



The Silver Lining

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

December 2001

“THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT”

Sermon by Elder Bro. Ron Messner, Washington, IL

Psalm 42 and II Corinthians 1

Let's start at the beginning of the chapter. There are different thoughts that Paul was introducing to them in this letter. Let's go to the beginning and find our way through those. Paul starts out the letter that with this church he had a personal relationship. It was one that he knew well, in fact, probably knew a number of the people well.

We think about today, as we travel from one church to another, if we were to call up someone or write, we would go directly to those personal relationships and ask, "How is so-and-so doing? We remember so-and-so who is a good friend and wonder about what was happening." It is not that we need to do as Paul did, but where you can see his heart and he went directly to the real relationship he had with them. The real relationship is the one that was established through the Father and that his real concern for them was not who had a baby and who is engaged. You know how we do.

In fact, you might think about this a little. There is nothing wrong in doing it but when you get the Silver Lining or something like that, what is our first interest? We want to know what is going on and what is happening there. That is because we care about each other, because we love each other and because we want to know that. Paul's relationship to the church was the same as what ours should be. His relationship was that he was directly tied to them through the grace of the Father in the common faith that they had. He went directly to it.

"Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." II Corinthians 1:2. It is a reminder to us because we know each other so well and travel so freely. We have families in so many different congregations and have all those links. It is easy for us to get caught up in, like sometimes when we talk about the faith we share. We all know what we mean, but our interest in each other can almost take the place of that, can't it? We sometimes forget that. What is the real

link we have between each other? What is the real thing we share? Is it because we were in the young group together or because so-and-so married your best friend? Those things are definitely important to us.

God made us a people and made us to have a concern for each other. What is the tie that brings us together? What is it that makes us sit down together and feel comfortable being in the same church and in the same building? What is it that makes us comfortable traveling to another church and sitting down there? Is it because we knew them or met them on a trip or have family relationships and those kinds of things? Or, do you remember that it is the common faith which we share in the faith of the shed blood of Christ? Those other links do not mean anything.

It sounds like I am taking down those family relationships, but I am not doing that at all. We love them and they are important to us, but they can become so interesting and so captivating that we forget that, if we didn't know that soul at all and sometimes this happens. Sometimes we notice it more when we go to a church that is a little further away and where there is just not any of those kind of ties that we have. We go and then we are reminded that we are glad to be there and that they are glad to have us because we share the same faith in Christ and the same sense of God's love for us.

If we plan to come to church on a Sunday morning, there is no question we look forward to it in the same way we would when we get together with family, our family reunion, or our friends because we are going to get to see people and find out what happened during the week. It is a good place to do it. It is part of what we enjoy, but let's be sure it doesn't override the grace and peace from God our Father and the gift of life through Jesus Christ. Think about it. What is it you share with the people sitting around you? What is most important to you that you share? Probably most of you are sitting by someone that

you could think of another list of things you share. If not blood lines, then other things that you share. What most importantly do you share? Isn't that what knits us tightly together? Isn't it the real reason that we care a lot about what happens to somebody else? Sometimes when we doubt that a little or get moved away from it, maybe it helps us

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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

December 2001

Am I Your Enemy Because I Tell You the Truth?

One would think that the truth could hardly be controversial. If something is the truth it should be verifiable and, therefore, quite easy to settle upon.

Unfortunately, there are those who deny the truth, distort the truth, and even persecute those who stand for the truth. The world may make light of the truth, but Christ said "...the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). Pilot, in a state of confusion, asked "...What is truth?..." (Jn. 18:38) and as Jesus He prayed for His disciples, He answered that question "...Thy (God's) word is truth" (John 17:17).

Sometimes we are faced with situations about which we would rather not know the truth, perhaps thinking in the back of our minds that if we don't know we won't have to deal with it. There are times when an individual doesn't feel well physically. There may be fear that something is very wrong and as a way of denial, the individual tries to convince himself that there is nothing wrong.

Eventually, however, in those situations the individual must face reality. Perhaps they have put off seeing a doctor for so long that when circumstances finally force them to face reality, they find that the situation has become so serious there is little that can be done. Perhaps earlier it could have been dealt with successfully, but by denying the warning signals for too long, the situation became hopeless.

In the physical sense this is sad, but in spiritual situations it is disastrous.

When Ahab, King of Israel, wanted to go to battle against Syria, he sought the counsel of about 400 prophets who said he should go to battle. Although these prophets told Ahab what he wanted to hear, Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, who was going to battle with Ahab, was not sure these prophets were really saying God's will. Jehoshaphat asked if there was another prophet they could consult. Ahab said "...There is yet one man, Micaiah ... but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil..." (I Kings 22:8). The King preferred to hear false good news prophesied, rather than the truth. It cost him his life.

Isaiah wrote of rebellious children who

would not hear the law of the Lord "Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:" (Is. 30:10). Again, they preferred short term comfort rather than the truth. In the long term, they suffered because they did not want to know the truth.

In the writings of Ezekiel, Chapters 33 and 34, the prophet warned of the results of not sending a clear signal and of refusing to listen to warnings. The shepherd and the watchman on the wall were warned of their responsibility to sound a clear alarm and to feed the sheep. Those who would not fulfill their duty were severely reprov'd. Those who refused to heed the warning when the truth was spoken were told that "...his blood shall be upon his own head" (Ez. 33:4).

In addition, as Jesus was explaining to the scribes and Pharisees His relationship to His heavenly Father, they became very angry and took refuge in the fact that they were Abraham's seed. Jesus reminded them that if they were Abraham's seed they would do the works of Abraham. "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth..." (Jn. 8:40). They denied that they planned to kill Him but a few minutes later they were so angry "Then took they up stones to cast at him:..." (Jn. 8:59). They could not stand the truth.

What about our brotherhood? Do we still stand for the truth? Do we avoid listening to Conference tapes and to the reading of the Memorandum? Do we stay away from provings so we don't have to be reminded of our commitment to God? Occasionally we hear of those who stay away because they don't want to hear what is said. If we choose to not hear the truth, it does not reduce our responsibility to do what is right. Those who have the opportunity to hear and to know the truth will be accountable for their behavior even though they may have tried to not be reminded of the truth.

Many of Christ's followers have also felt anger from those who did not want to hear the truth. As Paul was lovingly exhorting the Galatians, whom he feared

were trusting too much in the flesh, he asked, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Ga. 4:16).

The Apostles often risked their lives by standing up for the truth of God's Word. Paul described the persecution he faced as a minister of the gospel: "...in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;" (II Cor. 11:23-25). He goes on to describe the perils of water, robbers, his own countrymen, by heathen, in the city, in the wilderness, at sea, among false brethren and so on. All of these were suffered because of his desire to be truthful in "...the care of all the churches" (II Cor. 11:28).

History tells us that all of Christ's original disciples who remained faithful except John gave their lives for the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Although John was not killed for his faith he was banished to "...the isle that is called Patmos, ... for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

Throughout the world even today there are those who must suffer for their faith. Persecution is very severe in many parts of the world. In our own land many government regulations have changed which makes it more difficult to stand for the truth. We are told that there is strength in diversity, that we need to tolerate (which is often interpreted as embrace) those of a different faith. The purity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is being threatened by those who would oppose the truth.

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another" (Ep. 4:25).

Are we enemies of some who do not want the truth? Jesus said "...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:31-32).

An editorial committee of elder brothers is preparing articles for this section of the Silver Lining to address some of the special needs of our times. Suggestions for subjects are welcome and can be sent to: Silver Lining Editorials, 1389 County Road 1600 N, Roanoke, IL 61561.



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

European Board Meets with CAM and ICM in Ohio

On October 18, 2001, all the members of the European Board met in the offices of Christian Aid Ministries in Berlin, Ohio, to discuss matters pertaining to our ongoing work in Europe. Elder Ernst Pfister from Breidenbach, Germany, also was with our brethren throughout the day and evening.

Christian Aid Ministries

For many years our brethren have worked with this organization to carry on efforts not only in Eastern Europe, but also in the Caribbean area and throughout the USA. Christian Aid Ministries handles shipping of our food packages to Romania each month.

It is the practice of our European Board to meet with this group in the autumn of each year. Since all Board members were able to be present, they used the opportunity to meet in the morning in a room that CAM so graciously provided from 9:00 AM until noon. The afternoon meeting with CAM's representatives was used to discuss the many areas where we work together.

Food packages to Romania

At this time we are shipping well over 400 parcels, consisting of two packages each to the needy brethren in Romania. Brethren from a wide area come together on a regular schedule to assemble these packages in Bluffton. The final destination of the shipment is CAM's warehouse in Cluj, Romania, from which they are taken to places where our own brethren distribute them to the needy brethren across Romania. The program seems to be working well, and is certainly

appreciated by all of the recipients across Romania.

Iron Curtain Ministries

Some years ago a group of Amish in Holmes County, Ohio, established an organization through which they could channel assistance to struggling believers throughout the nations behind the "Iron Curtain". Representatives from the European Board try to meet with them each year. They cover one-half of the costs of the food package program to Romania, up to \$10,000 per month.

Garden tiller project

Several years ago ICM made arrangements to ship high-quality garden tillers and attachments to Ukraine from Italy. This excellent program is working quite well. Last year we agreed to send one of the tillers to our own brethren in Ukraine. Cost of these units is about \$2,500 each, and we provided necessary funding for this initial trial shipment.

The group of our brethren that visited Ukraine in May of this year was able to see first hand the results of our joint efforts with ICM.

They visited in the home of Brother Grisa Jacobits on Monday, May 21. As they entered the cluster of buildings that make up the home of this family of 12 children, they saw the mother carrying milk from the cow into the house. As reported last month, she was already in labor and delivered her child later that day. The family had to pay \$200 before she could be accepted in the hospital. They had been given the money for this on the previous Saturday.

Bro. Grisa is a deacon of the church in Mahalla, and had reported in the meeting held with our brethren on the previous Saturday that normally the government is supposed to make child

support payments. However, this year he had received only one payment in three months, and the total sum could not buy enough bread alone for one month for his large family. They have no idea how they would manage without the support they are receiving from the American brethren.

As our brethren looked at the tiller and attachments and saw the tears of gratitude from this family, they shed tears of their own. There is no way to express how much a machine like this helps them to subsist as well as to help their brethren and neighbors.

At this time, arrangements have been made to ship six more machines into Ukraine and brethren have already been chosen to be the recipients. Since there is over 50% unemployment in Ukraine, people of necessity have learned to live off the land. A representative from the organization in Kiev, Ukraine, who oversees the distribution of these tillers says, "I think it is impossible for someone in America to fully realize what the tillers mean to these people without being along on a delivery."

It is common to see people working the ground by hand. With this machine they can accomplish far more. Wherever it is possible, people keep a cow for milk, cheese, and butter. They can cut grass in the fields for fodder to feed these valuable animals. Families now can cut as much hay with this machine in three hours as they could by hand in three days. The trailer will carry the hay.

If you want to help

Anyone wishing to help provide a garden tiller to our Ukrainian brethren may send a contribution to:

BRO. LEON GRAF, TREASURER
EUROPEAN BOARD
180 PARK PLACE
WADSWORTH, OH 44281



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

Church Buildings in Eastern Europe

Over the years the Mission Committee has established communication with our brethren in Eastern Europe and has funded numerous new church buildings throughout the area that was formerly under Communist domination. During 2001 two new churches in Hungary and one in Romania have been dedicated to the honor and worship of God.

Funding for these projects has been taken from the East European Church Building Fund, through which our brethren have contributed large amounts of financial support over the years.

Learning of the needs of our brethren in Ukraine

After the fall of Communism, our brethren were able to establish communication with our members in Ukraine. There have been believers in this area since around 1920, but due to the political circumstances our American brethren knew little, if anything, about them. However, since 1989 there has been much contact, and the relationship with this group continues to improve.

New churches have been built

As the year of 2001 draws to a close, there are nine congregations in the province of Bukovina, Ukraine. Two of these congregations are now assembling in new buildings constructed with funds from the Mission Committee. One is in Korovia and the other in Dimka, each of which has around 100 members plus children.

A congregation was established in Lukovita in 1924, and now has about

73 members. The believers in this rural area endured many hardships over the years, and although the flame of faith perhaps grew dim under the oppressive regimes, it did not go out. By the grace of God and the support of our American brethren, the small building used for a church for this congregation was remodeled and improved during 2001. The team of brethren who visited Ukraine this year visited this facility, and were entrusted with the thanks of the faithful pilgrims living there. The building is quite simple, but seems to be adequate for their needs. As one observes the tranquil setting of this small building, it is hard to imagine that the believers have endured so much over many years.

Ostrita is the largest congregation

Since their first visit into Ukraine in 1991, our American brethren have held services in the building in Ostrita each time they have been in the country. This congregation is in a semi-rural area just to the east of Chemovic, a city of about 200,000. With about 300 members plus many friends and children, this is the largest congregation in Bukovina. The building in which they hold services is an addition built on the house of Elder Vasile Paladean. In about 1988 he and his family were able to plant a private plot of watermelons that they sold on the open market. The profit they made on this project enabled them to build the addition onto their home.

The room serving as their assembly area is far smaller than anything we would consider adequate for the size of their congregation. A balcony hangs over the rear portion of the assembly room, and the entire area has always been filled with people as our own brethren visited them.

Building a new church

Through the years we have encouraged this group of souls to build a new place to worship, and by the grace of God they were able to make a beginning in construction early in 2001. Plans were submitted to the American brethren in advance, and prior to construction a number of suggested alterations were made.

As is typical in Eastern Europe, the building has several stories because the building site is small. It is also typical that the entire structure is masonry construction. As the project evolved, the Mission Committee and the European Board approved using our own unemployed brethren to do the construction. We have agreed to pay them modest wages which accomplished the double purpose of getting the building built and providing a means of income to those who otherwise had no jobs. Unemployment in Ukraine is over 50%. It is hard for us to understand this, but the problems are real for those who are living there.

Seating for about 500

The building under construction provides an assembly room for about 500 people, which is only slightly more than the number who now attend services. The plans include full restrooms, which is a bit unusual in Ukraine, but our brethren thought it necessary for such a large group. Rooms for the children to assemble in Sunday School are also included.

Completion in 2002

It is hoped that with the grace and help of God the new church can be completed sometime during the year of 2002. Estimated costs are around \$400,000. Anyone who wishes to contribute to this project for our needy brethren may do so through the Mission Committee.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN COUNSELING SERVICES *History and Development* Part II

I John 3:17 - "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

The Bible is very clear that as a part of being Christ-like and as a part of our service to God we are to have compassion on those who are suffering. Specifically, the body of believers is called to support, encourage and assist those who are struggling. In the New Testament Scriptures we are taught by Christ's example and teachings as well as other scriptures (Paul's letters) that service to others should be given a high priority.

Matthew 5:45 - "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

We also know by Biblical teachings and by experiences in life that adversity and struggles happens in the lives of believers and unbelievers as well as to the most faithful and the weakest.

Because of the need around us and because of the scriptural call to serve and to do good to others, the Apostolic Christian Church has looked for ways to meet some of these specific needs. This was the impetus for developing Apostolic Christian Counseling Services.

ACCS offers four types of services. Each one is designed to help people understand and get assistance dealing with mental health issues and relationship problems.

The types of concerns most often referred to ACCS are depression, anxiety, adjustment difficulties and relationship problems of all kinds.

The Apostolic Christian Mental Health Hotline has been in existence for over 10 years. The Hotline was started by the church's Mental Health Committee who recruited and trained sisters who were registered nurses. In March of 2000 the Mental Health Hotline became part of the ACCS. The same five sisters continue to provide services and coordinate their efforts with the ACCS professional staff. The sisters take phone calls from struggling individuals or concerned family members/friends. The sisters help callers by listening to their concerns and then providing them with a referral to a counselor or sending print information. The print information available covers a wide variety of areas such as depression, anxiety, parenting, etc. The sisters are available to help callers find qualified counselors and/or physicians near the caller's home area. The Mental Health Hotline is available to all of our churches by calling the toll free ACCS number 877-370-9988. There is no charge for these services.

Apostolic Christian Counseling Services also provides individual, marital and family counseling for those who can travel to the office at 73 East Queenwood Road in Morton, IL. There are currently three counselors working out of the center. Hours are by appointment only. The counselors are trained mental health professionals who provide counseling from within a Christian framework that supports and encourages the doctrine and traditions of the Apostolic Christian Church. Many people choose to come to ACCS because

they have the assurance that their faith will be respected and protected. Fees for counseling are based on a sliding fee scale based on family size and annual family income. No one will be denied services because of inability to pay. The fees charged do not cover the full cost of providing the counseling services. The fees were set below actual cost so that a financial burden would not prevent individuals needing counseling from seeking services.

People calling ACCS can receive a consultation by the professional counselors. Calls are received from people needing assistance for themselves, family members of those struggling and Elders/ministers who are assisting people. Counselors can help callers understand mental health issues and relationship problems and develop a plan of action to deal with these issues. The counselors do not provide diagnosis or treatment over the phone. This part of the service has greatly increased in the last year and a half and is available to all of our churches by calling the ACCS toll free number 877-370-9988. There is no charge for this service.

Finally, ACCS offers an educational component that supports the other functions. Counselors from ACCS have provided presentations to churches that have requested them. Presentations of this type are requested or approved by the Elder of the church and cover mental health or relationship issues. At times, presentations are given to smaller groups such as the ministers of a specific church. These talks may be about how to deal with specific issues or more general information about how to be helpful when counseling. In addition, ACCS has print materials available that cover a wide va-

riety of mental health and relationship issues. These materials have been screened by the ACCS staff and, when appropriate, the overseeing Elders. Some of the materials have been written by the ACCS counselors. Print materials are available by calling the Mental Health Hotline through the ACCS toll free number 877-370-9988. Print material are sent out in a variety of situations including: providing additional education following a telephone consultation, being "homework" during the course of counseling and/or to addressing specific requests for information about an issue. Some of the print materials are specifically intended for support of Elders and ministers who are working with people dealing with particularly difficult issues.

For each of these services there is a need for donations or subsidy to cover the ongoing costs. The next article will go over costs and funding in more detail.

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

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Aren't we interesting? Think about how unique each one of us is. Then think about human tendencies and how so often we "tend" toward them. It seems that perhaps these tendencies are being rather vividly expressed these days throughout the human race from one end of the world to the other.

We are taught from the Word of Life that we should do unto others as we would have them do to us. (Matthew 7:12). But so often we do to one another that which tends to discourage, disappoint, or degrade.

We tend to brag, belittle, and best. We experience jealousy. We criticize. We complain (Galatians 5:15). How dare we.

