering and pain. May each of us sincerely seek the Path of Righteousness so that we can meet her again someday.

*What a Day that Will Be*

There is coming a day  
when no heartaches shall come,  
No more clouds in the sky,  
no more tears to dim the eye;  
All is peace forevermore  
on that happy golden shore,  
What a day, glorious day  
that will be!

There'll be no sorrow there,  
no more burdens to bear,  
No more sickness, no pain,  
no more parting over there;  
And forever I will be  
with the One who died for me,  
What a day, glorious day,

that will be!

What a day that will be  
when my Jesus I shall see,  
And I look upon His face,  
the One who saved me by His  
grace;  
When He takes me by the hand  
and leads me through the Prom-  
ised Land,  
What a day, glorious day,  
that will be!

*Gospel Hymns #831*

**IOWA, LESTER****Dawn Knobloch****Dawn Metzger**

Sis. Heidi Bajema (Bro. Rod and Sis. Twyla) and Bro. Ryan Frank of Oakville (Bro. Curt and Sis. Kathy) have announced their upcoming wedding. The same day we were shared the betrothal of Sis. Hana Larson (Tedd and Sis. Diana) to Bro. Matt Hartter (Bro. Jerome and Sis. Gail). Believing it is the Lord's will for their lives, we wish them God's blessings as they prepare for their future as husband and wife.

November 19 brought guests from the north and south as Sis. Valarie Knobloch (Phoenix, AZ) and Bro. Mike Howell (Bay City, MI) took their wedding vows. They will be making their home in Bay City and we wish them many happy, healthy years together with the Lord. Their parents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Sherryl Knobloch and Michael Howell and Pamela Howell. Helping to make the day special were visiting Bro. James Emch (Phoenix, AZ) and Elder Bro. Andy Virkler (Bay City, MI).

Molly Kate was born November 19 and is welcomed home by her loving parents, Bro. Vern and Sis. Chalea Knobloch, and siblings, Chalsea, Garth, Blain, Damon and Janel. Grandparents are Bro. Art

and Sis. Elgeva Knobloch. May the Lord provide the guidance we need to train up our children in His ways.

Anna Knobloch (wife of the late Otto) passed into eternity on November 22 after several years of declining health. However, we are so thankful and rejoice that she found the need of a Saviour even at a high age in life. We extend our sympathy to her family, Emma and Paul Banwart, Alice and Jay Jacobson and their children, and her brothers and sisters, Bro. Paul Leuthold, Andy Leuthold and the late Sis. Ella Metzger.

We wish to thank Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) and Bro. Roy Koehl (Morris, MN) who were with us for Thanksgiving Day services.

Two precious souls gave their testimonies of faith and were added to the fold the weekend of November 26. We welcome Sis. Amber Metzger (Bro. Harv and Sis. Mary) and Sis. Abby Metzger (Bro. Mark and Sis. Audrey). By the grace of God, may they follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Sharing the Word of Life that weekend were Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH), Bros. Virg Metzger (Chicago, IL) and Pat Zaugg (West Bend, IA). This same Sunday it was announced that Sis. Dawn Koehl (Morris, MN) and Bro. Mychal Van Wyhe have been led together by the Lord. They are planning a February wedding. Parents are Bro. Arnie and Sis. Sharon Koehl (Morris, MN) and Bro. Pete and Sis. Susan Van Wyhe.

We rejoice to hear that Jaleen Mogler (Sabetha, KS) has begun her repentance and we wish her God's continued grace. Her parents are Bro. Phil and Sis. Donna Mogler.

The month of December has brought two more bundles to our babyroom. Erica Ann Meyer made

her arrival on December 2. Delighted to have a healthy baby girl are Bro. Merlin and Sis. Marilyn as well as Jaden and Jessica. Erica's grandparents are Bro. Raymond and Sis. Twyla Meyer, Bro. Nick and Sis. Mary Kuenzi (Silverton, OR) and great-grandma, Sis. Emma Meyer, of our congregation. On December 14, Todd and Sandy Martin were blessed with a baby girl, Emery Lee. She will be welcomed home by her sister, Sydney. Happy grandparents are Ed and Judy Martin and great-grandma, Sarah Feucht.

Many in our congregation have submitted to surgery, hospitalization or have been in need of medical attention for the physical body. They are: Sis. Becky Wulf (Bro. Dale), Bro. Blair Metzger (Sis. Julie), Sis. Lori Popkes (Bro. Greg), Sarah Feucht, Sis. Leona Wulf (Bro. Bill), Glen Meyer (Bro. George and the late Sis. Charlyn), Sis. Salome Knobloch, and Sis. Marie Knobloch (Bro. Ezra). We especially want to remember Sis. Marlys and Bro. Butch Doorneweerd and their children as Sis. Marlys has started chemotherapy treatments again. May God help them to take each day at a time just as the Bible instructs each of us to do.

We extend our sympathy to Tedd and Sis. Diane Larson and their children as his mother, Betty Larson, passed away on December 2. That same day, Sis. Ella Metzger peacefully left us. We know there is a great emptiness for her husband, Bro. Ernie, and their 15 children, 70 grandchildren and 71 great-grandchildren. We remember Bro. Boyd and Sis. Lois, Bro. Don and Mary Jane, Alvin and Marilyn, Bro. Art and Sis. Kristy, Bro. Virg and Sis. Mary, Bro. Glen and Sis. Joyce, Bro. Harv and Sis. Mary, and Bro. Rod and Sis. Polly, Harold and Patty

Metzger, Sis. Shirley and Bro. Joel Wuthrich, Sis. Della Luthi, Ella and John Martin, Sis. Helen and Bro. Leonard Anliker, Sis. Arlene and Bro. Rodney Grimm, and Sis. Ida and Bro. Keith Kellenberger. Our sympathy also goes to Sis. Ella's brothers, Andy Leuthold and Bro. Paul Leuthold, of our congregation.

Our congratulations and God's blessings to Bro. Matt and Sis. Jerilyn Waldbeser who were united on December 10. Their parents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Sherryl Knobloch and Bro. Fred and Sis. Joan Waldbeser. This happy couple will now be a welcome addition to the Cissna Park, IL, congregation. We will miss you, Sis. Jerilyn! Once again, we enjoyed visiting ministers for this weekend: Bros. Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL), Ken Eisenmann (Cissna Park, IL), Tom Waldbeser (Atlanta, GA), Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN), Kent Mogler (Minneapolis, MN) and Dwayne Metzger (West Bend, IA).

This Sunday evening we are looking forward to hearing our young children and young adults recite their pieces and Christmas songs at our Sunday School program. It is not filled with a lot of glitter and entertainment compared to many programs that are presented at this time of year, but really this is the way Jesus' birth and life were—no decorations and no fancy lights on Christmas Eve long ago. Let us strive to keep that humbleness and simplicity in our life each day.

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**IOWA, OAKVILLE**  
**Melody Steiner**  
**Debra Wagenbach**

As we heard the little children and our young adults relate to us the story of the birth of Jesus at our annual Christmas program, may we all be reminded that "Alas how many

only know the Saviour as a child ." (Hymns of Zion #36). Let us remember the reason that Jesus came to this earth and not forget that it is the cross He bore that sets our spirit free.

We are thankful for our visiting ministers this month which include, Elder Bro. Doug Sabo (Sarasota, FL) and Bro. Rod Bajema (Lester, IA). May the Lord richly bless them.

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**IOWA, PULASKI**  
**Katrina Knobloch**

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

As another year begins, may we strive more fervently to serve our Lord and be an example for Him.

Bros. John Rowell (Sis. Nelda, Burlington, IA) and Dave Marquart (Sis. Lori, Taylor, MO) brought God's Word to us this past month. May He richly bless them for their willingness to serve others.

Our prayers are with Bro. Joel and Sis. Shirley Wuthrich, Sis. Ginny Wuthrich and Jeff Wuthrich as they laid their mother and grandmother, Sis. Ella Metzger (Bro. Ernie, Lester, IA), to rest.

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

Bro. Kent Getz (Sis. Betty, Elgin, IA) was a visiting minister this past month. We appreciated the message and also our home ministers who bring forth the Word of Truth in humility and simplicity each time we gather.

It seems we have had several loved ones spend time in the hospi-

tal. Those having surgical care have been Sis. Rosene Grimm (Bro. Clifford), Sis. Sara Metzger (Bro. Duane and Sis. Ruth), Ben Skoglund (Bro. Mark and Sis. Lori) and Sis. Kris Banwart. Medical patients have been Nathan Schneider (Clinton and Kelly) and Bro. Art Banwart (Madeline). We've also had some receiving outpatient care and one day surgery. We pray that God will touch each one with His healing mercies.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Leonard and Sis. Helen Anliker and family on the death of her mother, Sis. Ella Metzger (Bro. Ernest) of Lester, IA. Also experiencing the loss of a dear mother is Paul and Emmy Banwart. Her mother was Anna Knobloch, also of Lester, IA. Nettie Banwart (Ervin) is a sister-in-law to Anna. We pray that God will comfort these loved ones in their loss.

We welcome Bro. Darin and Sis. Twyla Massner who recently moved from the Burlington area. Bro. Darin has found employment here and may they find many blessings as they gather with us.

On December 5, we had our annual business meeting. We are thankful for the labors of those whose terms expired and wish God's blessings on those who were chosen for their new duties. Selected for ushers were Bros. Jason Fehr, Barry Fehr, and Frank Schmidt. For microphone, Bros. Bruce Messner and Darin Massner were chosen. Bro. Karl Fehr will fill a term for parking attendant and Bro. Dave Gerber will serve on the Retirement Village board. Sis. Lori Skoglund will be on Silver Lining and Sis. Mary Gerber will help on the World Relief committee.

*God is Faithful*

God will never fail us

He will not forsake,  
His eternal covenant  
He will never break.  
Resting on His promise,  
What have we to fear?  
God is all sufficient  
For the coming year.  
—F.R. Havergal

## JAPAN, SHIODA

**Ayako Inoue**

We send our greetings at this joyful season. At this time of the year we once again focus on our Saviour's birth and the reason He came to the world. We hope many can hear the true meaning of Christmas, and know that God gave us the most wonderful gift, Jesus Christ.

We had our Christmas program on the 17th and after that we went caroling to the local hospital as we do every year. We had been practicing once a month since September and were all excited to go. Bro. Andrew and Sis. Jana Klaus and their family were with us and were a big help. Seventeen adults and 4 children joined and sang with Bro. Andrew's accordion. We hope we could bring people the joy of Christmas and lighten their hearts.

We were glad to see Bro. Uchida again in church after he had been hospitalized for a few weeks. We thank the Lord for being with him. He shared an experience, in which he had the opportunity to talk about the Lord to another patient during his hospital stay. God always uses us as His workers even in times we think are hard.

We are looking forward to Makoto Inoue's proving and baptism coming up this weekend, and are praying for it to be a blessed time.

## JAPAN, TOKYO

**Jana Klaus**

New Year Greetings to you all! Most likely, you all are wondering the same thing I am "Where did the year 2000 go?" The older I get, the closer I come to understanding the verse of II Peter 3:8 "...one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." I am hoping that we can all "redeem our time" in this new year with our faithful Lord's guidance each day.

On December 3, we held a special meeting to discuss and vote on the Church Building Project that has been going on for quite some time. It was voted to not move the location of the church, but instead to tear down the living quarters next to our existing church and rebuild to make more space for Sunday School and parking. There is still much to plan and discuss, so we ask for continued prayers that it can all be done in peaceful, godly order.

December 14 was the special Christmas Ladies Meeting (this ladies meeting being held once a month with the exception of August) in which we invite one of our church Brothers to speak the Christmas message and then open the way for the ladies to ask any questions they may have on Christmas or the Bible. In Japan, we Christians so often get the question from Japanese, "What is the difference between Protestant and Catholic?" However, at this month's Ladies Meeting, the question that was asked was "What is the difference between Christianity and Judaism?" We were thankful Elder Brother Akito was there to answer that one. We also sang Christmas Carols together in Japanese and English and had a special lunch together. There was a fairly large turnout and we felt the Lord's blessing on our last ladies meeting of the year

2000.

I neglected to report last month on our Fall Shuyokai (fellowship meeting) which was held on November 3, the national holiday for "culture day." Unlike other years, this year it was not at a place in the mountains, but in the more urban setting of Tama Center, a very nice, newly developing area. The topic was "The history of our churches in Japan" and Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle gave the talk with a chance for any questions and comments at the end. It was very interesting and humbling to hear of our churches' beginnings here. We all, young, middle aged and older, have experienced many blessings from the Lord over the years in our precious brotherhood here.

At the time of this writing, Christmas is just around the corner, but we have not yet had our Sunday School Program. That is one of the events we are looking forward to this coming weekend, December 23 and 24. The other events that are to transpire this weekend, Lord willing, are our Christmas service and supper and the testimony and baptism of Makoto Inoue in which we look forward to meeting several American guests, including Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler and his wife, Sis. Frances ( Wolcott, IN.) We are all anticipating a weekend filled with blessings from the Lord.

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### **KANSAS, BERN Lori Baumgartner**

Greetings from Bern. We hope everyone has had a blessed Christmas season and a happy and healthy start to 2001!

We were thankful to have several visiting ministers this past month. Bro. Will Schieler (Milford, IN) was such a willing servant, who not only ministered to us on Sunday, but also

spoke to our Sunday School and college students on the weekend of November 18-19. On Thanksgiving Day, we appreciated the labors of Bros. Dean Steffen (Belvidere, IL) and Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, KS) as they were gathering with their respective families.

On the weekend of December 2-3, we were privileged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of Sis. Martha Strahm (Bro. Wilfred and Sis. Verona) and Sis. Diane Strahm (Bro. Curt and Sis. Ellen). We are rejoicing with their families, friends, and the angels in Heaven!

On Friday, December 8, many enjoyed our church Christmas caroling. We hope the Christmas carols were a blessing to the elderly in our Bern and Sabetha communities. A delicious soup supper and time of fellowship completed the evening.

As we never tire of those beautiful Christmas songs, our Sunday School brought forth the blessed story of Christ's birth in song on Sunday, December 17. It was inspiring to hear the blended voices of three different singing groups, from preschool to high school students.

God has blessed Bro. Terry and Sis. Dayra Menold with their first child, Norea Anne, who was born on December 11 and is also welcomed by her grandparents, Bro. James and Sis. Louise Menold and Bro. Jim and Sis. Jeanne Meyer. May they feel God's presence as they adjust to parenthood and the joys and challenges it brings.

Bros. Harvey Grimm (Sis. Marie) and Paul Grimm (Sis. Katie) have both spent time in the hospital. We pray that God can bring comfort and healing as He wills.

On December 16, we laid to rest a dear sister-in-faith, Grace Strahm. It was mentioned in her service about her calm ways, gentle smile

and what a "gift" she was to her family—how appropriately named Grace was! We extend our love and sympathy to her husband of 63 years, Bro. Emil; and her children, Stanley (Linda, Lincoln, NE), Sis. Loretta Wiegand (Bro. Elton, Eureka, IL), Joyce Dorsch (Dale), Ardena Kuenzi (Jack), and Bro. Wilfred (Sis. Verona), all of Bern.

Our prayers continue to be with this family, especially Bro. Wilfred and Sis. Verona, as their daughter, Sara Popkess (Ed, Topeka, KS), has been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor. How thankful we are that we know not what the future holds, but Who holds the future, and just trust that His will be done.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

We would like to express our deep appreciation and heartfelt thanks to each one for their expressions of love, encouragement, sympathy and prayers during the recent passing of our beloved wife and mother, Sis. Grace.

Your visits, support, food donations and flowers meant so very much to us. May God richly bless and reward you all.

*Bro. Emil Strahm and family*

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

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

*Luke 2:10-12*

As we read this, the Christmas season will be past, but let us always

keep the thought of His beginning on this earth along with His earthly walk, suffering, and death. As all the glitter and tinsel is put away, may Christ's love still shine from His children drawing others to Him.

We enjoyed the Sunday School's annual Christmas program. From the beautiful singing of the older children to the sometimes embarrassing antics of the youngest ones, we love them all dearly and pray that this seed will continue to be nourished by parents and teachers alike and that some day it will take root and blossom into whatever God has planned for each and every one of them.

Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA) shared the Word with us this past month. We thank them and their children for coming. It is always a joy to hear they are coming to visit their family. May our Heavenly Father bless them richly.

Bro. Tim Banwart (Bro. Lon and Sis. Debbie) had outpatient surgery this month. He is back at school although he will be on crutches for awhile yet. Bro. Wayne Sinn (Sis. Juanita) and Sis. Ruth Sinn both spent some time in the hospital this past month. We thank God that they are both home and recovering.

The Sunday School and their families enjoyed a night of caroling and fellowship. Such a precious freedom we have, to be able to worship without fear. Let our prayers be vigilant for our country and our leaders so that these freedoms ordained by God might continue.

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**KANSAS, KIOWA**  
**Jenny Stewart**  
**Laura Wagenbach**

What a beautiful season when we can worship together, and celebrate our dear Saviour's birth. We all enjoyed a wonderful afternoon sharing

with others as we caroled around town to our dear friends and those in the rest home. It was a cold, slick day, but our hearts were warm. Thank you to everyone who offered goodies to the carolers. They were greatly appreciated.

The annual Sunday School Christmas program was held on Sunday, December 17. It was definitely a blessing to hear young voices singing about the baby Jesus' birth, and to remind us all of the true meaning of this busy season. Everyone joined the assembly towards the end of the program to sing the age-old Christmas songs. What a joy!

We would like to thank ministering Bro. Clark Stoller and his wife, Sis. Cindy (Gridley, IL), for sharing a weekend with us. May the Lord bless them for bringing the wonderful Word to us.

As we bring in a new year, let us have a prayer on our hearts for God's rich blessing and loving care for all our dear children, family, and friends. Let us allow Him to use us to be an example for others that He may work wonderful miracles in their lives.

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**KANSAS**  
**LAMONT-GRIDLEY**  
**Sarah Somerhalder**

Thanks to ministering Bro. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO) for sharing God's Word with us on Sunday, November 26, 2000.

We pray for God's healing hand upon Sis. Ada Beyer (Bro. Ivan) who was hospitalized recently as a surgical patient.

How blessed it was on December 10 to hear our Sunday School children bring forth the old story of our dear Lord's birth in poem and song. That afternoon the Sunday School students, teachers and parents enjoyed caroling to several older broth-

ers and sisters in their homes and at two rest homes. Following caroling, the whole church was invited to a chili and soup supper at Bro. Tom and Sis. Jeri Knobloch's.

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**KANSAS, SABETHA**  
**Mary Kay Wenger**  
**Brenda Grimm**

Kyle Rodney Grimm, born November 19, brings special joy this holiday season to the home of his parents, Bro. Kent and Sis. Molly Grimm, and his older brother, Micah. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Doug and Sis. Joyce Wulf (Morris, MN) and Bro. Rodney and Sis. Arlene Grimm.

Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Sis. Rachel, Morris, MN) was our ministering brother this month. May God bless him for his labors on our behalf.

We have been very blessed with more good news this month. Keith Grimm (Bro. Doug and Sis. Jeryl) and Rick Aberle (Bro. Roger and Sis. Lavone) were announced with peace and are awaiting baptism.

An engagement was announced between Sis. Carrie Aberle (Bro. John and Sis. Cornelia) and Bro. Kyle Beyer (Bro. Martin and Sis. Karen). We rejoice with them and pray for God's continued guidance. They are both students at Kansas State University. A spring 2001 wedding is planned.

At this time of the year we have once again resumed Wednesday evening services alternating with the Bern congregation.

Our sympathy to Sis. Arlene Grimm (Bro. Rodney) and family on the passing of her mother, Sis. Ella Metzger, on December 2 in Lester, IA; and to Sis. Lois Grimm on the death of her sister, Lorraine Hanold, in Boise, Idaho, on November 25.

Our prayers are with Sis. Minnie



Nohl who has been hospitalized.

It is a blessing to hear Troy Strahm (Bro. Carl and Sis. Sharon) has begun to repent. We wish him much grace as he takes this important step.

The Sunday School children brought forth the joyful Christmas message of good tidings in word and song.

May each one have a blessed new year!

The following was read at our Sunday School Christmas program:

*We Are So Blessed*

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the million who will not survive the week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture or the pains of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people around the world.

If you can express your beliefs without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death, you are more blessed than almost three billion people in the world.

If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

If your parents are still married and alive, you are very, very rare.

If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thankful, you are blessed

because the majority can, but most do not.