It is only by the grace and mercy of God that we can be more like Jesus. Life is too short to be anything less. (Matthew 7:20)

In these days as we experience the uncertain times of this generation, let us lift up and encourage one another as mutual pilgrims in a world wanting for peace and joy. Let us ask to be made more like our Saviour, Jesus.

January birthdays at Timber Ridge, 2125 Veterans Rd., Morton, IL 61550 are: Nicole Delicath (6), Stephen Penn (8), Edith Wagenbach (8), Bruce Steffen (19), Jackie Willett (19), John Eddy (27), Tom Sides (31). At Oakwood Estate, 2213 Veterans Rd., Morton, IL 61550: Laverna Zobrist (25). At Linden Estate: Mary Schramm (13), Karen Blunier (14). At 650 Detroit: Rhonda Gerst (12).

GATEWAY WOODS APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME Dan and Susan Meister

As we enter the Christmas season at Gateway Woods we are again reminded of those less fortunate than ourselves, the children that we minister to whose memories of this time of year might not be so fond. Whereas we might remember fellowshiping with family and our friends, their experiences might not have been so positive. At the same time, it is very hard for many of the residents to be away from their families during this holiday time.

As we remember with fondness Christmases with our family, it is important to remember those that didn't grow up hearing about a loving God that sent His Son and it is His birth that is celebrated.

This is the time of year when

most children are concerned with what things they will be getting for Christmas. It is worth trying to convey to them that the gift of our salvation has already been purchased and is ready to be unwrapped anytime by the laying down of our lives. As He has promised, His yoke is easy and His burden is light. If we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him, He will gladly pay the penalty for our sins. When we consider what we have to gain, the sufferings of this present life are not worth mentioning, especially when He has promised to walk with us every step of the way. It is such a short time to stay faithful to Him considering He will stay with us forever.

We want to welcome Erin G. to campus. We also want to say good-bye to Amanda J. (both girls from the Lehman House), praying that we have sown the necessary seeds and trusting for God to give the increase. When the children leave, they might not have the structure or guidance to the extent we give, so it is important to pray for them to have the internal discipline to do what is right. Hopefully we would have shown them God and His perfect way through the Bible throughout their stay. We are also thankful and thrilled for Bekki who has "graduated" from the Plattners and our campus and has become part of one of our local Gateway Woods Christian foster families for the remainder of her high school career.

We want to thank Bro. Bill Eisenmann for his years of service as our Business Manager. He will be leaving sometime after the beginning of the New Year. He has been greatly appreciated for his organization and patience with Houseparents that don't always get petty cash correct (namely us). Thanks again, Bill, and God bless you wherever God leads you next. (Please see the job notice in this is-

sue.)

Congratulations to the Gateway Woods School faculty for achieving Freeway Accreditation from the Indiana Board of Education. Construction on our new school building has been delayed this fall due to wet weather, state reviews and permits, and busy architects and contractors. The earth moving machines are due to show up any time now. Pray that we can get a good start before winter totally moves in.

Our meetings for our Local Church Representatives are scheduled for February 23 in Illinois and March 23 in Indiana. We want to welcome anyone who has an interest in learning more about the programs, opportunities and future plans for our ministries of Gateway Woods. Mark your calendars and look for more details next month. In the mean time, feel free to call us at (888) 443-4283 to ask for any of our new brochures detailing our various services.

**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
PRESCHOOL
Melinda Matuch**

Little children, can you tell?
Do you know the story well?
Every girl and every boy,
Why the angels sing for joy?
On this Christmas morning.

Children sing of the birth of another child. This is what makes Christmas so very special. Their sweet innocent voices raised, they sing "Away in a Manger" or "O Come All Ye Faithful" while Dads, Moms, grandparents and friends watch and smile. During the month of December, we focus all our lessons on the story of the birth of Jesus and the wonderful songs that go along with it as we

prepare for our Christmas program. By Christmas morning, they should know the story well.

Our purpose and our goal are that every girl and boy in our care will know what Christmas really means. We hope and we pray that they carry the message home with them. That, as the Bible teaches us in Isaiah 11:6, "...a little child shall lead them" and they will share the good news of Jesus' birth with their families.

At this time we would like to say "Thank you and God bless you!" to all of our brothers, sisters and friends for their support during the past year. We could not continue to operate without the financial support AND the volunteer support we receive every year. We humbly ask that you remember our little ones during this season of giving.

Have a Blessed Christmas!

**ALABAMA, ATHENS
Joan Reinhard
Louise Hall**

We would ask for your prayers for those of our congregation who have been sick or hospitalized lately. Sis. Joan Schrenk (Bro. Tom) had surgery and is recovering well. Bro. Buddy Lynn also had surgery and they are hopeful that this will solve his health problems that he has had for some time. Sis Amanda Glass spent some time in Huntsville Hospital and is now recovering in a nursing home until she can gain enough strength to return to her home. Sis. Ruby Ross (Bro. Don) also spent some time in the hospital, but she is home now and feeling better. We also extend our prayers to Bill Coulter, father of Bro. David Coulter, who has had surgery and is recovering. As time marches on our physical bodies continue to deteriorate, but thanks be to God, that our spiritual

life can continue to grow and be renewed day by day.

The weekend of the 27 and 28 was a busy and blessed one for us. It was the semi-annual Preschool Board Meeting so we had some extra company here because of that, and it was also the weekend for the testimony and baptism of our Bro. Josh Johnson. Bro. Josh gave his testimony on Saturday night and then his baptism was held on Sunday with a potluck lunch following church. It is such an encouraging time for us to get together for a testimony. Our thoughts go back to the time when we gave our own testimony to the church, and the special peace we expressed. What a valuable item that peace is to a war torn world — more precious than treasure. We would continue to ask that God would grant each of you His perfect peace. We are also thankful for Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Sis. Roberta, Smithville, OH) and Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sis. Linda, Sardis, OH) who helped with this work and for Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH) who had our Adult Sunday School class and for Bro. Victor Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH) who had the morning service. There were many others that came to show their support for Bro. Josh that weekend and we are thankful for each one. We would ask that God would continue to bless Bro. Josh and keep him safe from the snares of Satan while he is going to college at Purdue.

**ARIZONA, PHOENIX
Ron and Ev Hoerr**

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Joshua 1:9

In these troubling times is it not the greatest assurance and comfort that we can find instant peace and solace in the Bible!

A personal note: All those years ago, you didn't mark up a new Bible. Sometime in the last 49 years we had lightly marked Joshua 1:9. For which major catastrophe was it? But strong and courageous we all need to be, dear ones, at all times.

Our annual Sunday School church picnic was October 28. It was a beautiful day with blue skies and 91 degrees. Fellowship, fun and food were enjoyed by many. The children singing before the group was fit for the Lord!

Singing — where are the birds? At one time we read that cellular phones, hardware, and reflections were part of the trouble. Even Inca doves are rare, even sparrows, grackles, woodpeckers, catbirds, Sambel quail. Glad the blue sky and the mountains are so peaceful, but we miss our numerous birds.

We have other blessings to count, along with Bro. Randy and Sis. Stefanie Wuethrich's. Alexa Helyn was born October 8. Her siblings are Jared and Kailey. Grandparents are Bro. Robert and Sis. Christine Baum and Bro. Richard and Sis. Nola Wuethrich (Francesville, IN).

Our World Relief workers are busy making comforters and seasonal gifts for many who rejoice to receive some love.

We enjoyed hearing the engagement of Bro. Jeremy Ebert to Sis. Janelle Hohulin. Their wedding will be December 30th in Goodfield, IL.

Our visiting ministers were Bros. Curt Kaufman (Tucson, AZ), Tom Troxel (LaCrosse, IN), Jeff Bahr (Kiowa, KS) and Walter Herrmann (Princeville, IL).

Thanks so very much and come back soon.

Seasons Greetings to all our readers from your loved ones in Phoenix.

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT**Jane Hodges**

The marriage of Bro. Tim Furrer (Bro. Jim and Sis. Rowena) and Sis. Janon Fiechter (Bro. Don and Sis. Suzie) was held in Bluffton, IN, on November 11. The couple plan to reside in Prescott and we warmly welcome Sis. Janon to our congregation.

Bro. Henry Volz was hospitalized with pneumonia for almost two weeks at the Veterans Hospital in Prescott, but was released before Thanksgiving and is continuing to regain his strength at home.

Our ministering brothers this month included Bros. Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL), Walter Herrmann (Princeville, IL), Ken Lawson and James Emch (both of Phoenix). We thank them all for traveling the miles and giving of their time to serve us. May God richly bless them and their families.

ARIZONA, TUCSON**Lisa Knapp**

Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix, AZ) spent the day with us recently. As it happens, Bro. Curt was home sick that day, so Bro. Jon's visit was especially appreciated. We thank Bro. Jon for allowing God to use him as a servant on the pulpit that day. God's timing is really perfect.

Bro. Jim Meiss (Phoenix, AZ) and his family joined us for the day on October 21. Bro. Curt and his family were traveling, so there would have been an empty pulpit here. We pray God will bless Bro. Jim and his family for allowing

God to change their schedule in order to be used in His plan.

It was good to see Bro. Floyd Banwart assembling with us again after spending some time in the hospital. We pray God will watch over Bro. Floyd and Sis. Clara as they are home together again.

Many thanks to everyone who took time out of their busy Saturday to come to our semi-annual church cleaning on November 3. It's nice to see different generations of families working together to keep our church building clean and orderly. May God add His blessing.

Our version of winter is finally here with temperatures in the 70's and even a little rain and cloudiness once in awhile.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA**Jim Klotzle**

Greetings from southern California!

Looking back on every Thanksgiving and Christmas season that has come and gone in our lives, we can get a good picture of our spiritual walk. Truly, no two years have ever been the same. Where and with whom did we celebrate? How were our relationships with our family and friends? Was a new life just beginning in our midst or a loved one missing from the circle? Had we grown closer to the Lord or felt the hollow loneliness of separation? Times of joy and times of pain come to mind. Where are we today?

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things

which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

II Corinthians 4:16-18

The Altadena congregation held an engagement shower for Sis. Sarah Aberle and Bro. Jeremy Ringer this month. We ask God's blessings on them as they step forward together in their walk with the Lord. Thanks to all who worked to make that evening possible.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. Dale Stoller (Fairbury, IL) and Bro. Jim Koehl (San Diego, CA). We extend warm thanks for their service on our behalf.

We welcome Bro. Reuben and Sis. Crystal Luthi back to our area for the winter. Their presence in our congregation is a blessing.

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Peggy Jevremov

We were very blessed this past month with many visiting ministers. Among them were Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS), Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary Ann, Peoria, IL), Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI), Bro. Mike Rieker (Sis. Carol, Peoria, IL), and Bro. Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Susan, Atlanta, GA). We appreciate their willingness to serve us during their visit and pray the Lord will continue to bless their ministry.

As the Christmas season approaches, our Sunday School children are beginning to practice their songs and pieces for our program. They are always eager to speak and sing about Jesus. It causes us to stop and think. Are we, also as His children, eager to speak about Jesus to those with whom we come in contact in our

daily walk of life? Are we truly letting our lights shine or are we hiding it under a bushel?

In the world in which we live, Christ is almost taken out of Christmas by all the rushing about in gift-giving and get-togethers. May we each do our part to keep Christ the foremost part of our family's Christmas. As our thoughts go far beyond the humble manger to the old rugged cross, may our hearts be flooded with thankfulness for God's gift to us, His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

KITCHENER, ONTARIO CANADA

Nathan Reutter

Greetings in the name of our dear Lord Jesus, brethren. We have had a relatively quiet month here in Kitchener. We had two visiting ministers, two all church singings, and a death. The good Lord has been with us by allowing us the blessings of fellowship and singing and comforted us in the sorrows that came with the death.

Our two visiting ministers this month have been Bro. Keith Beyer (Sis. Alisa, Detroit, MI) and Bro. Ron Palitto (Sis. Lynell, Akron, OH). We were again joyful that the preaching was of the Holy Spirit. We just pray that our friends will understand and know that they must repent and become converted if they are to see yonder shore so bright!

We also enjoyed the singings, and the families that hosted them. It takes some effort to host a singing and yet the blessings experienced from it always outweigh the work put in to make it happen. The fellowship we experience during these times is also very encouraging and strengthening. These times give us an opportunity to talk to brethren of our concerns and

cares and gives them opportunity to share their experiences and burdens, too. It always seems to be a mutually beneficial time.

Another beneficial time in a believer's life is told us in Ecclesiastes 7:2. Here it says that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. This month we had the opportunity to do just that. Our dear Sis. Barb Ursu lost her mother this month. Julie Walter was a beloved and cherished sister in our sister church in Kitchener (there were over four hundred lines signed in the guest book at her viewing). She will be missed by her family and church family. We wish all of the grieving souls the comfort and peace of the Holy Spirit.

May those of us left behind not neglect to visit the house of mourning when the opportunity presents itself. It offers the chance to remember the sobering reality that we will not be living forever and that we must make preparation for eternity if we are to enjoy it. The house of mourning also helps us to realize the impact people make in the life of others. When there are many tears it shows us that the person had made a difference in many lives.

May God's peace, love and grace rest upon you in the days ahead. May we not be terrified by the things happening in the world around us. Instead let us be focused on being the bright and shining light to a sinful world. Let us be full of good works and full of the fruit of the Spirit.

COLORADO, DENVER

Mike and Heather Katanic

Our congregation recently had several people travel to Imuris, Mexico, to help with construction

needs at the orphanage. We are thankful they had a safe and blessed trip. It is so rewarding to see the children and their happiness with so little.

This past month we sang familiar hymns to Sis. Elizabeth Schaeffer (Bluffton, IN) who is in a nursing home in Colorado Springs. We were touched to see her so alert and talkative. She perked up and sang along with us for many of the songs she remembered and she asked us to take her greetings back to church with us.

We look forward to listening to the Sunday School children present their Christmas program to us. Wishing you a blessed Christmas season as we remember Jesus' birth.

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

Luke 2:14

**CONNECTICUT
ROCKVILLE
Cherie Galat**

"The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge."

Proverbs 18:15

Elder Bro. Robert Walder (Congerville, IL) assisted our Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan in the service of reading the Memorandum. We are so thankful for wise counsel and direction. May we continue to uphold each other in the faith as we seek out His will. Also serving us as a minister of the gospel in past days was Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL). May God richly bless his efforts to serve us.

We gathered on a Saturday evening for a reception for Bro. Stephen and Sis. Julie Lanz with a singing following. We entreat

God's blessing upon them and hope the Lord continue to guide and direct them as they walk together as husband and wife.

At home, 'tis well!

There palms of peace abounding
Are gently cooling us, hot from
the strife;

O'ercome now are all pains of pilgrim life;

The cries of fear give way to
psalms resounding.

Zion's Harp #170

Our prayers and sympathy extend to the family of Sis. Emma Herzig, who passed from this life. She leaves her sister, Sis. Anna Thompson, her brothers, Henry (Agnes) and Walter Limberger, a sister-in-law, Dorothy Limberger, and extended family. May He comfort and console each one.

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah."

Psalms 68:19

We have so much to be thankful for...that He sent Jesus to die for our sins, for daily food and drink, for freedom of worship. We truly are a blessed people.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON
Henrietta Meyer**

"The Lord will provide" appears in several hymns we sing. This was again shown to us this month. Bro. Mike Rieker (Peoria, IL) was out here to serve as minister but was too sick to leave his hotel room until time to get the plane back home. Bro. Everett and Sis. Nancy Gerber (Rockville, CT) were in the area for ten days with her grandchildren so we did have a minister that Sunday and the next one. Our

other minister this month was Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield, IL). We are so thankful for these brothers coming to serve us.

Our church 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. Song service begins at 10:15 a.m., worship service at 10:30; afternoon service begins at 12:15 p.m. There will be no service December 23, 2001.

If you are planning to visit Washington, DC for vacation or business, please call Bro. Barry Steffen (410) 569-3635 for assistance and to let us know how many to expect for Sunday services. If you would like to get together on Saturday evening, please let us know that also. We would be happy to have an evening of fellowship and/or singing.

**FLORIDA
NORTH FORT MYERS
Dorothy Beer**

We welcome many of our winter residents who have returned and are again worshipping with us.

Not many couples have the privilege of celebrating 70 years of marriage as Bro. Roland and Sis. Viola Keller will on November 26. Also Sis. Viola had her 91st birthday on November 7. Our congratulations and best wishes to them. We pray that God will continue to bless and keep them in His care.

A time of good fellowship and good food was enjoyed by all who attended the annual church picnic at our home (Vic Beer) on November 4.

Bro. Rob and Sis. Anjie Baum and three sweet children are moving back to Morton, IL. We will miss them, and sincerely wish them God's richest blessings.

At this season of Thanksgiving, let us always remember every blessing comes from God.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA

Carol Koehl

Bro. Jeremy and Sis. Melissa Miller are happy first-time parents of twin boys, David George and Jonathan Douglas, born October 25. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Doug and Sis. Linda Sabo.

We also want to sincerely welcome Bro. Nathan, Sis. Sheila, Nathan, Heidi, and Douglas Sabo, who have recently moved here from Mansfield, OH.

Hospital patients have been Sis. Marie Reardon, Bro. Ernie Buser, and Bro. Pete Plattner (Peoria, IL).

Bro. Virgil Kaeb has been chosen for the ministry in Sarasota. We pray that God's abundant grace, strength, and blessings will be with Bro. Virgil as he assumes this serious responsibility. Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) was here to assist Elder Bro. Doug during this special time.

Other visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI) and Bro. Ron Heiniger (Bloomington, IL). We thank all of our ministers for lending themselves so unselfishly in God's service.

We are happy to see our winter residents returning, and we are very appreciative for all they do for our little church.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA

John Brewer

With the hurry and bustle of the holiday season, it is so easy to lose focus on the important things that we hold dear. The Christmas holiday activities keeps us busier which is added with our normal obligations in life which gives us a full

schedule already. Add the stress and uncertainty of the past few months, and you have a whirlwind of activities, thoughts and responsibilities. David gave us some advice in Psalm 46 about staying in focus when circumstances get busier and more uncertain. In verse 10 it is written:

"Be still and know that I am God. I am exalted among the heathen, I am exalted in the earth."

Our congregation was blessed with many visiting ministers this past month. We would like to thank Bros. Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL), Virgil Metzger (Sis. Mary, Chicago, IL) and Wallace Ramsier (Sis. Helen, Mansfield, OH). We appreciate the love and the time they have given to bring us the Spirit inspired Word.

If you are in the Atlanta area or passing through, our church family enjoys the added fellowship from other believers. Our Sunday service starts with singing at 10:15 and midweek services are on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. Our church is located in Fairburn, GA, southwest of Atlanta. We are approximately 15 miles southwest of the airport on I-85 south at exit 64 (Jonesboro Rd). Once you get off we are exactly four miles west of the exit. Please contact either Bro. Tom Waldbeser (770) 463-4778, Bro. Linn Stoller (770) 631) 4554, Bro. Keith Kaufman (770) 304-8335 or Bro. John Brewer (770) 304-8706 if you have any questions or just to tell us you are stopping through.

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE

Doreen Moser Sheila McCoy

"Enter into his gates with

thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

Psalm 100:4

As our nation has celebrated Thanksgiving, may we as servants of the most High thank the Lord every day for our many blessings.

I am never weary reading,
hearing of His wondrous love:
How His loving tender mercy,
draws us to His home above.

Hymns of Zion #75

Our visiting ministers this month that have read and exhorted on God's Holy Word were Bros. Tom Schambach (Elgin, IL), Wayne Laubscher (Cissna Park, IL), Tom Troxel (LaCrosse, IN) and Paul Zimmerman (Forrest, IL). May our ministers never tire of reading the Bible and may we as hearers never grow weary of listening.

I prize the friendship highest
of the one whose heart is true,
Friends who live by truth and
goodness
and who live in Him anew,
Friends whose hearts are up in
heaven
Thou their feet traverse this sod,
Find a place of highest merit
in our fellowship with God.

Hymns of Zion #91

Our church was filled with visitors on the weekend of invite - a friend. Christian friendships were strengthened and we thank all of you who took the time to share the weekend with us.

"Death is not extinguishing the light; it is putting out the lamp because dawn has come."

—Apples of Gold

Our sympathy is extended to Bruce Banwart and his family as his grandmother, Eunice Koehl, passed away on October 23. May the many memories make the days ahead easier to bear.

"Trusting in God" was Bro. Dean Steffen's topic at the monthly Bible Study in Madison. Bro. Jim Jepson held the Bible study in Belvidere and focused on "Redemption". Without trust in God, would redemption be possible?

O, may I seek the souls who stray
And save them from destruction,
And through Thy holy love still
lead

Them to Thy congregation,
May pray'rs and pleadings penetrate

To warn them of their lost estate.
Zion's Harp #113

As a congregation we gathered together on the weekend of November 17-18 to install a new minister. Bro. Ted Schock (Sis. Heidi) was chosen to preach the Word. Our prayers are with their family as new responsibilities have come their way. As a congregation, we were also reminded of our duties to support our ministers. We were blessed to have Elder Bros. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) and Art Bahler (Fairbury, IL) in our midst to do the Lord's work.

Life Without a Purpose...
Life without a purpose is barren
indeed
There can't be a harvest unless
you plant seed,
There can't be attainment unless
there's a goal
And man's but a robot unless
there's a soul.
If we send no ships out, no ships
will come in,
And unless there's a contest, no-

body can win...
For games can't be won unless
they are played,
And prayers can't be answered
unless they are prayed...
So pray for a purpose to make life
worth living,
And pray for the joy of unselfish
giving...
For great is your gladness and
rich is your reward
When you make your life's purpose
the choice of the Lord.

As we approach another holiday season, may we let others know the purpose of our life here on earth and share with others the joy of the Lord.

**ILLINOIS
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL
Shawn Masters
Ann Kellenberger**

We were blessed to have Bros. David Zehr (Gridley, IL) and Glenn Dill (Tremont, IL) worship with our church family this month.

Bro. Larry and Sis. Jeannine Mariani are very blessed parents. Their two sons, David and Brian, have turned to the Lord in repentance. We rejoice with their family.

Our church family was very busy with several activities this month. The Sunday School children enjoyed a harvest party on October 31. This gives our children an excellent alternative to other secular activities. Bro. Kevin Knapp spoke at our family night Bible study. His topic was "Living in Troublesome Times". We also had several from our congregation leave on a work team to Jamaica. Several collections were taken to remember those less fortunate this holiday season. We donated items for Thanksgiving Day baskets and Christmas shoeboxes. This was a good reminder of what our focus

should be this holiday.

We are thankful to hear that Bro. Bill Denick (Sis. Shirley) is home and recovering from heart surgery. We pray for God's healing hand upon him.

**ILLINOIS, BRADFORD
Chad and LauraLee Plattner**

On October 28, Bro. Bill Stahl (Bro. Lyle and Sis. Betty, Princeville, IL) and Sis. Kristal Wagenbach (Bro. Lawrence and Sis. Elaine, Princeville, IL) were united in Holy Matrimony. We pray that God will bless them as they fulfill God's purpose for their lives.

May God bless the following visiting ministers who have recently been with us: Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) and Bros. Glen Braker (Princeville, IL), Craig Martin (Princeville, IL), and Vernon Wettstein (Congerville, IL).

Note of Thanks:

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all for the kind deeds shown to me after my knee surgery. May God bless you.

Sis. Lucille Kieser

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

"For by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God..."

Ephesians 2:8

The last Sunday in October was very special for us as Kurt Metzger, son of Sis. Jeanne (Schlatter) Metzger, gave a testimony of his conversion and was baptized into the family of believers. We welcome our Bro. Kurt and ask for God's continued blessings on his

walk. Shortly after her son's baptism, Sis. Jeanne had surgery on her shoulder. She did quite well and is back to her normal busy schedule.

Just prior to Thanksgiving, our Sunday School children shared their blessings by preparing several boxes of food for two local families. The younger children stayed at church with a few teachers and colored pretty Thanksgiving pictures to decorate the boxes which would hold the food. The older children accompanied their teachers to do the grocery shopping. The families receiving the food had several young children and were quite thankful for the boxes of food.

Our University of Illinois student group hosted several students from Illinois State University (Bloomington-Normal) to prepare Christmas gift boxes for children in the Casa de Elizabeth orphanage in Imuris, Mexico. The students prepared a gift box for each of the children there (about 60 currently and they are expecting 10 more). These boxes will be shipped to Phoenix and the church there will see that they get to the orphanage and are distributed. This was a very nice way for the students to help the local church, the Mexican orphans, and World Relief! Over the next month, our Sunday School children will also be preparing some packages for children through the World Relief program.

Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer (Peoria, IL) spent the day with us, then assisted our Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart in the reading of the Memorandum from the Elder Conference. Other visiting ministers this past month included Bros. Chuck Kellenberger (Elgin, IL), Bob Pflederer (Morton, IL), Jeff Thames (Washington, IL), and Dave Zehr (Gridley, IL). We sincerely appreciate each minister

who came to be with us during the past month.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Jill Rager

When you hear the word "free" are you skeptical? We are taught "there is no such thing as a 'free lunch'". Well, during this season of gift-giving and receiving, the Saviour offers us much more than just a lunch.

"...by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

Romans 5:18

We rejoice that Hope Nenadov (Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn, Eureka, IL) has grasped hold of this free gift of salvation. We pray that her faith can grow strong during this repentance process.

The blessing of visiting ministers certainly can feel like a gift. Elder Bro. Everett Hari (Bloomington-Normal, IL) assisted in our Communion services. Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) and Bro. Tom Waldbeser (Atlanta, GA) shared the inspiration of God's Word with us, and Bro. Byron Stoller (Gridley, IL) presented a topical Bible study regarding "Accountability". We want to express our gratitude to these brothers for serving us in these ways.

We feel like we are giving a gift away as we bid farewell to Sis. Ashley Wiegand who will be attending college in central Illinois. We wish her God's blessings and know she will be a blessing in her new home.

As we consider the gift we were given at Christmas, let us respond as did the wise men, diligently seeking the King to present Him with their finest and to humbly worship Him.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

Denise Walder

Cheryl Eisenmann

Our congregation was once again saddened by the loss of a dear brother. Bro. George Winger passed away on November 8 at the age of 101. We extend our sympathy to his children, Sis. Irma Jean Knapp, Sis. Marilyn Winger, Sis. Lila Winger, and Gordon Winger (Aldine).

On October 21 Bro. Josh Walder (Bro. Denny and Sis. Sharon) was united in marriage to Sis. Tina Knobloch (Bro. Roger and Sis. Janet, Lester, IA). May God direct this dear couple and each couple who takes this step in life. We will miss Bro. Josh as they make their home in Lester.

We rejoice with Bro. Phil and Sis. Charlotte Waldbeser on the birth of their second daughter, Molly Marie. Big sister Lisa and grandparents, Bro. Fred and Sis. Joan Waldbeser and Bro. Gene and Sis. Shirley Nester (Lester, IA), are enjoying this precious gift from Heaven.

We were blessed with visits from the following ministers: Bro. David Obergfel (Peoria, IL), Bro. Art Mueller (Belvidere, IL), Bro. Bob Beebe (South Bend, IN), Bro. Fred Witzig (Indianapolis, IN), Elder Bro. Everett Hari (Bloomington, IL), and Bro. Vernon Wettstein (Congerville, IL).

Hospital patients this month include Sis. Ilene Greiner, Sis. Sandy Kaufmann, and Bro. Harry Young. May God's healing be with each one.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Glenna Rinkenberger

In my weakness He's my power;
In the darkness He's my light;
And when good deeds are accom-

plished,
It is only through His might.
What good things my heart de-
sires,
It in Jesus Christ acquires.
Oh, the joy that He shall be
All and everything to me!
Zion's Harp #231 vs. 3

Oh, the joy that He shall be, all
and everything to Wendy
Rinkenberger (Bro. Mike and Sis.
Pat) who has left the world behind
and is seeking her salvation. We
rejoice with her and her family.

The Spirit's course was not re-
strained nor the Word of God con-
cealed by our visiting ministers.
We were inspired and instructed
by Bros. Bill Dotterer (Lamar,
MO), Glen Braker (Princeville,
IL), Rick Plattner (Peoria, IL), and
Wayne Wiegand (Goodfield, IL).
May God's blessings be on these
brothers who serve so diligently.

Undergoing surgery were Sis.
Kathe Hasty (the late Bro. Rich-
ard) and Bro. Jay Steffen (Sis.
Melinda). Bro. Jay has been back
in church but has had some compli-
cations. Sis. Kathe is still recover-
ing at home. May God's healing
hand be on them.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

**Amy Gasser
Kay Kellenberger**

The Elgin congregation has
been encouraged, uplifted, chas-
tised, and blessed as we listened to
the Brotherhood Conference
tapes. May we each earnestly heed
to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

The blessed story of the Christ,
The babe of Bethlehem,
Is worthy of our song and praise,
And stirs the hearts of men.
The fullness of God's love divine
Surrounds the Christ so mild.

Alas, how many only know
The Saviour as a child.

Our saving hope is all in vain,
If here our love should cease,
For in the man of Galilee,
We find the gift of peace.
'Tis not the babe but Christ the
man
Who walked in Galilee;
'Tis not the manger but the cross
That sets the spirit free.

Be not content this babe to know,
Nor stay at Bethlehem,
But go with Christ to Calvary's
brow
Beyond Jerusalem.
'Tis there men learn to know the
Christ,
For there He bore man's sin.
Then open wide the door of
heart,
And let the Saviour in.

Hymns of Zion #36

May our hearts be fully focused
on the most precious gift ever
given: Christ Jesus our Lord.

We were recently exhorted to
rejoice in the Lord, for His bless-
ings are abundant. It is easy to be-
come too focused on the road we
travel rather than the blessed
hoped-for destination. May we
continue to pray for our ministers
as they faithfully bring forth the
Word. We thank Bro. Ken Dietz
(Bradford, IL) and Elder Bro. Wes
Knapp (Goodfield, IL) for their
willing service for the Lord.

Our prayers are with the family
of Sis. Bertha Lauber, who passed
into eternity on November 3. Our
prayers are also extended to Sis.
Marge Wewetzer (Bro. Bill) in the
passing of her nephew, Clyde Dan-
iel Cooper; and to Sis. Ann Reber in
the loss of her brother, Eugene
Schladenhauffen.

May we pray for a speedy recov-

ery for all of our dear loved ones
who have recently undergone sur-
gery: Sis. Evie Gudeman (Bro.
Bill), Dorothy Jones (mother of Sis.
Sandy Kinsinger), Clint
Schambach (Bro. Bob and Sis.
Jeanne), Sis. Marge Wewetzer
(Bro. Bill), and Bro. Nathan
Steffen (Sis. Marilyn).

Loni Schock (Bro. Norm and
Sis. Ginny) and Tim Axford (John
and Joyce) were married on Octo-
ber 13. Lynwood Schambach (Bro.
Don and Sis. Leann) and Jamie
Weiss (Bro. Roger and Sis. Karen)
recently have announced their en-
gagement. Also, Marianne Cox
(Bro. Robert and Sis. DeAnne) is
engaged to Kevin Power (the late
Francis and Mary L. Power). May
each couple diligently seek the
Lord's guiding hand in their lives.

First-time parents, Jim and
Christine Berntsen, welcomed
Kaitlyn Rebecca into their family.
Her grandparents are Arnold and
June Berntsen and Bro. Frank and
Sis. Lois Schock. Also, first-time
parents are Wayne and Jennifer
Sauder as they welcomed their
first child, Ariana Lorraine, on
September 19. Her grandparents
are the late Roger and Sis. Gert
Sauder and the late Frank and Do-
lores March.

'Twas grace that taught my heart
to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace ap-
pear
The hour I first believed.

Hymns of Zion #97

Our hearts rejoice with Ben and
Stephanie Standish and Lucas
Young (Morris and Pat) who have
recently begun their repentance
and are turning their life to the
Lord. May they remember daily to
put on the whole armor of the Lord,
standing fully equipped to resist

the devil.

Note of Thanks:

I would like to give special thanks to all for the prayers, cards, and gifts of love during my hospital stay and recovery at home. May God bless each and every one of you.

*Your least brother-in-faith,
Bro. Delbert Schmidt*

**ILLINOIS, EUREKA
Janet Zimmerman**

There is yet room, our Lord is
not content,
though many guests are there.
He calls to all with love and kind
intent

His feast with all to share.
And by His loving interceding
He calls all men with earnest
pleading.

For yet there's room, for yet
there's room.

Hymns of Zion #129

We rejoice with the angels in Heaven when a soul repents and this month we are thankful we can report several. Our new converts are Pete Wettstein (Bro. Jake and Sis. Mary), Evan Schmidgall (Bro. Paul and Sis. Kris), Jonathon Stoller (Bro. Jim and Sis. Janet), Ben Rocke (Bro. Robyn and Sis. Jan), David Knecht (Elder Bro. Ervin and Sis. Sandy), Jarod Leman (Bro. Chris and Sis. Marlene), and Hope Nenadov (Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn). Hope recently moved to the Chicago area and assembles with the Chicago congregation. We wish each one God's grace and guidance as they begin to build a solid foundation.

Come to the feast, the Master has
prepared,
for there is room for all.

He welcomes you, His glories He
will share,
Oh, heed His loving call...

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Sam Blunier, Sr. (Sis. Liz) and Sis. Corine Hartter who are in the hospital. May God be with them and provide for their needs.

On November 3 we listened to the reading of the Memorandum. We heard so many good exhortations and timely warnings. May we strive to walk a closer walk with our Lord. We are thankful Elder Bro. Roy Grimm and his wife, Sis. Dona (Taylor, MO), could be here and help Elder Bro. Ervin in this duty.

Thankful for a precious baby boy are Bro. Keith and Sis. Michelle Knepp. Galen Keith was born on November 18. His sister, Emily, and brothers, Ross and Grant, welcome him into their hearts and home. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Ervin and Sis. Sandy Knecht and Gary Knepp and Sis. Nancy Knepp (Washington).

We wish Bro. Rich and Sis. Marge Rocke God's richest blessings as they recently celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

"I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth..."

Psalms 121

Our dear Sis. Evelina Sinn was called to her Heavenly Home November 10. We are thankful she could be relieved of her earthly cares and trials and now we believe she is resting peacefully in Jesus' nearness. We have many precious memories of Sis. Evelina as she

lived to be 97. She was a very good baker and will be remembered for making delicious glazed doughnuts for many different gatherings. We extend our sympathy to her sons, Richard (Roanoke) and Bill (Florida), and to her many other close relatives.

We also extend our heartfelt sympathy to Bro. Ben Knapp on the death of his sister, Anne Strunk. She died November 7. Bro. Ben had recently been bringing his sister from the nursing home over to church. May God fill this vacancy left in his life.

Bro. Mike Rinckenberger (Congerville, IL) was our visiting minister November 11. May God bless him for his labors. We are always thankful for visiting ministers and likewise for our home ministers who labor for us from Sunday to Sunday. May God's blessings be upon each one and their families.

Bro. Mark Nenadov (Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn) and Sis. Brenda Grimm (Bro. Gerald and Sis. Ruby) of Sabetha, KS, were united in Holy Matrimony on October 28. May God richly bless their union and we extend a warm welcome to Sis. Brenda to our congregation and hope it won't be long before she feels at home here.

Josh Knecht (Bro. Ernie and Sis. Judie) and Shannon Weeks (Dale and Debbie) of Mackinaw became husband and wife on November 17. May God bless them as they begin their new life together. We likewise welcome Shannon to our church.

Note of Thanks:

Dear Brethren and Friends,

The outpouring of God's love has been shown us through the many gifts, flowers and cards since Leroy's illness.

A quote from my mother comes

to mind. "A bud to the living is worth more than a wreath to the dead."

We thank each one and pray God's blessings upon you.

Sincerely,

Bro. Leroy and Sis. Clara Huber

Note: Silver Lining collection for Eureka subscribers is due in January.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

Tammy Hinrichsen

Joann Zehr

Several from our congregation have spent some time in the hospital, and we wish God's healing strength to Sis. Donna Huber (Bro. Jesse) and Bro. Tom Steidinger (Sis. Dianne).

One of our dear and faithful sisters, Sis. Lena Zehr, reached her 100th birthday on October 13, and one week later, on October 20, she was able to go to her eternal reward. We extend our sincere sympathy to her three remaining sisters, Sis. Anna Steffen, Sis. Aldine Steffen, and Fannie Steffen.

We also want to wish God's comfort and our sympathy to Sis. Gladys Slagel (Bro. Raymond) in the death of her brother, Richard Fehr.

Marion Rieger, 78, passed away on November 3. Again, we extend sincere sympathy to his son, Steve Rieger (Sandra), and daughter, Sis. Karen Steffen (Bro. Albert). He was very sick in the last weeks of his life, and we are so thankful that he could turn to God in repentance and was able to acknowledge that he was ready to die. What a wonderful God and Saviour we have!