If you can hold someone's hand, hug them or even touch them on the shoulder, you are blessed because you can offer God's healing touch.

If you own just one Bible, you are abundantly blessed. One-third of the world does not have access to even one.

If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world that cannot read anything at all.

*Note of Thanks:*

To our Sabetha and Bern church family,

Our hearts are overwhelmed with thanks for all the prayers, cards of encouragement, phone calls and loving concern for our little family when we had to be separated across the miles. The days were so long and hard while I was very sick in early pregnancy, but God is faithful and brought me through this difficult time. We are so thankful for each one of you and we love you. God bless you.

*Richard and Joni*

*Cameron, Taylor and Haylie*

**KANSAS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**Tiffany Kellenberger**

Christmas is quickly approaching, as is the end of another semester here at K-State. With finals week before us, we pray that we will not become too burdened down and stressed out with studying. We must remember that, though important, these tests are but for a season. The last final each of us will take on judgment day is the only one that really counts, and it draws closer every day. We know not the day nor the

time that God will once again send His beloved Son, so we must always be mindful and prayerful that we are preparing for His return according to God's divine will and teachings.

On November 17, K-State held a Bible Study in which we were blessed to have Bro. Will Schieler and his wife come. We had many relatives and friends from various churches come for this and we thank them for their support. Wednesday evening services concluded on November 29 with Bro. Max Reimschisel (Wichita, KS) being with us. We want to thank both of these brothers and their wives for their efforts in coming. May God richly bless you. This past week we held our annual Christmas caroling with many coming from Sabetha and Bern. It is such a joy to bring a little Christmas cheer to the elderly in the nursing homes. One man told me, with a great big smile, that we just made his day.

We were also overjoyed to hear that Michelle Bahr (Bro. Phil and Sis. Dawn, Detroit, MI) recognized her need to repent and we pray that God will grant her abundant grace as she begins this new life with an unfailing Heavenly Father. Prayers continue to arise for our other dear friends.

Thanksgiving weekend also brought an added surprise to us here at K-State. Bro. Kyle Beyer and Sis. Carrie Aberle announced their engagement and we wish them God's greatest blessings. Their parents are Bro. Martin and Sis. Karen Beyer and Bro. John and Sis. Cornelia Aberle, both of Sabetha.

This semester has been a good one, and for that we are thankful. God has truly shown His presence and as a new year begins, we pray that each and every child of God will put their trust solely in Him, and live

one day at a time according to the will of our omnipotent Heavenly Father.

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## KANSAS, WICHITA

**Emma Miller**

In lieu of Wednesday night Bible study in December, those who were able went caroling to nursing homes and to private homes. Bro. Godfrey Miller and I were extremely touched that so many made the effort to drive the miles in order that they could share songs, scripture, and prayer with us at Beverly Health Care in El Dorado.

Our part of Kansas is experiencing the coldest temperatures in five years. After several blustery attempts, the snow came gently and piled up wherever it lit. I can best describe it by using a line from a seasonal poetry book which I read long ago. "Bushes in their nightgowns were kneeling down to pray." Also, I think of the hymn, "Whiter than Snow".

Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;

I want Thee forever to live in my soul;

Break down every idol, cast out every foe;

Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

*Hymns of Zion #210*

Our Sunday School Christmas program is planned for Sunday afternoon on December 24.

I have a clipping that I took from a newsletter years ago on my refrigerator that describes the gifts we receive from the Trinity and the way we can access them. These gifts are superior to any we might give.

"He has given you His Son who completely understands your every need."

"He has given you His Spirit to comfort, teach, and remind you."

"He has given you His Word which contains great and precious promises to help you be more like Him."

"He has given you prayer by which you find grace to help in need."

Sis. Carol Carter has been led to accept employment in Ft. Scott. Wichita's loss is Ft. Scott's gain. Ft. Scott was Carol's original home and we wish her God's blessing in the move.

Recently, the aircraft industry began recruiting and training skilled workers. If you are seeking a change in your livelihood, prayerfully consider Wichita. Our dwindling congregation would welcome you and your family. Bro. Max Reimschisel (his name and phone number are in the minister's book) can counsel you concerning possible employment contacts.

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## MEXICO, IXTLAN

**Lorenia Sibaja**

This month we were blessed with a number of brethren from the States who advanced the wiring and plumbing on our new guest quarters/education facility, which is still under construction. The same week Bro. Duane Reutter (Rockville, CT) was present and held services both here in Ixtlan with the local brethren and also with the small flock which congregates in Morelia. We sincerely thank these brethren not only for their physical labor, but much more for their spiritual witness. May the blessings of the Lord be their reward, and not the praise of men.

*Meet Sister Areli Sibaja*

"My name is Areli Sibaja Leon; I am twenty years old. I live in Ixtlan,

Michoacan, where I was raised in a Catholic household. I am currently studying at a university in Zamora, Michoacan. I first came to believe in Christ and to recognize Him as my Saviour when I was still in high school. Thanks to a friend who lives in La Barca, I came in contact with the Apostolic Church in Ixtlan. All the brothers and sisters welcomingly embraced me. I could see the love of Christ radiating in their hearts. Among the brethren I felt a deep peace and a confidence that I had never felt in my home. Although I never physically abused my own body, I didn't always exactly have the best relationship with my father or siblings. For this reason I have always struggled with self-respect and have always sought to be accepted among others. But thanks be to God, I was led to an inn of kindness, love, and spiritual aid, which in turn pointed me to Jesus Christ, who accepted me to such an extent that He died for my sins and invited me to be in communion with Him and His Body. On August 9, 1998, I committed to repentance. After I had confessed my sins and asked for forgiveness, I was baptized on the 23rd of January, 1999. From that day until the present, my life has been filled with blessing and thanksgiving toward my Creator."

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## MICHIGAN, ALTO

**Kristen Plattner**

**Sandy Schutte**

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

*Luke 2:11*

Suppose tomorrow's headline is "Young Teen Claims to be Virgin Yet Gives Birth in a Barn Because Hotels are Full". What do you suppose

your conversation would be around your dinner table? Would you believe any of the account? Would they commit the girl and take away the child? Would the husband stand by her, would he even believe her, even if an Angel came to him? Mary and Joseph must of contended with a lot of skeptics and yet they did not waver. They just followed their hearts, listened for God's direction and did as He told them. Pretty amazing considering most of us can't make up our minds what we should do next weekend without checking a calendar. It is the reason that this season above all others is so special. The story is so unbelievable that it has to be from God about God. That only our hearts would be able to see the truth to it. It is so simple, so packed full of faith and hope and love that none of us can deny it. Yet last year many thought He would usher in His return with a computer malfunction. Sometimes when we look so hard we don't see what we need to see. Sometimes we make things so complex that we overlook the small things. So when we stop to see the error of our way, we see why the Jews overlooked the greatest event in mankind—the birth of a Saviour. We have a lot to learn.

We here in Alto would like to thank Bro. Tom Schrenk (Sis. Joan) for being with us to share Thanksgiving weekend. It is always good to have them home to share time with us.

Sisters Christine and Margaret Wingeier are doing better, even though Sis. Christine still has some concerns. They would like to thank everyone for the cards, love, support and prayers during this long period of illness.

Carrie Grawberg (Sis. Jane Grawberg's daughter-in-law) was in for some surgery and all went well.

Our prayers go out to Jeanette Overholt and Sis. Julie Sanders as their grandfather passed from this life to the next. We also extend our heartfelt sympathy to Sis. Julie Blough (Bro. Jim) for the death of her grandmother. "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." (Nahum 1:7).

Congratulations to Bro. Ott and Sis. Pat Schlatter on the birth of yet another grandchild, Otto Kenneth Schlatter, born to Bro. Otto and Sis. Deanna Schlatter from South Bend, IN.

A big thanks go out to Bro. Nathan and Sis. Susan for all the work it took to put together this year's caroling and to Sis. Luanne Kaeb for all the work she puts into bringing to us those that have special needs each year.

We would also like to thank all the Sunday School children and the teachers for a night of celebration of the story of the birth of our Saviour, Christ the King. It is encouraging to leave the world behind and hear the story again from the lips of our children. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." (Psalm 127:3).

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### MICHIGAN, DETROIT Bonnie Bedolla Crystal Ramsier

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

*Jer. 29:11-13*

Several of our loved ones have

been ill over this past month. Our thoughts and prayers have been with Bro. Ben Maibach (Sis. Lorene), Bro. Floyd Wieland (Sis. Perseda), Bro. Guy Wieland (Sis. Rosie), Sis. Kristine Krieger (Bro. Kevin) and Bro. George Popp. They continue to be in our prayers as we wish God's nearness and healing hand upon them.

The Detroit congregation suffered a great loss this past month. After a long battle with ALS, our dearly beloved Bro. Dan Knochel (Sis. Ruth) has gone to his eternal rest. Our love, prayers, and sympathy reach out to Sis. Ruth and their children, Gary (Mary) Knochel, Debbie (Kent) Obermann, Dawn Ness-Glaesmer, Bro. Dana (Sis. Beth) Knochel and Candice (Gary) Klopfenstein, as well as all the grandchildren. We are thankful for Bro. Dan's strong presence not only in our congregation but in the community and with nationwide missions. He was such a gentle and loving man who will be dearly missed. We are thankful that Bro. Jeff Thames (Sis. Brenda, Washington, IL) was able to be with us and share in the funeral service. In the time before Bro. Dan's death, he stressed to all that it was his will for those who loved him to "Love God." Thank you to Bro. Jeff and Bro. Dan for so clearly reminding all of us of this crucial fundamental.

For the past month's Tuesday evening service at Woodhaven, Elder Bro. Andy Virkler (Sis. Maxine, Bay City, MI) made the trip to Detroit. We are always thankful that our loving brethren will take time out of their schedules to be with our elderly and share His Living Word. We were also privileged to have Bro. Don and Sis. Mary Gudeman (La-Crosse, IN) with us for the weekend. We thank Bro. Don for allowing God

to use him on Sunday and we appreciate his willingness to be a servant for the furthering of His Word.

We rejoice with an addition to our church family as Bro. Jason Rauhe returned to the Detroit area with his wife, Sis. Carrie. Bro. Jason's family is thrilled with their return as they are expecting their first child in the coming year. We wish them all of God's richest blessings as they begin their lives here. We also welcome Sis. Sarah Beard (Bro. Ed and Sis. Dee, Toledo) and Sis. Krista Bauman (Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie, Smithville) as they have found employment in the Detroit area. Bro. Jeff Waibel (Bro. Bill and Sis. Carol, Bay City) also moved here to further his education. We hope that they will also feel at home in our congregation.