Two homes were blessed with baby boys. David James was born on October 31 to Bro. James and Sis. Carrie Tate. He has one brother, Jonathan, and his happy

grandparents are Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean Knapp and Don and Marilyn Tate.

Also, Landon Lee was welcomed into the home of Bro. Jason and Sis. Joy Kilgus. He is a brother to Courtney and Tyler, and his happy grandparents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Jane Steidinger and Bro. Duane and Sis. Arlene Kilgus.

We are happy for Charles and Arlene Farley as they will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in November 24. May God bless them in their future years together. They are the parents of James Farley (Karla) of Omaha, NE, and Julie Bazzell (Gregg) of Fairbury.

On Sunday, October 28, our Bible Class hosted the Eureka Bible Class. Visiting ministers for that occasion were Bros. Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL) and Dan Koch, Jr. (Tremont, IL). Other visiting ministers the last month have been Bros. Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL), Erik Givens (Princeville, IL), Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA), and Ralph Garber (Morton, IL). We thank each one for their willingness to serve on our behalf and to bring us the living Word of Life. It is such a blessing to be able to go to church and hear the truth.

ILLINOIS, FORREST

Jean Knapp

Linda Anliker

Baptized into Thy name most
holy,
O Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and
lowly
Among Thy seed, Thy chosen
host.
Immersed with Christ, I'm dead
to sin;
Thy Spirit now shall live within.

Zion's Harp #47

May the light of our Lord forever shine in the lives of our new brother and sisters in faith. Making their covenant with our Lord in baptismal waters were Sis. Rebekah Stoller (Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill), Sis. Leah Knapp (Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean) and Bro. Corbin Anliker (Bro. Bob and Sis. Linda).

We are thankful that the call of the Lord is still going forth and another soul is seeking the light of the Lord in repentance. We pray God will grant Courtney Livingston much grace as she makes this change in her life, submitting her will unto His.

May God grant Bro. Troy (Sis. Kathleen) Lanz and Bro. Karl (Sis. Bethany) Edelman much grace and wisdom as they have been given the responsibility to teach our children in Sunday School.

Visiting us for different occasions, we thank Elder Bros. Jon Schmidgall (Oakville, IA) and Art Bahler (Fairbury, IL) and Bros. Glen Braker (Princeville, IL), Tim Hohulin (Roanoke, IL), Todd Stoller (Latty, OH) and Ken Eisenmann (Cissna Park, IL) in lending themselves in God's service.

Taking vows to be joined together as husband and wife on October 27 were Mark Steidinger and JaNae Drayer. Their parents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Jane Steidinger (Fairbury, IL) and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Gloria Drayer. May the Lord bless their marriage.

Time swiftly glides past. As one couple has just begun married life another couple, Bro. Clarence and Sis. Doris Koehl, is reflecting on the sixty years that has passed since their wedding day. May they continue to feel the Lord's blessing and nearness.

The precious gift of life was given to Bro. Stan and Sis. Kristen Mueller with the birth of Wade Thomas. His siblings, Allison, Lincoln, Nicole, and Stanton, and his grandparents, Bro. Alfred and Sis. Wanda Kupferschmid and Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida Mueller, are thankful for his arrival.

Spending time in the hospital this past month were Sis. Viola (Bro. Chris) Metz and Sis. Louise (Bro. Les) Zimmerman. May God grant healing and restoration.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Norval and Sis. Wilma Knapp in the death of his sister, Ann Strunk (Morton, IL).

Note of Thanks:

I wish to thank everyone for the cards, flowers and gifts of love I received on my 95th birthday. God bless each one.

Sis. Hazel Karcher

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD
Heather Hohulin

We have had several weddings the last few months. In October, Chanel Zacha married Greg Heuer. Parents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Connie Allen, and Kenneth and MaryEllen Heuer. In November, Megan Colclasure and Robert Schmidt were married. Their parents are the late Ron Colclasure and Betty Colclasure and Wayne and Marleen Schmidt. Also in November, Sis. Jenni Grimm married Bro. Matt Sauder. Their parents are Bro. Jeff and Sis. Ruth Grimm and Bro. Dale and Sis. Joann Sauder. We rejoice with each of these dear couples and pray that God will bless their marriages.

Our prayers are with our hospital patient this last month, Bro. Tim Blunier (Sis. Susie). We pray he is feeling much better and on the road to recovery. Kristen Davis (Bro. Noel and Sis. Molly) under-

went surgery and we hope she is healing fast. We also think of Bro. Ivan Nohl (Sis. Pearl) and Sis. Phyllis Zobrist (Bro. Howard) who have been ill. We pray that God would be with them all.

I failed to report the birth of a baby boy. Justin and Sheri Zobrist are first-time parents of Coleron Matthew. May he be a blessing to their lives.

Visiting ministers this month were Bros. Allen Schambach (Sis. Sarah), Steve Baner (Sis. Donnalou), Brian Huber (Sis. Jacki), Chuck Kellenberger (Sis. Debbie) and Elder Bro. Charles Sauder (Sis. Miriam). We are very thankful for their service to us.

As we approach the Christmas season, may we never forget the reason we celebrate — the birth of our Saviour.

Notes of Thanks:

We want to express our appreciation and sincere thanks to all who helped bring in the harvest and for the meals, gifts, cards and visits, and especially all the prayers on our behalf since Rick's accident. May God keep you and bless you for all your acts of love and kindness.

Love,

Bro. Rick and Sis. Kathy Knapp

We would like to thank each of you who sent cards, flowers, gifts and food to help make my 70th birthday special. We also appreciate the love, support and prayers of each of you during my recent illness. May God richly bless you for your deeds of love and kindness.

Bro. Howard and Sis. Phyllis Zobrist

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY
Perry Klopfenstein

With a new year a short span away, it illustrates how fast time passes. Already we are nearly two

years into a new century.

Because time is fleeting, and passes quickly, the Word teaches us to, "Redeem the time, for the days are evil." That is good direction for the believer, whose calling is to build up the kingdom of God.

On November 4, Sis. Maria Klopfenstein was announced to be married to Bro. Brandon Emch of Kansas City, MO. She is the daughter of Bro. Perry and Sis. Carol Klopfenstein. His parents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Susan Emch (Lamont-Gridley, KS). God works in marvelous ways if His direction is sought with a pure heart.

Bro. Dave Steffen had heart by-pass surgery while in Florida. Sis. Lucille Wagner is recovering from hip surgery. Sis. Kay Hock had foot surgery, and Sis. Kathy Taylor is recovering from her recent surgery. Bro. Keith Zimmerman is dealing with an illness and he surely has our prayers for recovery.

We were blessed with three visiting ministers on November 4: Bros. Fred Eberhardt (Burlington, IA), Brace Wieland (Leo, IN) and Ted Hirstein (Morton, IL). On November 11, we had Bro. Bill Emch (Lamont-Gridley, KS) and Bro. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO). It was a blessing to have all these dear brothers with us.

On the evenings of November 4 and November 11, Gridley was the host to ACYF. Our youth are our "fond expectation" for the future, and may God give us grace to nurture and train them up so when they hear God's call to repentance they will submit to His will.

Sis. Lulu Schlipf recently moved into Sunrise Manor.

Several of our young members attended the High School weekend at Peoria on November 3.

One of our ministers told an interesting account of an intended

“deathbed conversion”. A man told him of an experience he had. This man always intended to wait until he was near death to repent. A short time ago he was on an airplane flight, and the plane got into trouble. The pilot announced the plane was going down, and would likely crash. Flight attendants had the passengers strap on their seat belts and position pillows behind their necks, as a plane crash seemed imminent.

With what seemed like certain death, did the man repent and turn to God? The answer is no. Rather, he became angry and actually cursed God. Panic and terror seized him and repentance was impossible.

Somehow, the pilot was able to gain control of the airplane, and disaster was averted. The incident illustrates the folly of waiting until just before the end of one's life to repent. Circumstances then are no more convenient than the present. There is never a more “convenient day” than today to seek God in a true repentance.

May multitudes hear the tender call of the Lord today!

ILLINOIS, MORTON

**Phyllis Farney
Cheryl Wuthrich**

The funeral for LaVern Rinkenberger was held at Morton church November 7. We rejoice that he was able to make peace with his Lord before his passing. The Lord is merciful. Lavern has four brothers, Verden (Elma), Bro. Cleo (Sis. Esther), Ed (Dorothy) and Glenn (Ginger). His sisters are Waunita (Sam) Hirstein, and Sis. Bernice (Bro. Henry) Rapp. May the Lord comfort each and every one of them and draw them to Him.

Bro. Alvin Heiniger is now walking the streets of gold in the

presence of the Lord. He died on November 8. May the Lord strengthen and comfort his wife, Sis. Laverne; his son, Keith; and his daughter, Shirley Wilson; his brother, Bro. Lester Heiniger; and his sisters, Sis. Larene Heiniger and Viola Huette.

On November 10 the engagement of Bro. Tate Kaiser to Sis. Melissa Criss (Peoria, IL) was made known. Bro. Tate's parents are Bro. Fred and Sis. Chelly. Sis. Melissa's parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Linda. We wish them God's richest blessings and continued guidance as they join their lives.

We are happy to welcome two families who have decided to make Morton their home church. They are Bro. Andy and Sis. Holly Kieser; and Bro. Rod and Sis. Teresa Blunier and their children.

Bro. Bob and Sis. Marvel Knobloch celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this month. We are thankful for the Godly example of a loving family.

November 10-11 our young group hosted brothers and sisters from several churches throughout the land. It was a blessing to have them with us for the weekend and it was an opportunity for many lasting friendships to be established.

Morton held a Benefit Dinner November 17-18. This project involves the Sunday School Bible Class as well as all others who wish to participate. It is held every other year. It is a time of fellowship and worship through song. Blessings were abundant for all who attended and participated.

We wish to thank Bros. Kevin Knapp (Bloomington, IL) and Ronald Allenbach (Kiowa, KS) for bringing the Word to us this month.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA

Peter and Mabel Weber

Especially in troubling times, God, the main factor in our lives, draws our attention to sin and evil and what must be done about it. Is. 14:14 states, “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” and verse 12, “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou cut to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!” Genesis 3 describes the fall of Adam and Eve, turning the world around and causing mankind to be born of sin and, by nature, contributing to sin while going through life. They were created to live forever but their sin contaminated their bodies and they began to deteriorate. God forgives sin but there is a great price to pay, which cost the life of Jesus. He promised to shed His innocent blood for our sins, but “in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground” (Gen. 3:19). Don't flirt with sin as there is no way you can win. After it is committed, God puts on the pressure and we cannot hide and run from Him. We must serve the Lord with what we were given (Matt. 25:15-46). How do we use our (the Lord's) resources, the talents we were given? Search what the Lord wants us to do, use our mind to lift Him up. Are we willing to have faith for a moment and then quit, or have a believing faith, which sustains us? A life in Christ is a process of growth and letting the peace of God, which passes all understanding, come into our lives. He who overcomes will escape the second death (Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer, Bros. Tim Roecker, Mike Rieker, Dave Obergfel, Rick Plattner, Tim Funk 10/21 and 28).

Special thanks to the Young Group for their annual Senior Citi-

zens Dinner on October 27 at the Fellowship Hall, followed by a spiritual and patriotic liederkranz and appropriately concluding with "God be with you."

Jesus tells Peter in Luke 5 to launch out into the deep and let down the NETS (4). Peter replied they had fished all night, taken nothing but would let down the NET at His command (5). The catch was so great they had to call another ship for help (7). Let's let down ALL the nets and carry out what the Scriptures tell us to do (Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer 10/31).

The focus of the November 4-5 High School weekend was "The Beatitudes - Where true Happiness begins." We thank Bros. Ted Hirstein, Jaye Rinkenberger and Mark Streitmatter for their inspired presentations and Sis. Karen Waibel and her committee for organizing this event.

101+ was Jack Hemmer's age when he passed away recently at the home of a grandson in Boise, ID. He was Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer's uncle and came to Princeville in 1923 with Chuck's father, Bro. Max Hemmer, from Niedereggenen, Germany.

We thank Bro. Darren Plattner (Champaign, IL) for his family night service on November 7 about "Honoring our Relationships" ... with God (because He is worthy and showed us His mercy), parents and others. To honor means to revere someone above and beyond the call of duty and is a matter of the heart. We honor God by honoring His Son and the relationships He has placed into our lives. We are called to "in honour preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10) and must make a choice to honor or dishonor, like God honored us by giving us eternal life.

Recent nonagenarian birthdays were: Bros. Irvin Leman (96), Les

Wagenbach (93), Roy Sauder (92), Sisters Katherine Knapp (99), Anna Schneider (98), Marie Hoerr (91), Vera Irions (90), Lillian Koehl (90 - gone to Zapata, TX, for the winter) and Edna Binkele (94). We wish them the Lord's blessings to their further walk of life. All but Sis. Lillian are Skylines residents.

There is no guarantee of life and God will provide the time-table for our lives. The sting of death is diminished by feeling not alone as many are sharing the loss of loved ones and praying for the bereft families. Bro. Herb Schwenk (91) went to his reward on November 9 and we express our sincere sympathy to his wife, Sis. Ida; son, Bro. Doug; and daughter, Paula Sloan; and their families. Sis. Gertrude Sauder, beloved wife of retired Elder Bro. Roy Sauder, went to be with the Lord on November 10 at the Skylines after 63 years of devoted married life. We wish Bro. Roy the nearness and sustenance of the Lord and express our deep condolences to him, sons, Bro. Ken and Steven, and the other family members. Sis. Gloria Heiniger (69) passed away at Restmore on November 7 and we express our sympathy to her sister, Eldora Young, and brother, Vernon.

Hospital patients were Bro. Walter Merkle and Sisters Marie Hohulin, Lillian Koehl, Mick Koehl, Pam Ober and Mabel Schafer.

Congratulations to Sis. Melissa Criss and Bro. Tate Kaiser (son of Bro. Fred and Sis. Chelly Kaiser, Morton, IL) on their engagement announcement on November 11.

Thanksgiving: Ephesians 5:20 says, "Give thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." We are thankful for having enjoyed great abundance again in the past year ... "Thou, O God,

didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary." (Psalm 68:9).

The annual Silver Lining collection of \$11.00 will be on January 6. Please put your contributions into the boxes in the church foyer or mail them to Ken Hoerr, 9819 N. Rt. 91, Peoria, IL 61615.

Where are they now?

Bro. David Sceggel graduated from ISU last May and has been teaching Technology Education in London, England, since August. He hopes to spend Christmas with his family and then return to his teaching job until July 2002. If you don't get to him over the holidays, you may send him wishes for the Lord's blessings in the New Year via e-mail: sceggel@hotmail.com.

Also expecting to be home for the holidays is his brother, Bro. Philip Sceggel, who is attending Phoenix church while going to school there. His e-mail is: scegg@hotmail.com.

Note of Thanks:

Sis. Anna Schneider wishes to thank everyone for their kind wishes, cards and gifts for her 98th birthday on October 29. May God bless you all.

The Schneider family

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE
Phyllis Knobloch
Crystal Streitmatter

To dwell among the restless,
 where peace is so despised,
 where evil spirits govern,
 it fills my heart with sighs.
 My home is up in heaven:
 I am a stranger here.
 Oh, God, I'll praise Thee ever,
 When I am with Thee there.

Zion's Harp #242

May our thoughts be "up in heaven" this holiday season and may we let the peace of God dwell in our hearts. Jesus came as a little babe but through His shed blood we can look forward to life with Him in Heaven.

A beautiful baby girl was born to Bro. Matt and Sis. Deanna Steffen on October 17. She has been named Liberty Jane and joins her sisters, Myca, Olivia, Paige and Cherelle, and brothers, Quinn and Ethan. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Aaron and Sis. Loretta Steffen (Alto, MI) and Bro. Howard and Sis. Mary Ann Herrmann.

Also a sweet baby girl was born to Bro. Mike and Sis. Julie Martin on November 12 named Morissa Nicole. Mitchell, Marshall and Melissa are so happy to have a baby sister. Grandparents are Bro. Kenny and Sis. Donna Gehrig and Bro. Walt and Sis. Janet Joos. May God bless these happy families.

Our visiting ministers have been Bros. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Peoria, IL), Bill Waibel (Sis. Carol, Bay City, MI) and Keith Beyer (Sis. Alisa, Detroit, MI). We thank them for their willingness to serve us.

The Detroit choir and many others visited us the first weekend in November. Thank you! Our hearts rejoiced with them as they sang many beautiful hymns. Many of us joined in with the singing and felt blessed as the voices blended together. As I read the stories of David, his singing becomes vivid to me. My family has always been musical, growing up as a child and then raising our own family. Not only evenings, but also many noon hours in the summer were spent singing. Our precious Zion's Harp is my favorite hymnal and I still enjoy singing from it every morning. How wonderful it is to know that God hears our singing even if our

talent is limited! With music in our hearts it is well with our souls!

Open house was held at the Heartland School on November 3. Thank you to the many volunteers who made this a reality! There are 38 precious children with four loving teachers, Bro. Scott Endress, Sis. Darcy Stoller, Sis. Mary Ehnle and Sis. Rachel Knapp.

Surgical patients have been Sis. Luann Endress (Bro. Jerold), Beau Martin (Bro. Mike and Sis. Julie), Sis. Jane Ehnle (Bro. Kurt), and Travis Wieland (Bro. Bob and Sis. Nancy). Our prayers are with you!

The testimony of Ben Martin (Bro. Sam and Sis. Mary) is scheduled for December 1. May the peace of God continue to dwell in his heart all the days of his life.

We wish for each of you many Christmas blessings! Glory to God in the Highest!

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE
Jenell Hodel
Linda Hodel

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy
face,
With the dawn of redeeming
grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.
Amen.

Hymns of Zion #42, vs. 3

We once again quickly near the time where believers throughout the world remember the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and truly what a special and beautiful time it is to reflect on the love of our Heavenly Father to send us the most precious gift — the salvation through His perfect and Holy Son.

We trust Bro. Brad and Sis. Jill Sauder are enjoying the birth of

their son, Carter Jon, born November 14, as well as big sister, Elly, and grandparents, Elder Bro. Tom and Sis. Kathy Hoffman and Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan Sauder.

We ask for healing mercies to be extended to those who have been hospitalized and also "injured" this past month. They include: Sis. Kathy Hoffman (Elder Bro. Tom), Bro. Dick Bowald (Sis. Molly), Sis. Jennifer Feucht (Bro. Matt), Colin Hodel (Bro. Curt and Sis. Jenell) and Bro. Larry Neukomm (Sis. Sharon).

We are blessed to have six new brothers in faith. They are: Luke Fischer (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Annette), Donnie Tolan (Don and Jill), Mike Hodel (Willis and the late Sis. Margaret) who gave their testimonies and were baptized on October 28; and Dustin Hodel (Bro. Brad and Sis. Patty), Joshua Lindberg (Bro. Rich and Sis. Julie) and Nate Sauder (Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan) who gave their testimonies and were baptized on November 18. We were thankful to see Bro. Bill Hodel be able to go to the pulpit to assist with this!

Our visiting ministers this past month were: Elder Bros. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL), Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL) and Jesse Beer (Milford, IN), and Bros. Erik Givens (Princeville, IL), Tim Funk (Peoria, IL) and Ed Knecht (Silverton, OR).

Roanoke hosted College Weekend the third weekend in October, the young group hosted a "Harvest Party" as an alternative to Halloween for the children, the Bible Class hosted a "Harvest Supper" on November 3 to help raise money for a work project coming up, and we had our annual "Thanksgiving singing" on November 18. Having various occasions like this remind me of a saying: The church is full of willing people — those willing to

work, and those willing to let them! May we ever look for opportunities to be useful in the service of the Lord.

And may each one reflect on the true meaning of Christmas as we gather together with our loved ones and come together to worship our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

Heather Rassi

LaVonne Wagenbach

Many visiting brothers and sisters assembled with us for the Over 25 weekend. We pray a blessing on all who attended, organized, and brought forth the message. Ministering brethren were Bro. Mike Rieker (Peoria, IL), Bro. Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN), and Bro. John Stoller (Leo, IN).

Additional visiting ministers this month included Bro. John Hartman (Fairbury, IL), Bro. Ed Fritz (Washington, IL), Bro. Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL), Bro. John Rowell (Burlington, IA), and Bro. Roger Sauder (Fort Lauderdale, FL). May God richly bless each one for their service in ministering the Gospel.

Two souls were united as one in marriage on November 4. Bro. John Dill (Bro. Glenn and Sis. Marilyn) and Sis. Jamie Koch (Bro. Ken and Sis. Amy) gave their vows in the presence of many witnesses and God the Father. May Christ be the center of their marriage as they walk hand in hand on the path of life.

Because Bro. Chris Woerner (Sis. Wilmina) recently spent time in the hospital, we want to remember him in prayer. Our hope is that he will recover quickly and be restored.

Bro. Ray and Sis. Cleda Rinkenberger and Glen and Kay Heflin rejoice at the arrival of their

most recent grandson, Blake Allen. Shawn, Stacy, and Bryce Rinkenberger are the thankful parents and big brother of this new baby born on October 6. May God's blessings be showered upon this little one.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

Dianne Wyss

Marcia Koch

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

1 Thess. 5:18

As the Thanksgiving holiday approaches, I am reminded of the encouragement of Bro. David Wiegand years ago to give attention to that one little word "in". While we are in the midst of both pleasant and unpleasant circumstances, let us give thanks. Following the struggle, it is not difficult to look back and see His goodness. Looking ahead to a struggle, we envision the growth that could accompany it. But to give thanks in the midst of a struggle is the test of our faith.

We thank Elder Bro. Earl Ringger and his wife, Sis. Dixie (Gridley, IL), for their encouragement as Bro. Earl recently ministered at our topical Bible study. He addressed "The Doctrine of Perseverance" with many biblical references for us to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14).

We're also thankful for Bro. Greg Lehman (Sis. Mary, Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Ken Weertz (Sis. Myrna, Cissna Park, IL) for spending a Sunday with us and sharing God's Word.

Our Elder Bro. Ron Messner spent a week in Haiti with a group and we're thankful for their safe

return.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON

Tonia Isch

Beth Aschliman

Help this feeble child, I pray
As I travel that narrow way.
Teach us, Lord, just how to love
As we view those things above.
And as we journey to life's end,
Clearly teach us our truest
Friend.

May we not faint; may we not despair

With hopes to meet Thee in the air.

And as we journey all along,
May we have a precious song.
And join the angels of heaven fair
As we wend our way up there.
Truly behold us as we fight,
And keep upon us that heavenly light.

No matter how dark the path
may be

We know we can make it some-
day with Thee.

So continue to lead this child as
is best

Until we can reach our heavenly
rest.

Heavenly rest, doesn't it sound wonderful?

Leah Baumgartner (Bro. Craig and Sis. Beth), Amber Steffen (Bro. Eric and Sis. Marcia), Lisa Frauhiger (Bro. Lynn and Sis. Jenny) and Shaunda Bedwell (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Nancy) look to their Heavenly Father in repentance. We're so thankful for each soul that can come out of the world and take God's hand. We continue to pray for all of our converts.

We rejoice with Bro. Dan Dubach (Bro. Ken and Jodi) and Sis. Bethany Furrer (Bro. Jim and Sis. Rowena) of Prescott, AZ, as

they were united in marriage on October 21. Also becoming one in the Lord is our Sis. Janon Fiechter (Bro. Don and Sis. Suzie) and Bro. Tim Furrer (Bro. Jim and Sis. Rowena) of Prescott, AZ. Their vows were taken on November 11. We wish both these couples God's richest blessings as they make their homes in Prescott, AZ.

On October 26, Bro. Bill and Sis. Heidi Carrico were blessed with a daughter, Megan Jo. Caleb and Joel welcome home their new little sister and Bro. Lyle and Sis. Connie Kaehr and Pat Carrico are thankful for a healthy granddaughter.

Kristen Kaehr is a new mother to a precious son, Cane Marcus. Cane was born November 1. Bro. Steve and Sis. Janice are happy for their first grandbaby. We rejoice with you.

Our thoughts and prayers are extended to loved ones as they have been hospitalized for illness or surgery. Sis. Ann (Bro. Les Frauhiger, Bro. Kendall (Sis. Sandy) Ringger, Sis. Doris Frauhiger and Morgan Pulver (Bro. Chris and Sis. Kara) spent time in the hospital and we pray for God's healing in each of their lives.

We want to thank Bros. Jim Ramseyer (Sis. Marlene, Bay City, MI), Dwight Stoller (Sis. Lori, Latty, OH) and Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA) for offering God's Word through the Holy Spirit in Bluffton. We welcome you back again to visit us.

We also were blessed to have the children from the Galilean Home sing for us and worship with us on Sunday. We thank you for sharing with us.

**INDIANA
BLUFFTON NORTH
Rhonda Maller
Ann Meyer**

What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
Tabernacle Hymns #223

We had four souls that gave their testimonies that the blood of Jesus cleansed them so they were baptized on October 28. We welcome Sis. Mandy Schladenhauffen (Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy), Bro. Kyle Reinhard (Bro. Roger and Sis. Maureen), Sis. Jenna Francesi (Bro. Len and Sis. Mary) and Bro. Ryan Steffen (Bro. Keith and Sis. Kay) into the fold. We appreciated having Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Sis. Michelle, Philadelphia, PA) come and share in this special weekend.

We were also blessed with other visiting ministers that brought inspiring messages. Many thanks go to Bros. Bill Dotterer (Lamar, MO), Ben Manz (Junction, OH), Mark Streitmatter (Bloomington, IL) and Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), along with their wives, for their visit and act of service.

We rejoice that Brittany Aschliman (Bro. Kelly and Sis. Lisa) is claiming the blood of Jesus to wash away her sin in repentance. We're also thankful that Kathy Meyer (widow of Ron) has asked to give her testimony and become part of our fellowship. Our prayers are with Kathy as she recently had a major surgery along with losing her husband in September. May she feel the Lord's love and strength to carry her through.

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Hebrews 13:5

May Sis. Rochelle Gerber (Bro. Rod) feel the Lord's presence and healing touch as she has been in the hospital over a month. We miss her at church. We are thankful Bruce Harris (Bro. Mark and Sis. Susie) escaped serious injury in his car accident and we hope his arm will heal soon. Sis. Velma Fulkerson has also spent time in the hospital.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

I Cor. 13:13

Love is what brought Andy Rupel (Bro. Fred and Sis. Rhonda) to claim Veronica Saldivar (Louie and Gloria) as his wife on November 10. May they love and esteem each other, as Christ loves the church. We wish God's blessings on their marriage.

Love and commitment were demonstrated when Howard and Goldie Stettner celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Thank you for your shining example and we wish you many more.

**INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE
Pam Huber**

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

I Cor. 13:12

We awoke just before 4:00 a.m. hoping to catch a glimpse of the Leonids meteor shower. But as we stepped outside, we knew we would have to wait another 33 years. A thick fog had swallowed up our view of any stars that morning! This brought the wise men to mind, traveling far from home, led

only by a star, to find the King of the Jews. When they could no longer see the star, they did what seemed logical. Herod would surely know where this king could be found. Had they come all this way in vain? "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." (Matt. 2:10). How precious is the reassurance of God's leading in our lives. Help thou our unbelief on those cloudy days, dear Father.

What joy we have had this past month as Danielle Wuethrich (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Kathy) and Caleb Wuethrich (Bro. Mark and Sis. Lynne) were announced to be at peace with God and man. We pray for your continued growth in the Lord and look forward to your day of baptism.

There has been more rejoicing in Bro. Bruce and Sis. Kathy's family as Sis. Kayla Wuethrich and Bro. Aaron Kilgus (Elder Bro. Dan and Sis. Jenna) have announced their engagement. May your love for the Lord be the firm foundation for your relationship in the years to come.

Many prayers of thanks have been offered up to the Lord for His protection of little Courtney Isch (Bro. Burt and Sis. Karlene) while she was in the hospital. Bro. Glen Boehning (Sis. Eileen) is also in need of our prayers as he has been ill and unable to come to church.

Our thanks to Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) who joined us this past month to read the letter from the Elder Conference. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24)

Note of Thanks:

Thanks to everyone who remembered me with cards, prayers

and telephone calls while I was in the hospital and since returning home. Also to the J.O.Y. group for the beautiful tapes they sent me. Your love and thoughtfulness will always be remembered. May God bless each of you.

Sis. Helen Eshleman

**INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS**

**Gail Bradford
Sue Levy**

In this season of renewal and hope, we rejoice with parents, Bro. Matt and Sis. Missy Ackerman, on the birth of their second son, Joshua Matthew, on November 5. Little brother, Jacob, and grandparents, Bro. Roger and Sis. Margie Ackerman (Morton, IL) and Bro. Mike and Sis. Cheryl Stratton (Taylor, MO), are happy to see the new arrival, too.

We were gratified by the services of several visiting ministers in the last few weeks: Bros. Erik Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL), Steve Sauder (Sis. Mary, Tremont, IL), Brace Wieland (Sis. Brenda, Leo, IN) and Garry Bucher (Sis. Lois, Valparaiso, IN).

Recently a group of young people visited Indianapolis as they do twice a year to participate in community outreach services. All agreed that, "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

We appreciated the efforts of our Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart, and former Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler who shared the 2001 Memorandum with us. Words of wisdom reminded us of the many ways we can worship our Lord. Our thoughts, words and deeds reflect our commitment to the lifelong vows we made in the waters of baptism. We should afford ourselves of God's grace so that we may reflect His love in our families, among our brethren and in the world.

Especially in the Christmas season we should share our blessings with others. We honor Christ when we do so. Let us also avail ourselves of opportunities to share the Gospel as well as material gifts.

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

Matthew 5:16

**INDIANA, LACROSSE
Eric and Bobbi Ann Heinold**

Lord, I am fondly, earnestly longing
Into Thy holy likeness to grow;
Thirsting for more and deeper communion,
Yearning Thy love more fully to know.

Dead to the world would I be, O
Father!

Dead unto sin, alive unto Thee;
Crucify all the earthly within me,
Emptied of sin and self may I be.

I would be Thine and serve Thee
forever,

Filled with Thy Spirit, lost in
Thy love;

Come to my heart, Lord, come
with anointing,

Showers of grace send down from
above.

Hymns of Zion #171

We rejoice as another soul has come to the Lord in repentance. Ryan Elcock (Bro. Keith and Sis. Ruth) has made a beginning in a life of service to the Lord. We rejoice with their family and pray that he will feel God's nearness during this time of repentance.

God is gracious to provide spiritual nourishment each Sunday,

and how privileged we are that He grants us this day of rest from our earthly cares. Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Doyle Frauhiger (Sis. Jane, Bluffton North, IN). We appreciated the thoughts that were shared and pray that Bro. Doyle received as much of a blessing as our small congregation did.

**INDIANA, LEO
Ethelyn Schlatter**

We gathered together at Bro. Tim and Sis. Jenny Sauder's home for our annual wiener roast on October 21. We had an enjoyable evening concluding with singing praises to the Lord.

Bro. Steve and Sis. Marsha Scheitlin's three - year - old son, Phillip, is in a cast to immobilize his hip in order to tighten the ligament. The next step is a brace for six months. Phillip is doing well, but needs to be carried. Our prayers are with the family as they face this adjustment in their life.

Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) presented our Topical Bible Study on Wednesday evening, November 14. He said there are many lists in the Bible: Ten Commandments, genealogies, beatitudes, fruits of the Spirit, gifts given by the Spirit. He chose to elaborate on the Ten Commandments. The first commandment tells us Whom we should worship. There is only one Lord God — we are owned by God. The second: How we should worship. We should worship in Spirit. "Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 19:4). We should reverence the Lord in holy awe. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" (Ex. 20:7). Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Ex. 20:8), a day of rest, freedom from labor, to rest

and pray. "Rest from your labor on this Holy Day and give thanks to God." The fifth commandment was given for children, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Ex. 20:12). We should always honor the authority of principles they taught us. The next five are covered under, "...thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord" (Lev. 19:18b). "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, and are convicted of the law as transgressors." (James 2:8,9). His thoughts were very thought - provoking and convicting. It was all very impressive since it was only three days before we partook of Holy Communion. It was a blessing to have Bro. Phil and Sis. Maureen visit us again.

Saturday evening, November 17, Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL) came to help Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz and Bro. John Stoller serve the Lord's Supper. We were deeply moved and blessed as we remembered the great sacrifice and love of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Elder Bro. Earl and Sis. Dixie stayed for Sunday. We thank them for coming and pray God bless all who served us this week.

Robert and Sis. Jan Pfister's son, Rob, passed the bar in both the State of Indiana and Connecticut. He graduated from both Indiana University and NYU, and is established in Connecticut at present.

We welcome Sis. Terri Gramm back to Leo from her stay in Tokyo, Japan, where she helped Bro. Andy and Sis. Jana Klaus.

What is Christmas?

Christmas is more than a day

at the end of the year,
More than a season of joy and
good cheer,
Christmas is really God's pattern
for living
To be followed all year by unselfish
giving;
For in giving to others and being
kind
Man finds true joy and peace of
mind;
And peace on earth will come to
stay
When we live Christmas every
day.

—Helen Steiner Rice

Note of Thanks:

Bro. Marvin Fischer wishes to thank all those who remembered him in prayer, and with cards and visits during his surgery and recuperation.

**INDIANA, MILFORD
Stacey Feller
Pam Beer**

We want to say a special thank you to Bro. Gary Tonner (Bluffton North, IN) and Bro. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL) for coming to Milford this past month and ministering to us over the pulpit. We extend an open invitation to them to come back and visit anytime.

Congratulations to Bro. Tom and Becky Price as they got a new grandson named Ryan Thomas born to their daughter and son-in-law, Jenny and Dana Kreft.

As 2001 comes to a close and a new year approaches, may we all feel the presence of the Lord Jesus in our daily lives and decisions.

Note of Thanks:

I would like to thank each one that sent me cards, gifts, food, and prayers while I spent several months in the hospital and nursing home. God bless each one of you for

your deeds of kindness.

Sis. Eleanor Beer

INDIANA, REMINGTON

Rochelle Ward

Beth Virkler

The angels in heaven rejoiced three times this month as three dear souls began repenting, seeking their eternal salvation. We rejoice with Brian and Kristen Schneider and Dean Waibel (Sis. Tammy).

Bro. Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL) and Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman (Francesville, IN) shared our pulpit this month. Also, Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (West Bend, IA) traveled many miles to help with the reading of the Memorandum. Do we appreciate enough the many long hours our ministers and Elders give so unselfishly to brethren they hardly know, often at the expense of their own health and family life?

Sis. Eliza Getz, 94, went to her eternal rest on October 30. She was the widow of the late Bro. Phil Getz, who passed away in 1966. Her children are Sis. Lucille Steffen, Sis. Marilyn Bahler (Bro. Elmer), Bro. Maurice Getz (Sis. Eileen), Bro. Eldon Getz (Sis. Charlene), Ron Getz (Sis. Jean), all of Remington, and Kathryn Beer, of Milford, IN. Elder Bros. Art Bahler (Fairbury, IL) and Alfred Bahler officiated at her funeral.

January 6, 2002, is the date chosen to hear the wedding vows between Sis. Lea Stoller (Bro. Dan and Sis. Deb) and Bro. Dana Nieman (Bro. Denny and Sis. Kay, Smithville, OH). A marriage of faith remains so strengthening to the whole church.

This week the radio newscaster mentioned that one industry rarely affected by a recession or national insecurity is the marriage industry. In hard times, people re-

alize the value of enduring relationships over everything else. During this Christmas season, may we value our enduring relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ over the temptation to indulge in material things around us as substitute comforters during these soul-searching times.

On October 27 and 28 we witnessed the testimony and baptism of Melanie Bahler (Bro. Mark and Sis. Benita). Bro. Don Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN) ministered to us. That evening, we held an appreciation singing for Bro. Alfred and Sis. Frances Bahler who served our congregation for 29 years in the Eldership. May God richly bless their labors as they gave their time and energy in many unseeing ways.

Note of Thanks:

We wish to thank you for your calls, cards of sympathy, many acts of kindness, and for your prayers and love shown to our dear mother in many ways during her fourteen years of residency at Parkview Haven. All was very much appreciated, and God bless each one.

The family of Sis. Eliza Getz

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

Lavilla Langhofer

DeAnn Schlatter

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

Matthew 2:11

Our goal should be to present to God gifts of a life pleasing to Him. At Christmas, we give each other gifts in remembrance of that most

wonderful Gift, God's Son.

We were very blessed by the visits of several visiting ministers: Bro. Greg Lehman and his family (Wolcott, IN), our Elder Bro. Jesse Beer (Milford, IN), and Bro. Walt Rager and his family (Toledo, OH).

Our prayers are with Bro. Wayne and Sis. Shirley Lehman and their family as Sis. Shirley battles cancer. Their family has been through a great deal recently, so we pray God will give them an extra measure of strength.