Mark Meyer's grandmother from Bluffton, IN, passed away this month. Our thoughts are with him as well as Sis. Kristie and Jon, Cecily and Stephanie. May God be near them as they remember their grandmother and great-grandmother.

We were privileged to hear our young Sunday School children praise our Heavenly Father during our annual Christmas Program. They were able to memorize verses and sing praises to His name. It was a wonderful way to remember the Christmas story and help the future of our church learn the importance of Christ's birth. Our theme this year was "Any Room For Jesus?" - a question for all of us to ponder this season and throughout our lives.

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**MINNESOTA  
MINNEAPOLIS  
Delores Sauder**

Our sympathy and prayers are with Bro. Justin Metzger (Sis. Jody) and Sis. Sheryl Luthi with the passing away of their grandmother, Sis.

Ella Metzger (Lester, IA).

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

*Matthew 1:23*

We enjoyed the blessing of caroling to some of the elderly on December 15.

The Sunday School children brought forth the story of Christ's birth in verse and song December 17. It brought joy to our hearts as they so eagerly told the story.

Our Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Winthrop, MN) was here for the Christmas program and shared God's teaching earlier in the day.

*A New Year Brings a  
New Beginning*

As the New Year starts and the  
old year ends,  
There's no better time to make  
amends,  
For all the things we sincerely regret,  
And wish in our hearts, we could  
somehow forget—  
We all make mistakes, for it's human to err,  
But no one need ever give up in  
despair,  
For God gives us all a brand-new  
beginning,  
A chance to start over and repent  
of our sinning—  
And when God forgives us we too  
must forgive,  
And resolve to do better each day  
that we live.  
By constantly trying to be like  
Him more nearly,  
And to trust in His wisdom and  
love Him more dearly—  
Assured that we're never out of  
His care

And we're always welcome to  
seek Him in prayer.

—*Helen Steiner Rice*

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**MINNESOTA, MORRIS  
Dianne Kellenberger  
Cheryl Messner**

Bros. Doug Grimm (Sabetha, KS) and Dale Wulf (Lester, IA) shared God's Word with us this month. May God bless them for their efforts.

On November 26, our Bro. Kurt Domnick and Sis. Rachel Stoller (Eureka, IL) became united in marriage. We pray that God's love and peace will ever abide in their hearts and home. Parents are Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Sherry Stoller and Bro. Gary and Sis. Velma Domnick.

The engagement of Bro. Mychal Van Wyhe (Lester, IA) and Sis. Dawn Koehl was made known on November 26. Believing it is the Lord's will, we wish them God's blessings and guidance as they prepare for their future together. Parents are Bro. Arnie and Sis. Sharon Koehl and Bro. Pete and Sis. Susan Van Wyhe.

Our prayers remain with brethren who continue to suffer bodily afflictions. We hope God's love, comfort and strength will sustain Bro. Alphai Moser, Bro. Leroy Fehr and Sis. Dorothy Durkee and their families.

Through verse and song, our Sunday School children related the blessed Christmas story to our congregation.

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 #38*

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**MINNESOTA, WINTHROP**  
**Carol Ann Messner**  
**Marilyn Messner**

The new year 2001 will soon be here. "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time." (Col. 4:5). "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." (Psalm 90:12). Counting our days reminds us of the swift passage of time and the need to live with eternity's values in view. The hours, days, and years are here and gone. Let us be sure to make them count for Christ.

An 80th birthday was celebrated in honor of Sis. Delores Messerli given by her children.

"The aged woman likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness...teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed...In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works..."

*Titus 2:3*

Our Christmas Sunday School program was presented on December 10. We thank the children and teachers for their hard work done to give God the glory.

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Ruth Schmidt (Bro. Derrick), Sis. Sophie Miller, and Shirley Demm (Lowell). We are thankful they are on the path to recovery.

Vanessa, Jacob and Samantha welcome home their new baby sister, Kenadee Joy, born December 1. Parents are Jerry and Melissa Isaacson.

Grandparents are John and Sis. Dorothy Jacobson. We wish them all God's blessings.

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to all the families of Bro. Roy and Sis. Rose Alice Howk. Wayne and Colleen Waugh of Waseca lost his father suddenly (Colleen is their daughter). Their granddaughter, Kim Fualsang, of Fairmont lost her husband, Bob, suddenly. He also leaves behind a 3-month baby and a two-year-old child. May the Lord comfort them and heal their hearts.

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**MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY**  
**Komari Neal**

Of course, the end of November brings a celebration of Thanksgiving each year. And each year, we recall the many blessings for which we are thankful. Surely, the most precious gift we can receive is the gift of salvation through the shed blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. May we be thankful for Jesus, God's own Son, at Thanksgiving time and throughout the entire year.

The congregation in Kansas City is quite thankful for the ability to come together each week and worship and fellowship with one another. The numbers in our pews were sparse on Thanksgiving weekend with many traveling to fellowship with their original home congregations. What a pleasure it is to be able to travel so freely, and then, reassemble with brothers and sisters in Kansas City.

Sunday, December 10, 2000, was the day for our annual Sunday School Christmas program, caroling, and chili supper. We had a total of 25 Sunday School students participate in the program. They gave the account of Christ's birth from scripture and verses. We were also treated to several Christmas hymns.

It was a joy to see and hear the love our children have for Jesus!

After our afternoon service, the congregation visited two nursing homes and sang various Christmas carols. Our group has grown to be quite large and we divided into two groups as we strolled the halls and sang our praises.

To finish the day, we returned to the church and filled ourselves with homemade chili and soups and loving fellowship. Visiting with us on this special Sunday was Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS).

The tradition that has been established on this special Sunday in December each year has become very dear to the Kansas City congregation. Our traditions are important because they keep our fellowship strong and united. It is important to remember and be thankful for the traditions set up for us by our early forefathers in the church as well. It may be easy to think that old traditions are for an older time, yet we must strive to keep the traditions that keep us united and strong in the Lord.

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**MISSOURI, LAMAR**  
**Kristi Huber**  
**Kristen Braker**

My Lord, an off'ring do I bring;  
My heart I give to Thee.  
I gladly give this heart of mine,  
Which Thou dost ask of me.

*Zion's Harp #163*

We were encouraged and uplifted to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of Bro. Greg Braker. We also appreciate the labors of Elder Bro. Bob Walder in this special weekend.

Bro. William Stefan, Sr. was a patient in the hospital this month.

We're thankful he is recovering.

May we all remember the true meaning of Christmas at this time of year and seek God's grace and guidance throughout the new year.

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**MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS**  
**Rachel Schrock**

My lifetime doth pass away.  
Hourly to the grave I hasten  
And I know each fleeting day  
My allotted span will lessen.  
Think, man, death comes soon or  
late,  
Tarry not, it will not wait!  
*Zion's Harp #253*

Our sympathy goes out to Bro. Morris Braker as his mother, Sis. Clara Braker (Roanoke, IL), has passed on to eternity. May God grant you comfort as you feel this loss.

As the year 2000 is now almost past, surely our lifetime doth swiftly pass as well. We have been encouraged to get our life in order in a recent sermon as the dear brother outlines God's simple yet perfect plan of salvation. We appreciate those brothers who come and help our Bro. Loren Schrenk minister God's Word. Our visiting ministering brethren this past month included Bros. Don Gudeman (Sis. Mary, LaCrosse, IN) and Fred Eberhardt (Sis. Kathy, Burlington, IA). May God bless them and their families.

As our congregation recently caroled at a nearby nursing home, we felt God's blessings upon the whole group. We pray that each one of you may also be blessed, both as you commit labours of love for Him and as we venture into the new year.

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**MISSOURI, TAYLOR**  
**Peg Haerr**

We were happy to hear of the engagement of John Hoerr (Bro. Don and Sis. Elaine) to Jamie Sublette (Dale and Marsha Elston). They are planning a July wedding and we wish them God's blessings.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Sis. Linda Heimer on her passing on December 4. May you find comfort in knowing she is Home with the Lord.

Our annual Christmas caroling was held December 10 at Maple Lawn Nursing Home at Palmyra, MO. The Christmas program was held December 17. What a joy to hear and sing about our Saviour's birth!

Recently Pam Hoenes was hospitalized. We wish her continued recovery.

*Note of Thanks:*

We would like to thank everyone for their love and prayers throughout Linda's illness and since her passing. May God richly bless each one.

*The family of Sis. Linda Heimer*

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**NEW YORK**  
**CROGHAN-NAUMBURG**  
**Anna Mellnitz**

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

*Luke 2:8-11*

Christmas will soon be here but we must remember that it is not all decoration but it is the birth of our Lord and Saviour.

We had singing at Hallmark Nursing Home on December 8 and then we had singing at Lowville Extended Care Nursing Home on December 15. On December 17 we had singing at Brookside and then to Loren Virkler's for refreshments. On December 17, we also had our Sunday School program. It is always good to hear the children tell of the birth of our Lord and Saviour, and what the loving teachers have taught them.

We had World Relief work night on December 1.

Sis. Esther Rauhe and Bro. John are at their daughter's. Sis. Esther is receiving treatment there.

On December 3 we had a brother and a sister from Rockville visiting us.

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**OHIO, AKRON**  
**Joyce Gasser**

Bro. Dan and Sis. Amy Reljin have become a new mother and dad with the birth of their first baby on November 18, a little girl they named Hanna Raquel. Grandparents are Eugene and Sis. Dianna Bako and Zarko and Helen Reljin.

Our Sunday School students blessed us with a Christmas program portraying the real meaning of Christmas. It was very well put together and most enjoyable.

Our visiting ministers were Bros. Thomas Troxel (LaCrosse, IN) and Gary Maibach (Smithville, OH). We appreciate their visits and service in the ministry.

Our oldest Sister is Marie Ritzman and she is having her 95th birthday on Sunday, December 24. Sis. Marie resides in our nursing

home.

We were blessed this year with 6 baptisms, 7 babies born, and 1 marriage. There were 3 deaths.

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### OHIO, COLUMBUS Anita Steiner

On December 3 we had our Christmas program. Our Sunday School children sang about the birth of our Lord Jesus. It is a blessing to watch the fruits of the seeds that have been sown.