There is reassurance in the knowledge that God never leaves us, no matter where we are in the world. Bro. Marty Langhofer had a safe and blessed trip to Romania. Bro. Bob, Sis. Sue, and Sis. Kara Beebe are spending the month in Haiti.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Darel and Janet Walker

We are thankful that two of the Lord's servants visited our congregation this past month. Bro. Tom Troxel (LaCrosse, IN) and Bro. Arnold Gerst (Taylor, MO) shared the Word with us. May the Lord richly bless them for being willing to serve us and the Lord.

We enjoyed a special day October 28 along with friends from the Francesville and Bluffton Churches who joined us for a harvest program and dinner. We wish to thank Bro. Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL) for his message on celebrating the harvest and for being with us for the morning service. We enjoyed listening to several inspiring singing groups, including the Ward sisters, a young men's quartet from Francesville, and a men's quartet from Bluffton. We wish to thank everyone who helped make this a special program.

Nothing But Leaves?

The farmer was weary at evening
time,
His work for the day was now
past.

With anticipation he had started
the day
To gather the harvest, but alas—

He found many plants that were
barren and frail
As he set out to bring in the
sheaves.

Few plants had come to fruition
And many had nothing but
leaves.

From spring through the sum-
mer he provided these plants
With his all, he had nourished
with care.

And now at the time of ingather-
ing
Precious few of those plants did
bear.

He was physically tired, emotion-
ally drained,
His countenance sad and grieved,
As with fond expectation to reap
of the harvest
And many had nothing but
leaves.

Now think of our Saviour and
our Father above,
As we as their plants here below,
They have planted us, watered
us, tended with care,
So we, plants of honor, may
grow.

Think of the Saviour who died on
the cross;
Think too, how His loving heart
grieved,
Would anyone here want to add
to His burden
By bringing Him nothing but
leaves?

Remember the fig tree in St.
Matthew's gospel,
As the Lord came, some fruit to
receive,
How he cursed it, said, "Let no
fruit grow thereon"
Because He found nothing but
leaves.

The disciples looked on at the
now-withered tree,
Their eyes they could scarcely be-
lieve,
As the Master said henceforth no
fruit grow thereon,
Because it had nothing but
leaves.

Unlike the fig tree, let's come to
fruition,
Be it thirty, sixty, or one hundred
fold.

We then, when we come to that
great harvest supper
Will walk on streets of pure gold.

How happy we'll be then, to be
with the Saviour
Of His blessings our hearts can't
conceive,
Forever and ever to share in His
glory,
'Cause we brought Him more
than just leaves.

—Anonymous

**INDIANA
WEST LAFAYETTE
Geoff and Angie Ginzel**

"That ye may with one mind and
one mouth glorify God even the Fa-
ther of our Lord Jesus Christ."
Romans 15:6

On November 21, we held our
first Thanksgiving service. Elder
Bro. Curt Frank ministered unto
us for this special service. He read
from Psalms and Romans, encour-

aging us to be thankful for all God
has provided, especially His Son
Jesus Christ.

We would like to thank the fol-
lowing ministering brothers and
their wives for visiting us and al-
lowing God to use them to bring
forth His message: Bro. Todd and
Sis. Pamela Stoller (Latty, OH),
Bro. Ron and Sis. Kayleen
Heiniger (Bloomington, IL), Bro.
Todd and Sis. Karen Feller (La-
Crosse, IN) and Bro. Dan and Sis.
Deb Beer (Milford, IN).

If you are in the area, please join
us at 10:00 a.m. for services. For lo-
cal correspondence, contact our lo-
cal ministering Bro. Neil Widmer
(765) 497-4709. Our counseling El-
ders are Bros. Curt Frank and
Wendell Gudeman.

**INDIANA, WOLCOTT
Erica Wagenbach
MaryBeth Lehman**

As Christmas approaches, it is
so easy to feel overwhelmed with
all the extra busyness that we put
upon ourselves. It's important to
quiet our hearts, keep the true rea-
son in the forefront of our minds,
and rejoice in the birth of our Sav-
iour and King. What a precious gift
God gave us!

November was a busy month
also. There were many things to be
thankful for. We were thankful El-
der Bros. Wayne Fehr (West Bend,
IA) and Dan Kilgus (Remington,
IN) were willing to share the read-
ing of the Memorandum with our
Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler. We were
thankful God provides counsel to
help us grow spiritually and re-
main true to Him.

We welcomed our new brother
and sisters in Christ after they
shared their testimonies and were
baptized the weekend of Novem-
ber 10-11. They are Bro. Brad
Widmer (Bro. Neal and Sis. Kris),
Sis. Briana Furrer (Bro. Brian and

Sis. Lorene), and Sis. Sheila Schwab (Bro. Tim and Sis. Rachel). We were blessed to hear the Word from visiting uncles, Bro. Tom Schambach (Elgin, IL) and Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Francesville, IN), who came to help along with Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus (Remington, IN).

Bro. Ron Heiniger (Bloomington-Normal, IL) shared his understanding of the conflict in the Middle East with us at our topical Bible study in October. There were many hours put into his research, and we appreciate his willingness to share it with us. Bro. Al Schambach (Remington, IN) preached the Word to us on a Sunday afternoon when Elder Bro. Alfred was alone. We pray God will bless all the brothers who came and shared messages of hope, inspiration, counsel, and encouragement.

We rejoice with Bro. Dana Nieman (Bro. Denny and Sis. Kay, Smithville, OH) and Sis. Lea Stoller (Bro. Dan and Sis. Deb, Remington, IN) in the announcement of their engagement. We have appreciated Bro. Dana as he works and lives in our area, and we know God will continue to lead and guide him and Sis. Lea in His perfect will.

IOWA, BURLINGTON

**Brenda Schulz
Karla Gerst**

Once again we were thankful to have visitors with us last month. Among them were ministering Bros. Ed Lanz (Oakville, IA) and Steve Sauder (Tremont, IL). May God reward them for their labors in His service.

Note of Thanks:

Sis. Charity Scheitlin would like to extend a special thank you to all those who remembered her on her

birthday in some way — whether with cards, gifts, or prayers.

IOWA, ELGIN Gloria Frieden Heidi Butikofer

God has surely been blessing us with beautiful November weather, which makes it hard to think of Christmas being so soon upon us. Actually, the true Christmas spirit should be with us every day of the year: the spirit of love, compassion, and the giving of ourselves to the needs of others. May we each do our part to keep this season holy and free of materialism, commercialism, and unscriptural activities.

We want to wish God's blessings to those who have recently announced their engagements and trust the following have sought God's will and direction in this major step in life: Sis. Darla Schupbach (Bro. John and Sis. Janet) and Bro. Derek Reutter (Bro. Duane and Sis. Kay, Rockville, CT); Bob Frieden (Bro. Floyd and Sis. Jan) and Julie Berns (Gary and Carol); Brian Frieden (Bro. Floyd and Sis. Jan) and Susan Ostert (Burt and Marge); and Danette Moore (Bro. Dale and Sis. Cheryl) and Kurt Kramer (Lloyd and Marlene).

We appreciate all our visitors, but want to extend a special thanks to God's servants who willingly allow themselves to be used in His service to our benefit. Visiting ministers this past month included Bro. Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA) and Bro. Gary Brown (Forrest, IL).

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE Willa Clark

As the Sunday School children tell the story of Jesus' humble birth in their programs, and the carolers proclaim His coming to

earth, it is wonderful to bask in the warm glow of this season of Joy and Peace. This Christmas season Americans as a nation are at war and have been attacked on our own soil so recently, and almost daily we hear of more threats of terror. Yet we as Christians can still have the peace of salvation that is the most powerful gift of all. Hopefully, we can share this precious gift with others throughout this Christmas season.

Visiting ministers have been Elder Bros. Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH) and Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA), and Bros. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Ben Wysong (Sabetha, KS), and Steve Baner (Gridley, IL). We are so thankful for their efforts to travel and share God's Word with us. Our faithful Elders read the Memorandum of the Conference.

We were richly blessed when the Gridley Choir visited in November. As they sang of the joy of Heaven, a listener could sense joy radiating from deep within, and read it on their faces. To gather with brothers and sisters who love the Lord is truly a blessing.

We at Garden Grove wish each and every one of you a blessed New Year.

IOWA, IOWA CITY Diana Butikofer

We thank Bros. John Rowell (Burlington, IA) and Ed Fritz (Washington, IL) for visiting us and sharing from the Word with us.

Our special thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Larry and Sis. Emily Peterson following the death of Bro. Larry's mother, Hazel Peterson. We pray that God will also comfort Sis. Rhoda Reker (Bro. Roger) and Karla Grimsman (Doug) and their families in the passing of their grandmother, Sis.

Eunice Koehl (Morris, MN).

Bro. Brad and Sis. Joyce Eland welcomed two new granddaughters into their family. Alexis Marie and Jordan Nichole were born to Keith and Lisa DuBrava on November 8. May God guide them as they raise their daughters.

If anyone is interested in employment in our area, please contact Bro. Jim Butikofer (319- 373-4384) for information. We enjoy visitors, but having you make your home here would be even better.

IOWA, LESTER
Dawn Knobloch
Dawn Metzger

We want to thank the visiting ministers who shared the Word with us this past month. They were Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Congerville, IL), Bros. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS), Larry Bahr (Fort Scott, KS) and Randy Mogler (Washington, IL).

We are thankful to hear Rachel Messner (Bro. Henry and Sis. Charlene) has found her peace with God and man. May God continue to bless her as she awaits baptism.

October 21 was the wedding day for Bro. Josh Walder and Sis. Tina Knobloch. Parents of this couple are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Sharon Walder (Cissna Park, IL) and Bro. Roger and Sis. Janet Knobloch. We welcome Bro. Josh and Sis. Tina as they have decided to make their home in our community. A number from our congregation traveled to Bradford, IL, to witness the marriage vows of Bro. Bill Stahl and Sis. Kristal Wagenbach on October 28. Parents of this couple are Bro. Lawrence and Sis. Elaine Wagenbach and Bro. Lyle and Sis. Betty Stahl (both from Princeville, IL). We enjoyed having Bro. Bill in our fellowship for a time and wish them many blessings as they wor-

ship with the Bradford, IL, congregation. Jeff Knobloch (Bro. Delbert and Sis. June) was united in marriage to Heidi Sandholm on November 3. May God be with them as they begin their married life together.

Three precious babies were welcomed into hearts and lives of loved ones in our congregation. First-time parents are Bro. Benji and Sis. Leah Kellenberger. Larinda Mae arrived on October 23. She had an extended hospital stay but we're thankful she is now home and doing well. Grandparents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Shirley Kellenberger and Bro. Sid and Sis. Cheryl Messner (Morris, MN). Great-grandmother is Sis. Elaine Kellenberger. Also welcoming their first child into their lives are Brian and Angie Metzger. Cade Thomas arrived on October 28. Grandparents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Deb Metzger and Sis. Esty Metzger is a great-grandmother. Bro. Dean and Sis. Linda Meyer along with Alvie, Lanna, Jacob and Tarah were happy to welcome Blake Raymond into their family on November 15. Grandparents are Bro. Raymond and Sis. Twyla Meyer and great-grandmother is Sis. Emma Meyer.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those who were hospitalized this past month. Sis. Zelma Knobloch submitted to surgery and we are thankful she is recovering well. Others were Sis. Viola Kellenberger, Sarah Feucht, Bro. Paul Leuthold and Sis. Paulina Knobloch. We continue to pray for Bro. Butch and Sis. Marlys Doorneweerd and their family as Sis. Marlys battles a serious illness.

Our congratulations are extended to Arlyn Metzger (Bro. Elmer and Sis. Mariann) on his engagement to Nancy Beverage. May

God be with them as they plan for their future.

We extend our sympathy to Jim Moser in the passing of his sister-in-law, Margaret Moser.

Note of Thanks:

I would like to thank each one who remembered me with cards and gifts on my 60th birthday. I did not expect to receive so many kind remembrances.

Bro. Ron Kellenberger

God gave us adversity,
So that we could enjoy accomplishment.

He gave us war,
So we could enjoy peace.
He gave us illness,
So we could enjoy health.
He gave us hunger,
So we could enjoy food.
He gave us friends,
So we could enjoy fellowship.
He gave us his Son,
So we could have life to come.

We thank our children, families and host of friends for their remembrance on our 50th anniversary. May God bless you all.

Bro. Wilbert and Sis. Helen Knobloch

IOWA, OAKVILLE
Debbie Wagenbach
Melody Steiner

Our dear friend Mitchel Schulz (Bro. Roger and Sis. June) was in a serious 4-wheeler accident. His injuries were great, but we are thankful He has made almost a complete recovery and is now seeking the Lord in repentance. May he feel God's nearness each day.

The hearts and home of Bro. Roger and Sis. June Schulz have been blessed again with the birth of their eighth daughter and ninth child, Kendra Beth. Welcoming her are her brother, Mitchel, and sisters, Sis. Bethany, Sis. Betsy,

Janae, Wendy, Marie, Brianna and Amy. May the Lord continue to be with this dear family. Also rejoicing with little Kendra's arrival are her grandparents, Bro. Myron and Sis. Dorothy Schulz and Bro. Phil and Sis. Donna Mogler (Lester, IA).

The betrothal of Bro. Brent Frank (Bro. Dale and Sis. Tina) to Sis. Bethany Schulz (Bro. Roger and Sis. June) was recently announced. May the Lord be near this dear couple as they prepare to walk as one with Him.

We wish the Lord's blessings to Mark (Bro. Ed and Sis. Patty) and Jackie Stoller as they were recently joined in marriage. They will be making their home in the Phoenix area.

We are thankful for each of the visiting ministers that have been with us in the last couple of months. They were Bros. Rod Bajema (Lester, IA), Bill Gerst (Alto, MI), Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT) and Jeff Thames (Washington, IL).

Notes of Thanks:

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends,

We have been humbled by God's mercy and the countless prayers of you, our Brotherhood, on Mitchel's behalf. God has shown us miracles both spiritually and physically.

May the Lord's name be praised, and may He graciously remember each of you for your prayers and other kind deeds.

Humbly,

Bro. Roger and Sis. June Schulz

Dear ones far and near,

I was overwhelmed and richly blessed by the many who remembered me with cards and notes on my 90th birthday. It was so good to hear from each of you. May the Lord continue to bless you for your

many kind thoughts and prayers.

*In Christian love,
Sis. Rose Steiner*

IOWA, PULASKI

Katrina Knobloch

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Julia Kinsinger. She passed away on October 20 at the age of 108. Her son, Roland Kinsinger, and brothers, Bro. Emil Strahm (Bern, KS) and Reuben Strahm (California) survive her.

Bro. Cleo Rinkenberger (Sis. Esther) also laid to rest a brother, Laverne Rinkenberger. It is comforting to know that Laverne made peace with his Lord shortly before he died.

We are thankful to those who shared God's Word with us this month. They were Bro. Wayne Grimm (Sis. Rose, West Bend, IA) and Bro. Brad Funk (Sis. Laura, Garden Grove, IA). We also appreciate all the other visitors we had.

IOWA, WEST BEND

Berniece Banwart

Lori Skoglund

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Ephesians 4:4-6

It was a weekend full of blessings when Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS) traveled here to bring us the Word and to assist in the bringing forth of the testimonies and then the baptism of Nancy Zaugg (Bro. Norm and Sis. Polly) and Jeremy Leman (Bro. Dale and Sis. Lezlie). We are happy to have them as our brother and sister in faith.

Also bringing us the Word was

Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN), who came to spend time with Sis. Lyla's father, Bro. Silas Metzger (Sis. Della), who had just been released from the hospital. Bro. Silas is now residing at the West Bend Care Center. May we keep him and Sis. Della in our prayers at this time of great adjustment in their lives.

Sis. Nima Fehr and Sis. Berniece Banwart have required hospitalization this past month, no doubt making them especially thankful for nurses who kindly and patiently care for others in their times of need.

A daughter, Autumn Joy, was born on November 11 to very happy, first-time parents, Cory and Konni Cantrall. Her grandparents are Don and Mona Haverman and Charles and Mary Ann Cantrall. Cory and Konni live in Waterloo, IA, but assemble with us whenever they can.

Sis. Eunice Koehl, who had recently moved here from Morris, MN, passed away. We extend our sympathy to her daughters and their families here: Sis. Marilyn Banwart (Bro. Vic), Sis. Kathy Fehr (Elder Bro. Wayne), and Becky Banwart.

Bro. Leonard and Sis. Helen Anliker and Mr. and Mrs. Roger Hohensee have announced the engagement of their children, Charles Anliker and Alyse Hohensee. They plan to be married on November 17. We wish them much love and contentment in their life together.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain."

1 Timothy 6:6

May we all strive toward that goal in life... to be godly and content. Those words can be especially good guidelines for the

choices we make at this time of year when we commemorate the birth of Jesus.

JAPAN, TOKYO

Jana Klaus

Greetings of love from beautiful Tokyo! Yes, we have the change of seasons here also, and because the climate is not so harsh, the leaves are at or just approaching their loveliest at the time of this writing. Even in the city, men take care to plant many trees along the streets and God's artwork really beautifies! If you would drive out to our country church in Shioda at this time, you would see breathtaking beauty as you pass through the mountains.

I personally extend a big thank you to Sis. Marie Inoue for writing this report for me the last several months while we were in America, and then since we returned and moved to a new house. I believe that all you readers enjoyed a change in writers as it doesn't happen too often here. Our family also extends a big thank you to the five young brothers from Ohio (mentioned in a previous writing) who were here visiting Bro. Matt Brake just during the time that we moved, and were such wonderful helpers. It truly was the Lord's timing we believe, and praise Him for that. We can testify of His perfect leading in many ways concerning our recent move and buying of a house. It is truly humbling and heart lifting. Among His provisions was that of leading Sis. Terri Gramm (Leo, IN) here for ten weeks to help out with the move. She was a great blessing and we appreciated her willingness to help so much, not only to our family, but to our church family also. At the time of this writing, she is safely back in Indiana and we will miss her!

Bro. Matt Brake (mentioned

above) is still a part of our congregation for a couple more months until his internship finishes. His support, fellowship and calm personality are so much appreciated. He has brought many guests our way, the most recent being his sister, Sis. Julia, and her husband, Bro. Dean Ramsier (Rittman, OH), who were able to worship and have supper with us on Sunday, November 11. It was so refreshing to have a young, energetic couple amongst us who is committed to serving the Lord wholeheartedly.

Sunday, October 21, was an important day as we partook of Holy Communion together in a very sacred service. Elder Bro. Willis joined us from Shioda and spoke on Exodus 12, challenging us, through the Holy Spirit, to examine ourselves if the blood has really been applied to our hearts. This time together is always strengthening for us members and brings us closer together and to our precious Lord.