We had our Christmas caroling and potluck on December 10. We appreciated the many visitors from Latty that day who aided us with caroling. After caroling, a potluck supper was enjoyed by all. Our special thanks goes to Bro. Dwight Stoller (Latty, OH) who ministered God's Word unto us.

Travis Banks (Bro. Larry and Sis. Nancy) has become engaged to Rachele Wuertz. They plan to be married in the next year or two. May God bless them and their families.

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### OHIO, JUNCTION Cindy Schlatter

With thankful hearts we were able to hear the testimony and then the next day view the baptism of two converts this past month. We welcome Bros. Larry Manz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen) and Micah Gherian (Bro. Paul and Sis. Sharon) into the fold. We trust God will be with not only each of you, but with us all as we daily strive to walk the straight and narrow way. Elder Bro. Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) spent this weekend with us and we heartily thank him for his labors. Many thanks also to all those who made an effort to be with us on this blessed weekend, including ministering Bros. John Steiner (Oakville, IA), Todd Stoller and Dwight Stoller

(Latty, OH) and Doug Harmon (Toledo, OH).

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### OHIO, LATTY Heidi Hackenjos Kathy Sinn

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*

We are reminded once again during the busyness of the Christmas season of the true meaning of Christmas. Jesus came to this earth and His purpose was to die on the cross so we may have forgiveness of sins and hope of eternal life.

Winter has settled into the midwest and doesn't show any signs of letting up. We have so much to be thankful for. This time of year warm homes are a blessing from God.

We have several new additions in Latty. Mike and Kelly Keysor are first-time parents of Jacob Michael. Grandparents are Bro. George and Sis. Sharon Keysor. Riley, Abbey, Haley, Corbin, and Ethan Linder welcome home a new brother. Josiah Ray was born to Jim and Sis. Jane Linder. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Ray and Sis. Ann Sinn and Jim and Pat Linder. Bro. Jerry and Sis. Cherry Klopfenstein welcome home Jacob Lee. Angela and Abram have a new playmate. Grandparents are Bro. Raymond and Sis. Catherine Klopfenstein and Bro. Merle and Sis. Bev Rocke (Indianapolis, IN). Randy and Theresa Letso have been blessed with little Ethan. Ethan has a big sister, Megan. Grandparents are Bro. Russell and Sis. Melvene Stoller.

Dennis Wenninger (Bro. Don and

Sis. Josephine) is engaged to Beth Keller. May the Lord be with them as they begin a new life together.

The angels rejoice because two of our converts have been announced for peace: Julie Klopfenstein (Bro. Keith and Sis. Joanne) and Rustin Stoller (Bro. Craig and Sis. Ruth). We look forward to hearing their testimonies.

Visiting on our pulpit this past month were Bros. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH) and Dan Stoller (Remington, IN).

May the Lord grant His healing touch to those who have had surgery this past month: Bro. Dick Whitman (Sis. Eileen) and Sis. Florence Stoller (Bro. Bill).

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### OHIO, MANSFIELD John and Marci Pfeiffer

Farewell in God,  
Farewell! We'll meet again!  
In love to each we tell,  
We'll meet again!  
We'll meet again up there,  
To rest from toil and care,  
Where we forevermore  
Shall meet again!

*Hymns of Zion #274*

Our dear Bro. Ed Beer has passed from this life into eternity. May God comfort his wife, Thelma; his son, Barry (Joyce) Beer; and daughters, JoAnn (Edward) Stevenson, Barbara (Tom) Hone, and Wendi (John) Beck.

We extend our deepest sympathy to our Bro. Art (Sis. Lore) Stuenzi whose sister, Mary Harfmann, passed away. Surviving are her husband, Richard; a son, Tom (Jackie) Harfmann; a daughter, Sandy (Ted) Taylor; and five grandchildren. Our prayers are with both of these families in the loss of their loved ones.

Our prayers continue to be with

Sis. Alice (Bro. Frank) Graszl, Sis. Becky (Richard) Vent, and Andrew (Ron and Vickie) Kirschenmann as they have all been hospitalized this past month. May God grant His healing as He sees fit.

Our visiting minister this past month was Bro. Bill Dotterer (Lamar, MO). We thank Bro. Bill for ministering unto us and hope he will return again.

At our annual business meeting, Bro. Don (Sis. Joyce) Boliantz was selected to serve as trustee; Sis. Kay (Bro. Ron) Rufener was re-elected for the kitchen committee; Sis. Laura (Bro. Ed) Ramsey was elected to the World Relief committee; Bro. Mike (Sis. Lilly) Baumann was chosen again as our representative for the Rittman Nursing Home; Bro. Ron (Sis. Kay) Rufener was re-elected for treasurer; Bro. Mick (Sis. Delores) Hill as our head song leader; and Bro. Lonny (Sis. Becky) Moser was re-elected as assistant treasurer. We give them our prayerful support and thank Bro. Pete (Sis. Linda) Webel, Sis. Marci (Bro. John) Pfeiffer, and Bro. Lonny (Sis. Becky) Moser, who have completed their terms as trustee, World Relief committee, and head song leader.

We enjoyed our annual Christmas program on December 10. We thank our children and Sunday School teachers for their many efforts.

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**OHIO, RITTMAN**  
Beth Beery  
Cheryl Hartzler

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

*John 3:16*

Throughout this month, and in the coming year, may we each stop to reflect upon that Son which was sent to this earth on our behalf.

Two families in our congregation have received a new son into their home. Kenneth David was born December 2 to Bro. Joe and Sis. Kendra Ramsier. Elizabeth welcomes her new brother. Grandparents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Terri Ramsier and Bro. Ken and Sis. Janice Steffen (Forrest, IL). Bro. Scott, Sis. Ruth Bachman and Gregory welcomed little Mark Alan on November 27. Grandparents are Zane and Sis. Betty Bachman and Bro. David and Sis. Mary Ann Zollinger (Smithville, OH). May God continue to grant the wisdom and understanding to parents as they raise their children in the fear of the Lord.

October 20 was the wedding day of Danisa Lanz (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Diane) and Tim Burke (Patrick and Jill). Bro. Cliff Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam, Sardis, OH) and Sis. Gina Stoller (Bro. Andy and Sis. Roberta, Smithville, OH) were joined in Holy Matrimony on November 26. Michael Steiner (Donald and Sis. Deborah) and Michelle Cardenas (Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Klingelhafer and Mr. and Mrs. Armando Cardenas) were united in marriage on December 16. May God bless these three couples as they begin their lives together as husband and wife. May they look to Him to be the center of their home.

We are thankful to Bro. Steve Pamer (Akron, OH) for visiting and ministering to us this past month. Let us continue to pray for those that do bring us God's Word that they can feel God's nearness as they strive to do His will.

Our prayers are with Bro. Ralph Weber, Roger Hessidence (Evelyn), Adrian Keiper (Kevin and Carolyn),

Sis. Marge Weber and Sis. Martha Beery as they have been hospitalized. May God grant them His healing and strength.

God's blessings to Bro. Mitch and Sis. Vi Baltic, as they had their 65th wedding anniversary on December 16.

Wondering as another year comes to an end,  
How well did I serve my Saviour and Friend?  
Were my prayers sincere each morn when I woke,  
or were the thoughts of the day all that I spoke?  
Did I listen and watch for those struggling behind,  
or was it only my own way I had wanted to find?  
Was I patient and kind to those all around,  
or was there some selfishness God could have found?  
Wondering as another year soon is to come,  
How well will I serve my Saviour and Friend?

—author unknown

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**OHIO, SARDIS**  
Angie Figel

“...My mom had heard he had a heart for cinnamon rolls. So she baked him a batch...and set out for the one-room shack he called home. Seated next to [him] was his fifty-year old son, whose mental capacity fell far beneath his years. They both looked up, the man unable to hear what we said, the son unable to understand why. But when my mom pulled out the cinnamon buns, the light of recognition, understanding, and joy ignited. And without a word, they heard the Christmas message loud and clear: Joy to the world! The Lord is



come:

...Let every heart prepare him  
room,  
And heaven and nature sing!"  
—*Thomas Kinkade*

The holidays are over, but we are still full of sweet memories of Christmas warmth and cheer: visiting relatives, caroling to the elderly and shut-ins (is it more fun for them or us?), the children singing at the Christmas program, and bundling up to go to church on Christmas day to hear about the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Now, in the new year, we will have many more days and opportunities to spread "Christmas cheer" to those in need, as the Lord wills.

Visiting minister was Bro. Bill Dotterer (Sis. Sharon, Lamar, MO) who was here for Thanksgiving day. May we always be thankful to God every day for what He does for us.

O God of wisdom, life and love,  
Thine is the blessed plan,  
In holy bonds of love to join  
The twain created man.

*Hymns of Zion #286*

On November 26, Bro. Cliff Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam) and Sis. Gina Stoller (Elder Bro. Andy and Sis. Roberta) were united as husband and wife in the Lord's eyes at our church in Smithville, OH. May God bless this dear couple as they begin their lives together in Him.

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**OHIO, SMITHVILLE**  
**Edith Miller**  
**Ruth Gasser**

Many special events took place in Smithville in the closing months of 2000. On November 19, two souls were added to the fold. Michael Beery (Art and Eileen) and Marcia

Martin (Adam) became our brother and sister in faith. May they continue to build on the faith which has brought them to this point in their lives. Elder Bros. Eugene Pamer and Merle Hartzler assisted with the testimonies and baptism.

November 26 was the date chosen by Bro. Cliff Brake and Sis. Gina Stoller to become one in the Lord. Parents of the couple are Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam Brake (Sardis, OH) and Elder Bro. Andy and Sis. Roberta Stoller. We rejoice with them and are thankful for another Christian household in our community. Many visitors joined us for that special occasion, including Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle, Bros. Bill Brake and Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH), who shared in the services.

Several other visiting ministers have blessed us this past month as they have allowed the Lord to use them. Our thanks go to Bros. Dave Graf (Akron, OH), Earl Beery (Rittman, OH), Larry Wenninger (Latty, OH), and John Stoller (Leo, IN).

The family of Bro. Scott and Sis. Charlene Stoller has opened their hearts to Tobias Joseph on November 21. Doyle, Lynelle, Nelson, and Warren are his older siblings. Grandparents Bro. Everett and Sis. Marge Stoller (Rittman, OH) and Bro. Joe and Sis. Lilas Rufener have enlarged their family circle for him. Another son, Rhett Steven, was born to Bro. Steven and Sis. Jollene Hofacre on December 1 and joins Stephanie, Jennifer, Angela, and Ross at home. He will find a special place in the hearts of grandparents, Bro. Glenn and Sis. Elizabeth Gasser (Rittman, OH). May the Lord give His rich blessing to the parents in the care of these little ones, and wisdom to guide the little feet in His ways.

Some of our loved ones have experienced adversity this past month as well. Our prayers are with Bro. Brian and Sis. Beverly Indermuhle and their family, as they were called home from church to see their house in flames. May they feel the Lord's comfort in this misfortune. Robin Miller (Michael) has needed surgery and hospitalization recently. We pray she will be strengthened for a full recovery soon.

As we enter the New Year, may each of us take confidence in God's promises and submit to His direction each day.

His pledge in faith will ever  
stand;  
It is His blessed pleasure  
That naught me from His mighty  
hand  
Shall separate or sever.  
He will not break The Word He  
spake;  
So confidence in Him I take,  
And praise Him then forever.  
*Zion's Harp #177*

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

"It is a good thing to give thanks  
unto the Lord, and to sing praises  
unto thy name, O most High."

*Psalm 92:1*

We were exhorted to a life of thankfulness at our Thanksgiving services. Among our blessings that day was the service of Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH) in the ministry.

George Beard was a recent surgical patient. We are glad that he is home and recovering. Bro. Richard Fetter (Sis. Betty) has been hospitalized. We pray for his recovery and that God will comfort him in his ill-

ness.

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## OREGON, PORTLAND

### Louise Gallup

We do not have very much news this past month. However, we did have two ministers visit us, for which we are very thankful. Bro. Ed and Sis. Judie Knecht (Silverton, OR) were with us on Thanksgiving Day and we thank Bro. Ed for his sermon. May God bless him and his wife for supporting our small flock so faithfully year after year. We also appreciated Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Sis. JoAnn, Winthrop, MN) ministering unto us. Bro. Leroy and Sis. JoAnn visited us with their family recently. We hope they had a safe journey home.

Sis. Connie Steffen (Bro. Garth) has been ill for some time now and needs our prayers. We do miss seeing her in church and hope and pray she will regain her health and strength soon.

We do thank all other visitors who made the effort to come to Portland to worship and fellowship with us. This goes for our children as well. They also enjoy visitors their age in Sunday School!

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## PENNSYLVANIA PHILADELPHIA

### Nathan and MaryElizabeth Gasser

The highlight for all of us this month was joining our precious Sunday School children in celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Through songs and through reading of the Word we heard about His miraculous birth, life, and ultimate sacrifice for us from the mouths and hearts of our children.

We also had the opportunity to sing Christmas carols at several

nursing homes in the area and were warmly received. Isn't it wonderful how someone can listen to the same Christmas songs for 90 years and still look forward to hearing them again! Let us likewise never grow tired of praising our Lord and sharing His love with others.

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) with us for the reading of the Memorandum this month. Also visiting our area were Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) and Bro. Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN). We thank them for sharing the Word with our congregation.

As the year comes to a close, so does Sis. Melissa Kuenzi's year with us. We wish her God's richest blessings as she returns home to Silverton, OR.

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## TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE

### Mike and Monica Fritz

God watches over His children with such loving care! Recently we were privileged that He brought Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Sis. Nancy, Elgin, IL) into our midst to share encouragement through the ministry of His Word. We have also enjoyed the fellowship of many visitors from Athens, AL; Chicago, Elgin and Morton, IL; Francesville and Leo, IN; and Lamont-Gridley, KS.

If you are traveling in or through the Nashville area, please plan to worship with us. We meet every Sunday for worship and fellowship. The following churches are scheduled for services in the near future: Bloomington-Normal, IL (Jan. 21), Kansas City, MO (Feb. 4) and Cissna Park, IL (Feb. 18). On the other Sundays, we meet for a tape service. Beginning in March, our schedule is changing to have a visiting minister every Sunday.

We also meet on Wednesday evenings for singing. If you are planning to worship with us, please call ahead to confirm our schedule. Contacts are Bro. Don and Sis. Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928; Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz (615) 952-9933; and Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 662-2946.

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## TEXAS, CENTRAL

### Dan and Pam Sauder

What a comfort when we can embrace a new year, trusting the Lord to direct us, to bless us, and to provide according to His will.

Our visiting ministers in the past month were Bros. Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Fairbury, IL), Wayne Laubscher (Sis. Gloria, Cissna Park, IL), Nelson Beer (Sis. Shelby, Milford, IN) and Leland Plattner (Zapata, TX). We are grateful for the support of our brethren throughout the country.

Our services are currently being held in one location. We are meeting at the Quality Inn in San Marcos, TX. San Marcos is located on IH-35 approximately 20 minutes south of Austin or about 50 minutes north of downtown San Antonio. Exit at #206 and find the hotel on the northwest side access road.

Our February schedule of worship services and churches sending ministers include: the 4th (Bloomington, IL), 11th (Wichita, KS), 18th (Forrest, IL) and 25th (La-Crosse, IN).

We extend a welcome for anyone who may be in the area to worship with us. For your benefit, please call ahead to confirm our schedule. Contacts are Bro. Bill Zeltwanger (979) 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 and Bro. Dale and  
Sis. Amy Ringger (512) 933-1380.

**TEXAS, ZAPATA**  
**Mary Plattner**  
**Joyce Nohl**

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

A new year is dawning! Let us as  
children be eager to approach the  
new year with gladness and delight  
to live each day as a good soldier,  
ready for battle to the glory of God.

Press thou on! Press thou on!  
Zion, press thou on to God!  
With His strength thy spirit  
glowing,  
Be not like a withered rod,  
But a vine in vigor growing.  
Zion, let hypocrisy be gone;  
Press thou on! Press thou on!

Hold thou fast! Hold thou fast!  
Persevere now as of old;  
Lukewarm let not Jesus find  
thee;  
On, behold the crown of gold;  
On, forget what is behind thee.

Zion, in thy struggle to the last,  
Hold thou fast! Hold thou fast!

*Zion's Harp #20*

We welcome Bro. Tom Schrenk  
and his wife, Sis. Joan (Athens, AL),  
as our winter residents. We are  
thankful for our ministers who  
serve us so willingly. We trust God  
will bless Bro. Tom for being a faith-  
ful messenger.

We extend our sympathy to the  
family of Sis. Grace Strahm who has  
passed from this life to her eternal  
reward. Bro. Emil and Sis. Grace  
spent several years in Zapata and  
her brother, Ben Blunier (Sis.  
Wilma), are presently winter resi-  
dents.

Our sympathy to Bro. Amos  
(Loretta) Funk whose sister, Sis.  
Lorene Kiefer, passed away to be  
with the Lord. We can find comfort  
in knowing she is at rest and can  
have hope to meet her again in  
Heaven.

We were saddened to hear of the  
death of Sis. Edna Neuenschwander  
(Bluffton North, IN). We extend our  
sympathy to her family. We have  
many fond memories of the winters  
we shared with her here in Zapata.  
May God comfort these families as  
only He can.

When a Christian dies,  
Precious is the prize!  
Lasting joys for days of sorrow,  
Rest from conflict on the morrow  
Follows when he dies,  
Follows when he dies.

When a Christian dies  
His grief buried lies.  
All distress and tribulation  
In death's slumber find cessa-  
tion.

When a Christian dies  
His grief buried lies.

*Hymns of Zion #248*

Once again, we can see how God  
protects His children. Sis. Lillian  
Koehl was on her way to church last  
Sunday morning. It was a very foggy  
morning and the vehicle behind hit  
her car. The car was damaged but  
only by the protecting hand of God,  
Sis. Lillian was spared from any se-  
rious injuries. May God give her  
strength and courage through this  
trying time.

We are so thankful for all the  
blessings God has so bountifully  
provided for us in the past year. May  
we rededicate our lives in His service  
as we begin the new year!



*Sermon continued from page 2*

the spiritual rulers at that time—the chief priests and scribes—and said, “What do you say? Is there supposed to be a King that is born here?” I don’t think they necessarily believed themselves, but again another prophet said, “The Saviour that is to come will be born in the line of Bethlehem...the little town of Bethlehem.”

“And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.” Matthew 2:6. So Herod went and told the wise men that. They continued to follow the star.

Another miracle happened when this star came and stood right over where the young child was. They came to the house and saw the young child and fell down and worshipped Him. This is the only place, I think, in the Bible that someone worshipped such a young person. Yet, through inspiration, they knew that this was the King that they had come seeking, perhaps for many months.

They opened to Him the treasures—gold, frankincense and myrrh. These three gifts were, I think, three items that were in common use at that time. We know gold has been in use since the most ancient times and is still used many times today. It is a form of value and it is something that has kept its value. The last two—frankincense and myrrh—are spices and perfumes which were also used back then sometimes.

They were warned of God in a dream not to return to Herod. They realized Herod did not want to worship this Baby after all and so they went back to their country another

way.

We can look at these three presents that they gave to Jesus. Jesus didn’t receive many gifts when He was here in this world, even when He was older. He doesn’t want things from us. Even at the time of His birth, I don’t think He necessarily needed things, but these wise men gave Him these three items because they have some of their meaning behind them, not just because they are gifts.

Gold, for instance; gold is an item that was used by kings. Gold was the most valuable metal...better than silver and better than brass. Gold was the presents that you give to kings. People in authority, people above you and people who are worth a lot are worth gold. We know gold has cognations of heaven. In heaven, the streets will be paved with pure gold.

In verse six in chapter two, It says, “Out of Bethlehem shall come a Governor—Governor or King that shall rule my people Israel.” This gold represents Christ being our King and being our Head. He is God. He is worth the most valuable treasures that we have which, at that time, was gold.

Frankincense, the second gift, was an item used in temple worship a lot. It is mentioned in Moses’ law and is mentioned in several other places. It was a sweet incense. We don’t use incense today. In Japan, many people still use incense because idolatry is still quite rampant. You can go into many people’s houses and you can smell the incense.

Sometimes it is the sweeter kind of incense, as in temple worship, and at this time also. Frankincense was used as a sweet offering to God.