Our dear Sis. Urushino-san's husband has returned home from the hospital and is recovering there. Sis. Urushino is lovingly and selflessly caring for him. Please pray for her to have strength and for the whole family to be drawn closer to the Lord through this great trial. We know the "Lord works all things together for good for those who love him..." and we believe our dear Sis. Urushino does indeed love Him and has that same faith.

Our prayers are with Sis. Ayako Inoue (Elder Bro. Akito and Sis. Marie) as she has been transferred to a hospital several hours up north in Fukushima-ken for a couple years to further her medical training as a doctor. We trust that the Lord will bless her time up there and pray that she can be a strong witness for Him.

Bro. Akito and Sis. Marie were happy to meet the two daughters of Bro. Gerald and Sis. Joan Rudin (Cissna Park), Julie and Jodi, as they stopped by through the week on their way down south to a global conference with Pacific Institute. They are both students, but also dedicated to helping others through this program. We hope they come again sometime so more of us can meet them!

KANSAS, BERN

Sally Strahm

Lori Baumgartner

"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."

St. Luke 2:11-12

We never seem to tire of the beautiful old story of the humble birth of our Lord. How sad it seems that there was no room in the inn for our Lord as He made His entry on the earth. But sadder yet it is that in many hearts today there is still no room for our risen Lord. The Lord only makes his entry into a heart that is receptive and humble. Hearts that are "full of worldly desires" have no room for Him, just as the crowded inn could not welcome him years ago. May we each examine our hearts and allow room for Christ to come in and dwell.

On October 28 we were thankful to have Bro. Tom Leman (Sis. Marlene, Denver, CO) here to share God's Word with us. May the Lord bless him for his labors on our behalf.

Although none of us desire ill health or injury, we realize that God has a purpose for all that He sends into each of our lives. Several from our congregation spent

time in the hospital this month. They are Bro. Galen Rokey (Sis. Nancy), Kathy Baumgartner, Les Baumgartner, Sis. Linda Esslinger, Sis. Darlene Meyer (Earl), and Sis. Anna Ulmer. We trust that God knows the needs of each individual, and we are thankful for His healing hand.

There are friendships that we cherish

In our daily walk of life...

Hymns of Zion #91

We bid a fond farewell to Sis. Suzanne Hoffman, who has spent a year in our area and is now returning to her home church of Rockville, CT. We pray for God's blessing on her upcoming marriage to Bro. Gardy Moreau (Rockville, CT). May they feel welcome to come back and worship with us anytime.

We wish everyone a blessed Christmas season.

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT **Ruth Bahr**

In October, we finished listening to the Conference tapes. As a body of believers, let us be brought closer together through the exhortations and encouragements.

Always thankful for visiting ministers, we heard from several this month. Elder Bro. Marvin Leman (Sis. Jane, Bradford, IL), Bro. Pat Zaugg (Sis. Julie, West Bend, IA), retired Elder Bro. Ed Lanz (Sis. Joan, Oakville, IA), Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA), and Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS) ministered to us.

On the 16th we had an all-church Thanksgiving dinner at the church and ended the evening with hymn singing. Who can't say they don't have much to be thankful

for?

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

Our hospital patient this month was our dear Sis. Soph Kircher. We pray for God's will and care in her life.

It is always a special blessing to have visiting ministers in our midst on Sunday. We would like to thank Bro. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS) and Elder Bro. Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, KS) for bringing us God's precious Word.

A wedding reception was held for Bro. Rick and Sis. Komari Aberle. Many friends and family attended. We pray for God's blessings as they start a new life together.

What Child is this, who, laid to

rest,

On Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,

While shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the King,

Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:

Haste, haste to bring him laud,

The babe, the Son of God.

The birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is a wondrous time for us to remember the precious gift God sent to us.

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

Thanks to visiting ministering Bros. Arthur Ingold (Rittman, OH) and James Kaeb (Bern, KS) for bringing us God's Word this month.

Bro. Glen and Sis. Lorean

Anliker hosted a farewell dinner and singing for Sis. Clara Anliker (the late retired Elder Bro. Samuel) on Sunday, October 28. Sis. Clara is moving to West Bend, IA, to live with her sister, Sis. Lela Banwart. We certainly will miss her, but we wish her the **Lord's** richest blessings.

We rejoice with ministering Bro. William and Sis. Susan Emch in the recent engagement of their son, ministering Bro. Brandon (Kansas City, MO), to Sis. Maria Klopfenstein (Bro. Perry and Sis. Carol, Gridley, IL). May the Lord be with them as they prepare for this important occasion in their lives.

As the Christmas season nears, let us focus upon its true meaning, rejoicing in the birth of Jesus Christ, and thanking God for the gift of His only Son.

KANSAS, SABETHA **Mary Kay Wenger**

We appreciated Winthrop, MN, hosting our Sunday School group for a blessed weekend.

Bros. Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL), Darrel Stoller, and Edwin Strahm (both of Bern, KS) were with us during the wedding of Sis. Brenda Grimm (Bro. Gerald and Sis. Ruby) and Bro. Mark Nenadov (Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn, Eureka, IL) on October 28. May God bless their home in Eureka. We will miss Sis. Brenda but hope they return often.

Sarah Aberle (Bro. John and Sis. Cornelia) and Thomas Angel, Jr. (Thomas Angel, Sr., Monroe, MI, and Lori Angel, Carleton, MI) have announced their engagement. An April 20, 2002, wedding is planned.

We are happy to announce the birth of a daughter, Ivy Ione, to Bro. Lafe and Debra Bailey on November 2. She is welcomed home

by her brother, Landon, and sister, Grace Isabel, as well as grandparents, Bro. Larry and Sis. Linda Bailey and Harold and Carol Bauer (Fairview, KS).

We had an early Thanksgiving potluck on November 4, during which everyone enjoyed an abundance of food. It was uplifting to sing songs of praise. These moments help us keep our focus on the heavenly goal we are seeking.

We plan to have World Relief sewing in our church basement the first and third Tuesday of every month, beginning in November and continuing until spring.

Sis. Caroline Banwart remains a hospital patient after suffering a slight stroke. May she look to God for her strength in time of need.

We were taught from Christ's sermon on the mount, found in Matthew 5:3-11. If we do what is right, someone will dislike us for it. A politician may say something that fits the situation. That leads to distrust and makes him hypocritical.

As we look toward another year, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (Matthew 6:34)

We pray that those that feel they are "almost Christians" will become true Christians in the next year. There is no "almost heaven".

KANSAS, WICHITA

Emma Miller

On November 3 Bro. Max and Sis. Judy Reimchisel became grandparents to Elizabeth Grace Nelson. She was born to Andrea and Stuart Nelson, and her siblings are Lauren, Rhea Lyn, and Samuel.

We are enjoying an extraordinarily beautiful Indian Summer this year. The colorful foliage has

remained with us much longer than usual. Much as we need moisture, we still need to thank God for His blessings in all things. He is ever present and we need to be aware that our blessings are a result of His goodness rather than something we have earned or caused to happen. Just take the time throughout the day to send prayers of gratitude to Him. Let us keep Thanksgiving Day on the traditional holiday and every other day throughout the year.

Plans are to have the Sunday School Christmas program on the second Sunday of December.

I have a special need, and I hope you will forgive me for using this space for it. As you may know, my husband, Bro. Godfrey Miller, is a patient in a health care facility. One of his few pleasures is to listen to soft music that he is familiar with. If anyone can help me locate some CD's of Zion's Harp songs, I would like to purchase them. We have some on tapes, but they require constant attention whereas I can load his player with five CD's and leave, knowing that he is listening to something desirable. Contact me at 320 South Taylor, El Dorado, KS, 67042.

MEXICO, IXTLAN

Rosario Gonzalez

Our Sis. Luz Brenes de Avina has been blessed to receive another granddaughter in her family who was born October 20, 2001. Her parents are Celia and Gonzalo Avina. We pray that the Lord continue to bless them and guide them so that they can come to know Him and do His will.

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

1 Timothy 2:4

Meet Sis. Lourdes Leon de Sibaja:

After a time of coming to church and listening to the Word of God, I realized that what I had believed before was all vanity. I began to have a desire to know more and have a hope of salvation. I realized that Jesus Christ was the only way since He was the one who came to the world and gave His life for us. I had a desire to repent of my former life, to be a new person, and to serve the Lord. I also enjoyed the fellowship among the

brethren of the church and all this encouraged me to continue in the way of the Lord Jesus Christ. I could see that our three older daughters had found the peace and happiness that all of us need. To see them was a great motivation for me and encouragement for me to come and share in the joy they were experiencing. I used to wonder why they wanted to spend so much time in the church and then when I understood the reason, I too wanted to spend more time there. Now the time in church seems short and I really would like to be there more but need to fulfill my obligations with my family. I am praying that the Lord will help my husband and two younger daughters to also open their hearts to Him some day.

I was baptized on July 9, 2000. God has transformed my life since I left the things of this world and now I want to live a life pleasing to Him and in accordance with His will. Now I have the joy of belonging to the family of Christ. My greatest desire is to share the Word of God with everyone so that they too can experience the changed life that is pleasing to the only true God. I have much joy in my heart and would like for everyone who doesn't know Jesus Christ to draw near to Him and to search out the

Scriptures because only in this way can we know what really is truth. I want to invite everyone to come and share the joy that we feel in His Word. It is a beautiful thing to live in the love of Christ.

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

Matthew 5:16

MICHIGAN, ALTO
Kristen Plattner
Sandy Schutte

“The man who has God for his treasure has all things in One. Many ordinary treasures may be denied him, or if he is allowed to have them, the enjoyment of them will be so tempered that they will never be necessary to his happiness.”

“Jesus is the reason for the season” is a greeting card cliché. Tough to remember when you have ten lists of things to do and people to see during the holidays. We lose the meaning hidden in the lists.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which was called Bethlehem...To be taxed with his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Luke 2:4-7

Let's take time to celebrate joyfully the birth of our Saviour. Take

time to listen to the old great hymns of the birth. Let's let this season be a time of renewal, a time of great thankfulness that God did give His only begotten Son.

Alto hosted the Elder Agenda Committee Meeting this last month and after a day of meetings, we were fortunate that Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan (Sis. Cheryl, Rockville, CT) could stay over and present the Memorandum along with Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen. We are thankful for his time and effort.

Sunday School superintendent, Bro. Nathan Steffen, organized a leaf raking day for the Bible class. The children went to houses of people who were unable to do their fall clean up. Afterwards, the entire church was invited for an evening of fellowship at Bro. Jim and Sis. Julie Blough's home. Thank you to all involved.

Congratulations go out to Bro. Aaron and Sis. Loretta Steffen on the arrival of granddaughter, Liberty Jane, born October 17 to Bro. Matt and Sis. Deanna Steffen. Welcoming Liberty home are brothers and sisters, Myca, Quinn, Olivia, Paige, Ethan and Cherele.

Prayers for healing go out for Bro. Wes Daniels, Denny Koehl, Sis. Margaret Wingeier, Sis. Christine Wingeier, Sis. Donna Oesch and Sis. Loretta Steffen. Each has had their share of health problems this fall.

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

Romans 15:13

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY
Rhonda Knochel
Peggy Jackson

With Thanksgiving come and gone we all begin looking forward

to Christmas. To many of us, the two holidays really meld into one. For Christians, the greatest thing we have to be thankful for is the birth and death of our Saviour. Only our Loving Father could design a plan so tender as to send a baby in lowly estate, to speak to our heartfelt needs. It is our prayer that as you celebrate His birth, that you will take the time to pause and reflect on what it is you're celebrating — a baby, who became a man, who paid the penalty for our sin and curse on the third day! Oh, what a Saviour!

We rejoiced with the births of two new little ones this month. Bill and Lori Bateson and big sister, Mallory, welcomed home Beau Thomas. Pleased grandparents are Bro. Dean and Sis. Connie Pashak. We were also thrilled to hear of the arrival of Jack Christopher. His parents are Brandon and Kaly leBourdais (Okinawa, Japan). Excited grandparents are Norm and Sis. Linda Andrzejewski. It is our prayer that these two little ones continue to bring joy to those around them.

Jesus' first recorded miracle took place at a wedding feast. His very presence at the feast spoke of God's approval on the marital union between two people. Bro. Andy Wieland of Detroit (Bro. Rod and Sis. Evelyn) and Sis. Krista Bauman of Detroit (Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie, Smithville, OH) were united in Holy Matrimony this past month. We pray that their marriage will continue to have God at it's center and that their love for one another will grow.

We were blessed to experience the singing of the Morton mixed choir and the Mortonaires. The singing was wonderful, but what was especially appreciated was that all praise, honor and glory was given to God, for He alone is wor-

thy of our praise. With the Morton choirs came ministering Bro. Jon Zeller. We appreciated his willingness to be used to preach the Gospel to our congregation. May God richly bless all those who put forth the effort to come — it will not soon be forgotten.

Sisters Leah Ramseyer and Helen Meylan (Bro. Henry) both spent time in the hospital this month. We know that God is the Great Physician and so it is to Him that we turn and ask for their healing. It is our sincere hope that both Sisters will be able to come to church again soon.

May God touch your hearts with His love this Christmas season.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

**Sarah Beard
Holly Barton**

We rejoice that another Christian home is being established here in Detroit. Bro. Andy Wieland and Sis. Krista Bauman were united in marriage November 11 in Smithville, OH. May God richly bless them and use their marriage to glorify Him. Parents of Bro. Andy and Sis. Krista are Bro. Rodney and Sis. Evelyn Wieland (Bay City, MI) and Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie Bauman (Smithville, OH).

As one couple establishes their home in our area, another has felt God's call to move. Leland and Katie Haines, for many years an active part of our congregation, plan to relocate to the Elkhart, IN, area. We will greatly miss their support and fellowship, but they will always remain close in our hearts.

Our choir traveled to Princeville, IL, the weekend of November 3-4. We very much appreciated their hospitality and enjoyed the opportunity to share God's love in song.

Bro. Ben Belsley (Sis. Lois) underwent surgery this month. He remains in our prayers. We extend sympathy to Glen (Lisa) Krieger and Bro. Kevin (Sis. Kristine) Krieger on the death of their great-aunt, Eva Kniesel.

We were blessed to have Bro. Bill Gerst (Alto, MI) minister to our residents at Woodhaven this month. Thank you for making the trip, Bro. Bill!

Our society is usually so focused on material things at Christmas. Indeed, it seems the retail season starts earlier every year. With the events of September 11 and since, will this year be different? Even a columnist in one of our local newspapers, who generally seems no friend to Christianity, noted that the decorations and trinkets in the stores seem meaningless and trivial this year. This seems a perfect opportunity to share the true meaning of God's Christmas gift of His Son with those who may now be disillusioned with what this world has to offer.

He's the Saviour of the World
All the world has heard the story
of the little Christ Child's birth;
But too few have felt the meaning
of His mission here on earth.
Some regard it as a story
that is beautiful to hear,
A lovely Christmas custom
that we celebrate each year.
But it is more than just a story
told to make our hearts rejoice,
It's our Father up in heaven
speaking through the Christ
Child's voice,
Telling us of Heavenly Kingdoms

that He has prepared above
For all who trust His mercy
and live only for His love...
And only through the Christ

Child
can man be born again,
For God sent the Baby Jesus
as the Saviour of all men.

—Helen Steiner Rice

MINNESOTA MINNEAPOLIS Diane Stewart

Visiting ministers this past month that we are thankful for are Elder Bros. Joe Stoller (Sis. Emily, Princeville, IL), Leroy Messner (Sis. JoAnn, Winthrop, MN) and Gerry Hertzell (Sis. Ellen, Sabetha, KS).

Our prayers continue for Sis. Rachel Kent as she has undergone a bone marrow transplant. In prayer, we also want to uphold each family member.

Wishing each of you a very blessed holiday season!

MINNESOTA, MORRIS Cheryl Messner Dianne Kellenberger

We're so thankful that Rustin Schmidgall has found grace unto repentance. Rustin is the son of Bro. Mike and Sis. Diane Schmidgall. May God help him to build a firm foundation.

We're so thankful to Bro. Myron Knobloch (Lester, IA) for sharing God's divine teachings with us this past month.

On November 11, we witnessed the marriage vows of Sis. Savannah Gramm (Bro. Tim and Sis. Gwen) and Bro. Kurt Wulf (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Judy). May God bless their union of hearts and ever be with them.

Enjoying a precious baby girl in their home are Lane and Elizabeth Koehl. Kate Lee was born October 23. Bridget is happy to have a little sister to play with. Grandparents are John and Dorothy Plummer of

Martinez, CA, and Bro. Ken and Sis. Karen Koehl.

We extend our condolences to the family of our dear Sis. Eunice Koehl who passed from this life on October 23. She is survived by three sons, Bro. Jacob (Sis. Mary), Bro. Doug, and Bro. Arnold (Sis. Sharon), all from our congregation; four daughters, Sis. Marilyn (Bro. Victor) Banwart, Rebecca Banwart, and Sis. Kathy (Elder Bro. Wayne) Fehr, all of West Bend, IA, and Charlotte (Ward) Wery of Tucson, AZ; three sisters, Sis. Ruth Sinn (Fort Scott, KS), Sis. Esther Koehl and Sis. Dorothy (Bro. Wayne) Schmidgall, both of Morris.

Sis. Mabel Schmidgall was recently hospitalized. We pray God in His tender mercy will ease her pain and suffering.

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:10-11

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

**Carol Ann Messner
Marilyn Messner**

Christmas

What can I give Him poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man, I would do my part;

Yet what can I give Him?

Give Him my heart.

God opened His heart to the world when Jesus was born.

Visiting ministers welcomed this past month were Elder Bro.

Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL), and Bro. Duane Rocke (Sis. Bonnie, Minneapolis, MN). Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Sis. Sandy, Morris, MN) was also here to assist Elder Bro. LeRoy Messner in the reading of the Memorandum. We are thankful these brothers and their families are willing to lend themselves to help in the Lord's work.

There is joy in Heaven when a seeking soul repents, turns his back on the world and now professes peace with God and man. We rejoice with Nick Schmidt and his parents, Bro. Verl and Sis. Jamie.

Hospital patients this past month were Bro. Paul Messner (Sis. Jan) and Shirley Demm (Lowell). We pray for God's healing touch in their lives.

A Prayer For the New Year

Grant me the strength from day to day

to bear what burdens come my way.

Grant me throughout this bright New Year

More to endure and less to fear.

Help me to live that I may be From spite and petty malice free.