We know God’s Son, Jesus, is our Priest...He is our High Priest. This represents Him as our Spiritual Leader. Frankincense. Another word for Jesus is Christ, which means The Anointed One. The Anointed One again is someone who has been spiritually anointed as our Great High Priest.

I believe the Book of Hebrews also talks about Jesus being our High Priest. In Hebrews here, Paul mentions, “And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh,” which means when Jesus was come down here as a man, “when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son,” or the Son of God, “yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest...” Hebrews 5:4-10.

This is another name that we have for Jesus. He is our High Priest. He is the One who intercedes for us. When we pray, we pray in Jesus’ name because for each one of us, He has offered many prayers and supplications. “With strong crying and tears,” It says. Even though He was God’s Son and yet, by coming here as a man, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered and by being an

example to all of us.

God's Son was perfect and came here to this earth, and yet, was completely obedient in all things. How much more should we learn of obedience to God and to those above us in authority? So frankincense represents Christ's Spiritual Headship over us.

The last one is myrrh. This is another perfume that was used sometimes. It is mentioned several times throughout the Bible. I think the other time it is mentioned in the New Testament is when Jesus died. After He died, the women came carrying myrrh to anoint His dead body and this was used as a form of embalming. I believe it also had a sweet smell.

So this last one here, perhaps, is the most important. The purpose of Jesus coming to this world was to die. He came to be born so that He could give His life. Another name we have here for our Saviour is Jesus. This is perhaps the most used name. It is the name the angels told Mary and Joseph to call Him. Jesus means Saviour...Saviour of the world. "...for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21. That is the whole reason why He came here to this earth. Yes, He is our King. Yes, He is our High Priest. The purpose that He came was to save us from our sins.

Myrrh. That is to anoint the dead. Perhaps the wise men maybe didn't fully understand the meaning of these gifts. Yet, we can look back now and see how they matched so well the life He lived here.

So continuing, "And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the

young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." Matthew 2:13.

We know that throughout Jesus' life, Satan has always tried to foil God's plan from the time of His birth until the time at the cross. Many times Satan tried to do away with God's plan that He had for His Son. Again, here he used King Herod. Herod saw that he was mocked of the wise men and he was very wroth. He went and slew all the children in the Bethlehem region from two years old and under.

Again, this was a fulfilled prophecy "which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." Matthew 2:17-18. So when Herod was dead, an angel again appeared to Joseph and said to go back to the land of Israel. It is safe to go there.

We know that Joseph and Mary originally lived in Nazareth and went down to Bethlehem because a young Baby was just born. They probably were not able to return to Nazareth right away and ended up staying there for awhile. But Joseph did not want to go back to that region because he was so afraid; but he was warned of God in a dream again, so he went again to the parts of Galilee and came to a town called Nazareth.

It says here, "...that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene." Matthew 2:23. I believe this Nazarene comes from the same root as the Old Testament of the

word Nazarite which is a person that was especially set apart for God's service. This was again as written in Moses' law. A Nazarite is someone who kept himself from the things of the world. He didn't do certain things like drink strong drinks or cut his hair. Moses' law says that.

We know the two famous ones in the Old Testament were Samson and we also know the prophet Samuel, who were both Nazarites. Perhaps it is just chance but I tend to think of it more than chance that He happened to live in a town called Nazareth, which comes from the same root. He also was someone set apart...a separated one. Sometimes it means a branch. Jesus' life was completely set apart for God's service.

We know babies don't know really anything. They are completely helpless. Other animals of this world when they are born, they have many instincts and they can kind of fend for themselves, or get food for themselves. But human babies are completely helpless. If it were not for the mother taking care of the baby, we know babies would not live.

I don't think Jesus really knew His life when He was a baby, and yet, as He got older and His knowledge increased, He came to know of God's purpose for Him. I don't know exactly what age He really knew of His purpose in life and that was to go to the cross, but we know that by the time He was thirty and by the time He was baptized and started preaching this, He fully knew what God wanted for Him.

The two main stories in the Bible of Jesus' birth are Matthew and  
*Sermon continued on next page...*

*Sermon continued from page 45*

Luke. There is one more verse I would like to read in Saint John that I think is beautiful as a Christmas story. In John 1:1, It says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is another name we have for Jesus.

Yes, He is Emmanuel, God is with us. He is our King. He is our High Priest. Another thing He is, He is the Word. He came to this earth also to bring the Word to us. That is why we have four gospels completely filled with words that Jesus spoke. This same Word was in the beginning with God. This Baby who came to be born two thousand years ago was originally with God. We know God had no beginning. Jesus also had no beginning.

"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." John 1:3-4. We again here have the word light. We know of ourselves that we can do nothing to earn salvation. We ourselves are completely worthless and yet, Jesus is the One who gives us life. By believing on Him, by looking at the Light and learning from Him, we can have life.

It says here, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the

flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13. His whole birth was a complete miracle. It wasn't obviously a normal birth. It wasn't because man willed something but it was because God willed it. The Word was made flesh. This Word, Jesus, came down here to be flesh and to dwell among us.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14. That is how John describes our Saviour. He was made flesh. God was. The Word was, John writes here. John was one of the twelve disciples who spent many years with Jesus. It says we beheld Him and beheld His glory. It is something that the prophets looked forward to with earnestness. They wanted to behold the day so they could see their Saviour being born. We know that two thousand years after it happened, and we can't necessarily look at it with our eyes, and yet, we can read of it and we can still have the same faith within our hearts.

There were several people around the temple at the time of Jesus' birth that had been looking for the Messiah for many, many years. There was the prophetess, Anna, and she spent every day in prayers

and fastings. The Bible says she never departed from the temple. Her whole life was completely sold to God, and she was looking forward to her Messiah, the Anointed One. Finally, the day came when this Baby was carried into the temple and she saw Him and she blessed Him and said, "Now I have seen the redemption in Israel."

There was another man named Simeon who was an old man and looking every day for the salvation of Israel. When he saw the Baby, he didn't see the whole life of Jesus, he just saw God's Son as an infant. Then he said, "I have seen the salvation and now I can die in peace."

Today each one of us has the opportunity as well to read and to understand what God did for us. We read for the wise men, when they saw the Baby, it brought them exceeding great joy.

Today as we think of God's miracle of His Son, may we also be filled with joy. May our hearts be filled with love so we can share to each other. May it be filled with hope that through Him we can have eternal life. Through Him we can be saved from all of our sins, as it says here. He is our Saviour. He is our King. He is our High Priest.

May each one of us have a joyful Christmas day.



## CARIBBEAN BOARD PROJECTS - 2001

All volunteers should contact the project coordinator. Should you not be able to contact the coordinator, for Haiti direct your inquiry to Bro. Tom Hitz, Ph. 734-454-9229, Fax 1-734-454-9259 or E-mail [thitzhome@juno.com](mailto:thitzhome@juno.com). For Jamaica, direct your inquiry to Bro. Kevin Sauder, Ph./Fax 309-925-2409 or E-mail [ksss@dpc.net](mailto:ksss@dpc.net).

Country	Project	Dates	Location	Coordinator	Project Type	Count	Completion %
Haiti	AWA-FRW	Jan 18-26, '01	Les Cayes	Duane Schieler	Vocational Sch.	4	100%
Haiti	AWA-T	Jan 18-26, '01	Les Cayes	Derek Sauder	Water Aid	5	100%
Haiti	AWA-B	Jan 18-26, '01	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Vocational Sch.	2	100%
Haiti	MEBSH	Jan 25 - Feb 2, '01	Les Cayes	Dean Pashak	Grade School	9	(*) 50%
Haiti	SEED	Feb 15-23, '01	Les Cayes	Bob Beebe	Agriculture Aid	9	100%
Jamaica	CCCD	Mar 2-10, '01	Kingston	Terry Miller	Deaf School	40	50%
Haiti	MEBSH	Mar 8-16, '01	Les Cayes	Phil Isabel	Grade School	9	0%
Jamaica	CCCD	Mar 9-17, '01	Deaf Village	Kevin Sauder (TBA)	Work Place	40	95%
Haiti	MEBSH	Mar 15-23, '01	Les Cayes	Jim Walter	Grade School	9	0%
Haiti	Palm Grove	Mar 16-24, '01	Puit Sales	Tom Hitz	Grade School	11	100%
Haiti	SEED	Mar 22-30, '01	Les Cayes	(*) Art Mueller	Agriculture Aid	9	0%
Haiti	Palm Grove	Apr 6-13, '01	Puit Sales	Tom Hitz (Washington, IL)	Grade School	11	(*) 60%
Jamaica	CCCD	Apr 7-14, '01	Deaf Village	(1) Peoria B.C.	Work Place	50	80%
Haiti	MEBSH	Apr 19-27, '01	Les Cayes	Nathan Gerber	Grade School	9	0%
Jamaica	CCCD	May 11-19, '01	Deaf Village	Kevin Sauder (TBA)	Work Place	40	100%
Haiti	AWA-FWR	May 25 - Jun 01, '01	Les Cayes	Duane Schieler	Vocational Sch.	4	100%
Haiti	AWA-T	May 25 - Jun 01, '01	Les Cayes	Derek Sauder	Water Aid	5	100%
Haiti	AWA-B	May 25 - Jun 01, '01	Les Cayes	Bill Ragel	Vocational Sch.	2	100%
Jamaica	CCCD	Jun 2-9, '01	Deaf Village	(2) Gridley B.C.	Work Place	55	100%
Jamaica	(*) CCCD	Jun 9-16, '01	Montego Bay	(4) Belvidere B.C.	Deaf School	40/50	50%
Jamaica	CCCD	Jun 30-Jul 7	Kingston	(*) (5) Bluffton B.C.	Deaf School	50/60	100%
Jamaica	CCCD	Jul 21-28, '01	Deaf Village	(1) Ak-Rit-Sville BC	Work Place	50/60	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  
**(\*)** = Changes or additions since last issue

**Palm Grove** = Mission of Haiti  
**A.W.A. - B.** = Apostolic Water Aid/Bluffton  
**A.W.A. - FRW** = Apostolic Water Aid/Francesville, Remington, Wolcott  
**A.W.A. - T** = Apostolic Water Aid/Tremont  
**(\*)** = Held for College Student Participation

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Duane Schieler	765-567-2922	765-567-2922	
Jim Walter	815-692-3158	815-692-2851	
Jon Zeller	309-266-9009		

### - NOTICE -

Repair and Distribution of  
Worn Bibles,  
Bible Story Books,  
Hymns of Zion,  
Tabernacle or Gospel Hymn  
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**WE DO NOT ACCEPT ZION'S  
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### Apostolic Christian Counseling Services

73 East Queenwood Rd,  
Morton, IL 61550  
309-263-5536 (local#)  
309-263-6841 (fax)

**877-370-9988 (toll free)**

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### Gateway Woods Auction

Saturday, August 18, 2001

### Call To Subscribe

Please call the Gateway Woods'  
Office at 888/443-4283 to receive  
The Gate Post, a free newsletter  
about Gateway Woods published  
three times yearly.



### SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Gateway Woods offers three  
\$2,000.00 scholarships to stu-  
dents enrolled in undergraduate  
or postgraduate work leading to a  
degree in a social services field.  
The scholarships are available to  
any member of the Apostolic  
Christian Church or friend who  
attends on a regular basis. A de-  
scription of the scholarship and  
application are available by writ-  
ing or calling Bill Eisenmann at  
219-627-2159. Applications need  
to be returned to Gateway Woods.

### BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

*The Bible Distribution Center which  
was formerly in Leo, IN has been  
moved to Bluffton, IN.*

All books, including Bibles, in English and other languages, plus  
Bible Story Books which have been approved by the Apostolic  
Christian Mission Committee, are available for those who wish to  
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Bluffton can drop ship to nearly any address.

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Bluffton, IN 46714  
Phone and Fax 219/824-5587  
E-mail: [bibledist@parlorcity.com](mailto:bibledist@parlorcity.com)



## MEXICO WORKTEAMS 2001

### CONSTRUCTION

#### RIO BRAVO - ICCD

*(International Christian Center  
for the Deaf)*

**March 3-10**

Team Leader -  
Bro. Chad Lantz  
219-565-3463

**March 24-31**

Team Leader -  
Bro. Mike Fiechter  
219-597-7330

**June 16-23**

Contact Bro. Joe Maller  
219-565-3211

#### AGUA PRIETA PROJECT

**March 3-10**

Team Leader -  
Bro. Wayne Lehman  
219-773-4373

**March 10-17**

Team Leader -  
Bro. Wayne Lehman  
219-773-4373

#### JUAREZ PROJECT

**March 3-10**

Team Leader - Bro. Kurt Ifer  
219-824-2829

**March 10-17**

Team Leader -  
Bro. Jeff Sauder  
217-367-1427 or 309-925-3215

**March 24-31**

Team Leader - Bro. Jeff Leman  
219-565-3815

---

## MEDICAL TEAMS 2001

#### JUAREZ

**March 15-22**

Contact Sis. Cheryl Herrmann  
309-385-1082

#### JUAREZ or COPPER CANYON

**August 29 - Sept. 5**

Contact Sis. Cheryl Herrmann  
309-385-1082

**PLEASE NOTE:** The A.C. Mental Hotline that has been in operation for many years has become a part of Apostolic Christian Counseling Services as of March, 1 2000.

The old hotline number (800-747-9049) HAS BEEN CHANGED to:

**(Toll free) 877-370-9988**

*Please make this change in your address book.*

## Alternate Houseparents Needed

Gateway Woods has appreciated the Lord's blessing of being fully staffed with Houseparents. At this time, however, we are experiencing a staff opening. Bro. Chuck and Sis. Naomi Wiegand have informed us that they are expecting their fourth child and will be leaving their full-time position in March of 2001. This offers an opportunity for a couple, directed of the Lord, to come to work in a full-time ongoing ministry at Gateway Woods. This position offers competitive wages and benefits and a close relationship with brothers and sisters whose hearts and lives are dedicated to a common mission with an eternal reward. If you feel the call to explore these possibilities, please call one of the brothers listed below.

Ed Graf  
Child Care Supervisor  
P.O. Box 151  
Leo, IN 46765  
(219) 627-2159  
ed.graf@gatewaywoods.org

Phil Stettner  
Counseling Elder  
1780 N. 450 E  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
(219) 565-3499  
phs@adamswells.com



# REMEMBERING

## *Our Spiritual Heritage*

### Aspects of Growth

During the century of 1900-2000, the church grew, both in numbers and congregations. It also grew in its scope of ministry.

By century's end, the church had found a presence in 22 states and in Canada, Mexico and Japan. In addition to holding worship services, it grew into many projects that might not have seemed possible in 1900.

In the early part of the 20th century, due to a variety of factors, the church brethren were primarily active in finding an adequate existence. Having been in America for a little more than 50 years, the members had not found much integration in the culture. The language of worship and in everyday life was German. Cultural patterns from the old country did not die fast. Many brethren were farmers and had little social contact with those of nationalities other than German and Swiss.

Two wars with Germany were responsible, in part, for the brethren to shed its German ties, and begin to find more accommodation with the American culture.

The post World War II era found the church evolving into service pursuits that were beneficial in the Lord's service. Not only did the church grow in numbers (slowly), but also in projects to aid the poor and needy.

In addition, efforts in publishing (Apostolic Christian Publications) and in communicating (Silver Lining) gave the church a mode of influence it did not have early in the 1900's. A history, *Marching To Zion*, was published in 1984 that helped a growing number of members and youth understand the past and today's link to it.

### World Relief

While brethren had always been charitable, the early 1960's ushered in an official organization that sought to give assistance to needy persons.

By 1970, the World Relief Committee consisted of ten brothers. From 1964-1970, records indicate that disbursements reached \$360,000. From 1971 to 1976, they rose to \$1,033,070. Giving to a wide variety of causes saw disbursements rise significantly by 2000. From 1981 on, World Relief was giving to dozens of approved organizations.

Grain has been shipped to Honduras. Earthquake victims were aided in Guatemala (1976); and an Apostolic Christian presence in India was born when the church became an overseer of the Rural Gospel and Medical Mission as requested by its founder, Bhagwant B. Bhagwat. (Elder brethren have made numerous trips to India for this cause.)

Material Aid Centers were set up. Sewing groups were established in local churches. A big emphasis was put on Bible distribution. In the May, 1977, issue of the American Bible Society Record, the Apostolic Christian Church was shown as the biggest giver (per capita) of all U.S. denominations. A work projects program augmented World Relief.

### Silver Lining

In the early 1940's, a monthly church periodical was begun in Grabill, IN. The first issue was in October, 1943.

As time unfolded, each local congregation furnished news. In 1981, circulation reached 6,400. Today, the total circulation remains nearly the same. The Silver Lining serves as a cohesive force among our 86 congregations.

### Ministers Book

A booklet, published every few years, that has brought a further sense of cohesion to believers across the land, and abroad, is the Ministers Book.

First published in 1944 by Bro. Orel Steiner of Oakville, IA, it grew to 6,000 copies by 1981. The 2000 issue had 14,000 copies printed.

### Apostolic Christian Publications

In 1967, a small building was built in Eureka, IL, to house church-related materials. In the early 1960's, the church saw the need to house hymnals and Sunday School materials, and related items.

In time, a large brick building—facing Route 24—was built in Eureka. Its volume continues to grow.

### Nursing and Retirement Homes

Local churches today operate nine nursing homes, and several churches have built apartments for elderly brethren. This has been a major work. The financial statistics, and the people served, accrue to a significant work on the Lord's behalf.

### Home for the Handicapped

In October, 1971, a new \$800,000 facility was built in Morton, IL, to care for handicapped persons. In 1978, a 1.1 million dollar addition was made. This work has experienced expansion over the years. It is a notable work for the Lord.

### Children's Home

In 1976, a children's home was established. It is located one mile east of Leo, IN, and cares for youngsters from troubled homes. A dedicated staff devotes itself to helping and extending love to young people in need of special direction.

There have been many aspects of growth during the past century. While the church has experienced a four to five-fold increase in membership (since 1900), it has experienced significant growth in service areas as well.

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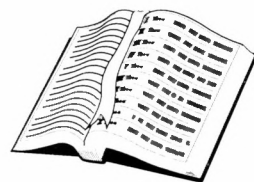
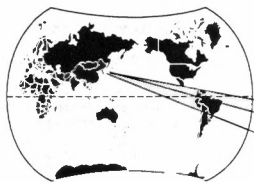
Next issue:

**Bro. Froehlich and the early days**

# The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

## 希望の光



### “The Beauty of Simplicity”

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

God spoke to Elijah in a still, small voice, and that was simplicity after all that noise and commotion. First there was a wind storm, followed by an earthquake and a fire. We read, “And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire, a still, small voice.” (I Kings 19:12)

There is something wonderful and beautiful about simplicity. A teacher who can make difficult, complicated and abstract ideas simple, is a teacher who is much in demand. The students love it and I don't blame them.

Don't you sometimes feel like you would just like to get away from it all and relax some place where the birds sing in the trees, water runs in the mountain stream, and all is quiet and peaceful? The duty you and I have, is to make right where we are, that kind of place. In all of our learning, let's learn to keep life simple.

A word that is closely associated with simplicity is quietness. I Timothy 2:2, “That we may lead a

quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” This requires us to speak softly and respectfully to one another, and not to show any anger in our voice or facial expression. At times, it may be necessary to be stern with children but we must be careful not to give them the impression that we cannot control ourselves, and that we consider ourselves to be superior to them. “And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.” (Ephesians 6:4)

I'm thinking about this coming year, 2001. How I would like to have a more simple life, although my life is already quite simple. What can we do to make our life more simple? The first thing I think of is, “Don't demand so much in regard to luxurious items.” I Timothy 6:8 says “And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

Concerning spiritual things, “Keep it simple.” There is a living God who is a Spirit and He is the Creator. He is perfect and we are not perfect so in order for us to be

able to spend eternity with Him, we need to be purified. Christ, God's Son, died for our sins and if we repent, believe and obey, we are purified. There are many things we can't explain, but that's all right. We just enjoy living the sanctified life.

A simple diet is fine so don't get all worn out cooking unless you enjoy it. Clean and neat clothes are fine, but they don't have to be fancy. Your car is for transportation and doesn't have to be exceptionally high priced. But you know better than I how to make your life simple. Let's work at it during this new year and may we come up smiling.

Another good verse for simplicity is I Peter 3:4, “A meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” In order for us to have a meek and quiet spirit, we have to do what we can to solve problems, and then rest in the Lord during 2001.

## 希望の光



*Springtime bringeth forth a renewing.  
Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.*

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