Let me not bitterly complain
When cherished hopes of mine prove vain,

Or spoil with deeds of hate and rage

Some fair tomorrow's spotless page.

Lord, as the days shall come and go

In courage let me stronger grow.

Let me with patience stand and wait,

A friend to all who find my gate,
Keep me from envy and from scorn;

As shines the sun with every morn

On great and low, so let me give My love to all who round me live.

Lord, as the New Year dawns to-day

Help me to put my faults away.

Let me be big in little things;
Grant me the joy which friendship brings.

Keep me from selfishness and spite;

Let me be wise in what is right.

A happy New Year! Grant that I May bring no tear to any eye.

When this New Year in time shall end

Let it be said I've played the friend,

Have lived and loved and labored here,

And made of it a happy year.

Note of Thanks:

The family of Sis. Florence Messner wishes to thank everyone for their expressions of sympathy in her passing.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY Garry and Marty Rokey

Even with the world in turmoil and the forces of evil seemingly disrupting our lives, we can see the Holy Spirit at work. Two of our friends of the Truth have expressed their desire to seek the Lord and His spiritual good. May we encourage and pray for Venetta Banwart (Bro. Alfred and Sis. Carolyn, Lamar, MO) and Tom Fehr (Bro. Bob and Sis. Barb, Philadelphia, PA). May we thank our Heavenly Father that the day of grace is still at hand.

On October 26, the Kansas City singles group held their organization meeting at Elder Bro. Don and Sis. Eileen Braker's home. Elected correspondent was Bro. Brandon

Emch; secretary, Sis. Jamie Marti; and treasurer, Bro. Neil Kellenberger. May God's blessings be upon our wonderful group of single brothers and sisters.

We certainly appreciated visiting ministering Bro. Galen Rokey (Sis. Nancy, Bern, KS) sharing God's Word with us on November 11. May God bless Bro. Galen and his family for their service in the Lord.

In recent times it seems that every month we have rejoiced in an engagement. Once again, on November 4, our hearts were gladdened when we heard of the engagement of our ministering Bro. Brandon Emch (Bro. Bill and Sis. Susan, Lamont-Gridley, KS) and Sis. Maria Klopfenstein (Bro. Perry and Sis. Carol, Gridley, IL). May God bless and guide this young couple as they prepare to walk the rest of their pilgrim journey together.

*Praise and Thanks
For God's Blessings*

Lord God, we honor Thee
and praise Thy mild compassion,
That Thou so graciously
dost hear our supplication!
Thy love is truly great;
Thy mercies are untold;
Thou givest food and drink
for Spirit, flesh and soul.

We sing our heartfelt thanks,
Thy truth and love adoring.
For guidance and for light
Thy Spirit we're imploring.
Our hearts we offer Thee
for life and every day,
that with Thy grace we tread
the straight and narrow way.

Zion's Harp #13

MISSOURI, LAMAR

**Kristen Leman
Kristi Huber**

Jack Thiebaud (Betty) spent some time in the hospital this past month. We are thankful he is able to be at home again.

On October 23, Wyatt Luke arrived to bless the home of Bro. Jerry and Sis. Carol Braker. Also welcoming him home are his siblings, Sis. Mindy, Darin, Evan, and Jesse, and his grandparents, Bro. Raymond and Sis. LuEtta Braker and Bro. Leroy and Sis. Clara Huber (Eureka, IL).

Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City, MO) and his family visited our congregation recently. We appreciated his willingness to minister God's Word to us.

The weekend of November 3 we were privileged to have Elder Bro. Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, KS) with us to assist in reading the Memorandum on Saturday evening. He again ministered to us on Sunday. May God bless these brothers for their labors.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Betsy Schrenk

When you set out in your car for a destination, you cannot just make a good start by getting on the right road, taking your hands off of the wheel, gawk around, and expect to drive safely. You must remain alert, make steering corrections, and avoid potholes for the entire trip.

A ministering brother recently made this analogy to our spiritual life. We must daily focus on our destination of Heaven, not go off to the right or to the left, and not leave the straight and narrow for the broad way that leads to destruction. We are on a journey, not a coaster ride, and our travel requires diligence.

Bro. Gary Anliker (Sis. Edie,

Elgin, IL) and Bro. Jim Rinkenberger (Sis. Jean, Bluffton, IN) were our visiting ministers this past month. We were blessed by their messages and loving fellowship.

At this Christmas season, we ponder God's unsearchable love as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We have indeed been blessed beyond measure.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Peg Haerr

A harvest celebration was held October 30 at Bro. Shon and Sis. Peg Haerr's home. After a hayrack ride in the beautiful, fresh fall air, the kids were all given a sack of treats to take home!

Nikki Haerr (Bro. Norm and Sis. Sally) is turning her back on sin and this world. We pray for abundant grace to be showered upon her and that spiritual fruit might come forth.

November 17-18 was a blessed weekend as we were privileged to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of Sis. Angie Sutter (Bro. Steve and Sis. Deb). Many visitors were here to share in this special event, and we especially want to thank Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Oakville, IA) for lending his services.

Bro. Fred Knapp (Sis. Marjorie, Congerville, IL) also visited Taylor this month and spoke God's precious Word to us.

Sis. Loida Hodel is thankful for another great-grandson. Joshua Matthew Ackerman was welcomed into this world on November 5 by Bro. Matthew and Sis. Melissa and big brother Jacob (Indianapolis, IN). His grandparents are Bro. Mike and Sis. Cheryl Stratton. Happy grandparents of Isabelle Marie are Dean and Gaye Redd. She was born October 15 to Josh and Julie. Great-grandparents are

Gene and Irene Riney. We pray for God's blessings upon these families.

Sis. Ruthie Hoerr (Bro. Louis) and Chad Messner (Lisa) were our hospital patients and are recuperating at home.

**NEW YORK
CROGHAN-NAUMBURG
Hope Graves**

We were thankful for the presence of Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand and his family (Philadelphia, PA) on the weekend of October 21. A potluck and singing was held on Saturday evening, and we wish him the Lord's richest blessings for ministering unto us from God's Word.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

Psalm 100

Funeral services were held for Elizabeth Stockburger on October 26, Everett Farney on October 30, and Sis. Emma Herzig on November 15. Elizabeth passed from this life on October 24 at the age of 89, Everett on October 28 at the age of 88 and Sis. Emma on November 11 at the age of 90. Sis. Emma was from Rockville, CT, where she has resided for the past several years. She is survived by a sister, Sis. Anna Thompson (Ellington, CT), and brothers, Henry (CT) and Walter Limberger (NH). Ministering

Bro. Everett Gerber and others from Rockville, CT, were present at her funeral. We wish these families God's comfort in their losses.

Our prayers continue to go out to Sis. Berdina Widrick who was hospitalized this past month and is now a resident of the extended care facility. Sis. Anna Mellnitz also underwent surgery this month and is now home recovering. Linda Hirsche (Martin) was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia, and we pray that the Lord will grant her a speedy recovery as well.

As the holiday season approaches, it is our prayer that we will always be mindful of the reasons we celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas. May parents continue to instill in their children the love which God manifested in the sending of His only begotten Son to this lowly earth for the sins of mankind.

The love of God is greater far
Than any tongue can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell.
The guilty pair, bowed down
with care,
God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.
Oh, love of God, how rich and
pure!

How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure—
The saints and angels' song.

Hymns of Zion #289

**OHIO, AKRON
Joyce Gasser**

We appreciated visiting Elder Bro. John Klotzle (Sis. Lois, Altedena, CA) for a long weekend of October 26-30 and Bro. John's inspiring messages. Also, we enjoyed Bro. Jerry Bauman and Bro. Mark Steiner. We thank these

brothers for their labors.

Bro. Eric and Sis. Erika Graf's young daughter, Annaliese, was admitted to Children's Hospital. Prayers are for good results for her and a speedy recovery.

We are looking forward to having the Regional Elder Meeting at our church on Saturday, November 17. We welcome all our Elder brothers, who will be attending and wish them the Lord's wisdom and blessing in their labors on behalf of our Churches.

**OHIO, COLUMBUS
Anita Steiner**

On November 2 we had a World Relief night. We enjoyed a night of fellowship with pizza after our work was accomplished.

This past month we were blessed by two visiting ministers: Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer (Peoria, IL) and Bro. Gary Tonner (Bluffton, IN). May God bless them for their efforts.

We are thankful for God's protection over Bro. Troy Baltic, a student at the Ohio State University, whose apartment burned down one night this past month and caused the death of his neighbor. Our prayers are with him.

**OHIO, JUNCTION
Cindy Schlatter**

We are thankful to have Sis. Cheryl Manz (Bro. Don and Sis. Connie) and Sis. Caroline Manz (Bro. Ben) back in church with us. Both spent time in the hospital this past month. May God continue to be with both of you and grant healing to your bodies as only He can.

Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forest, IL) recently spent a weekend in our midst to aid our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter in the reading and exhortation of the Memorandum.

It is so encouraging to hear of God's direction through our dear brothers. I pray that we can all see it as their love to help us toward the kingdom of God.

OHIO, LATTY
Kathy Sinn
Heidi Hackenjoss

During the month we have enjoyed the presence of visitors to worship with our congregation. We thank Bro. Doug Harmon (Toledo, OH), Bro. Jerry Bauman (Rittman, OH), Bro. Paul Gasser (Akron, OH), Bro. Bill Waibel (Bay City, MI), and Bro. Ron Kipfer (Bluffton, IN) for ministering the Word to us during their recent visit. May God bless them now and much more in eternity.

Bro. Glen Stoller (Sis. Edie) fell and fractured his hip. Bro. Ralph Stoller (Sis. Tootie) submitted to surgery during the past month. Our prayers are with them and their families. We look forward to again having them among us as we worship. May God's presence be felt as their bodies heal.

Bro. George and Sis. Sharon Keysor welcome two grandsons into their family. Alex David was born to David and Elaine Keysor. Kaleb Matthew was born to Chad and Jennifer Keysor. Our prayers are with them as they raise their sons in the fear of God. On Saturday, November 10, the Latty congregation hosted the Eastern World Relief Review meeting. We thank all those who contributed to the weekend. May God richly bless each one. We also express appreciation to those who attended. As the ideas and thoughts that were shared are pondered and followed through, may we thank God for the opportunity to serve Him in such a manner.

On Saturday, November 3, we met for the reading of the Memo-

randum of the Conference conclusions. We are grateful that the Lord opened the way for Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Francesville, IN) to assist our Elder Bro. Ray Sinn in this endeavor.

Bro. Aaron and Sis. Jennifer welcome home another precious soul. Savannah Brooke is also gladly received by her siblings, Shayla and Simeon. Her grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Deb Wenninger and Dave and Judy Shepherd.

As the holiday season approaches, let us give earnest care to retain the true meaning of this season.

OHIO, MANSFIELD
John and Marci Pfeiffer

Elder Bro. Art Bahler (Fairbury, IL) assisted our Elder Bro. Mark Masters in the reading of the Memorandum on Saturday, October 27. Bro. Art also ministered unto us on Sunday. Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (San Diego, CA) was also one of God's messengers this past month. We are very thankful for Elders that encourage, warn, and watch over us.

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Ella Erhart who was laid to rest. May God be with them during this time of sorrow.

Bro. Henry and Sis. Diane Pfeiffer were blessed on October 19 with the arrival of a precious daughter, Autumn Eilene. Big brothers are Austin and Ezekiel. Grandparents are Bro. John and Sis. Zuzanna Pfeiffer and Bro. Bill and Sis. Becky Sauder (Columbus, OH).

Matt Domka (Bro. Dan and Sis. Mary Ann) has found peace with God and man. Our prayers are with our converts that it would be well with their souls.

Recent hospital patients have been Sis. Helen Bricker (Bro. Rich-

ard) and Nehemiah Garunovic (Bob and Maryann). Nehemiah is the grandson of Bro. Mike and Sis. Jelena Garunovic. Our prayers are with them.

We thank the Sunday School teachers and many others for all their efforts during our annual Fall Outing at the Richland Rural Life Center. It was a wonderful time of fellowship for the children and adults.

Bro. Nathan, Sis. Sheila, Nathan Jr., Heidi, and Douglas Sabo have moved to Sarasota, FL. We wish them the Lord's blessings as they relocate and always.

On November 4, the engagement of Bro. Tom Hill and Sis. Elaine Baltic (Lexington, KY) was announced to our congregation. We rejoice with them and wish them God's guidance as they make future plans together. The parents of this couple are Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty Baltic and Bro. Chip and Sis. Sieda Hill.

*The Spiritual
 Railway to Heaven*

The road to heav'n by Christ was made,
 With heav'nly truth the rails were laid,
 From earth to heav'n the line extends,
 To life eternal, where it ends.
 Repentance is the station then,
 Where passengers are taken in,
 No fee for them, is there to pay,
 For Jesus is Himself the way.
 The Bible is the engineer,
 It points the way to heav'n, so clear,
 Thro' tunnels dark and dreary here,
 It does the way to glory steer.
 God's love the fire, His truth the steam,
 Which drives the engine and the train,
 And all who would to glory ride,

Must come to Christ, in Him
abide.
Come, then, poor sinner, nows
the time,
At any station on the line,
If you'll repent and turn from
sin,
The train will stop and take you
in,
And land you on that peaceful
shore,
Where sorrows will be o'er,
Eternal life will there be giv'n,
To all who are the heirs of
Heav'n.

—author unknown

OHIO, RITTMAN
Beth Beery
Cheryl Hartzler

Now thank we all our God
With hearts and hands and
voices,
Who wondrous things has done,
In Whom the world rejoices,
Who from our mother's arms
Has blest us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

Zion's Harp #236

This time of the year we are re-
minded of being thankful. What a
blessing it is to reflect on all the
reasons we have to be thankful.
God has many ways of blessing us
here in this life.

We rejoice with Bro. Matt and
Sis. Darlene Csapo in the birth of
their baby girl, Aubrey Joy. She
was born on October 24. Thankful
grandparents are Frank and Rose-
mary Csapo and Bro. Virgil and
Sis. Lois Gasser.

"For thou, Lord, hast made me
glad through thy work: I will tri-
umph in the works of thy hands."

Psalms 92:4

What a blessing in the works of
God's hands as He calls souls to re-
pentance. We are thankful that
John Kries (Sheila) has answered
that call and begun his walk with
the Lord.

We appreciate the many visit-
ing ministers that have preached
God's Word to us in this past
month. They have been Bro. Paul
Gasser and Elder Bro. Dave Graf
(both of Akron, OH), Elder Bro.
Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN),
Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH),
Bro. Lynn Fiechter (Bluffton, IN),
Bro. Steve Martin (Eureka, IL),
and Bro. Wallace Ramsier
(Mansfield, OH). May the Lord
bless these brothers for their la-
bors of love.

We are thankful also when God
directs two souls together to be-
come husband and wife. We wish
God's blessings to Bro. Tom Hill
(Bro. Chip and Sis. Sieda,
Mansfield, OH) and Sis. Elaine
Baltic (Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty,
Lexington, KY) as they have been
announced for marriage.

In our lives, there are times of
joy, but there are also times of sor-
row and concerns. How thankful
we can be to have the faith to be-
lieve that the Lord does stand by us
in any situation. If we only trust in
Him we can have the assurance
that He will provide for us. Sis.
Norene Miller (Bro. Mike) and
Travis Mills (Dean and Heidi) have
been hospitalized, and we pray for
God's healing on their behalf.

OHIO, SARDIS
Alice Ramsier

Visiting ministers this past
month have been Elder Bro. Merle
Hartzler (Rittman, OH), Bro.
Jerry Bauman (Rittman, OH) and
Bro. Lenard Meyer (Chicago, IL).
We are thankful that our minister-
ing brothers are willing to travel.

May they each know God's bless-
ings for serving us.

There are loved ones among us
needing our extra prayers. Sis. Ha-
zel Riggenbach fell and spent some
time in the hospital. She is now at a
rehabilitation center in
Parkersburg, WV, and is making
good progress in her recovery. Sis.
Janet Indermuhle (Bro. Allen)
also spent some time in the hospi-
tal. We are glad Sis. Janet is back
home.

In critical condition is our
friend, Robert Stalder (Clara). Bob
is at the Morgantown, WV, hospi-
tal suffering injuries due to an au-
tomobile accident. May God
comfort each of these dear ones
and their families as only He is
able.

Feeling loss, yet able to be com-
forted because of God's promises,
is Sis. Karen Indermuhle (Bro.
Robert) in the passing of her aunt,
Monell Stoll (Huntington, WV).

"...seek and ye shall find..."
Matthew 7:7

Able to have announced that
she has peace from God in her
heart is our young friend, Kristy
Miller (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Do-
ris). We rejoice with Kristy and
pray God's continued leading in
her life.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE
Ruth Gasser
Edith Miller

O dwell within me, Lord, I pray!
I'll strive to live for Thee each
day.

O, may my faith in Thee be true;
Unto Thy image me renew!

Zion's Harp #123 vs.7

This would certainly be the de-
sire of Bro. Mike and Sis. Robin

Miller (daughter of Bro. Ron and Sis. Ruth Steiner, Rittman, OH), as they brought forth their testimony and were baptized the weekend of November 3-4. We welcome them into the brotherhood and wish them God's rich blessings as they strive to live that overcoming life. Elder Bro. Merle Hartzler (Rittman, OH) assisted our Elder Bro. Andy with this important work. Also visiting us that day was Bro. Ron Steiner (Rittman, OH). May the Lord bless the efforts of all His servants.

On November 11, Bro. Andy Wieland (Detroit, MI) and Sis. Krista Bauman (Detroit, MI) were joined in Holy Matrimony. Parents of this couple are Bro. Rod and Sis. Evelyn Wieland (Bay City, MI) and Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie Bauman (Smithville, OH). We trust God will be the center of their home, which they have now established in Detroit. Many visitors were present with us that day, among whom were Elder Bro. Mark Bahr, Bros. Randy Gasser (both of Detroit, MI), Neil Ramseyer, James Ramseyer (both of Bay City, MI) Dan Stoller (Remington, IN), and Elder Bro. Dave Graf (Akron, OH). We thank each one for lending themselves in God's service.

The engagement of Bro. Dana Nieman (Bro. Denny and Sis. Kay) to Sis. Lea Stoller (Bro. Dan and Sis. Debra, Remington, IN) was recently made known. May they feel the Lord's direction as they make plans for their upcoming wedding and lifelong marriage.

Bro. Herbert Bauman (Sis. Berniece) recently spent some time in the hospital. We're thankful he is feeling better again.

OHIO, TOLEDO

**Rebecca Beard
Edie Fetter**

We enjoy the guests who come to visit college students in our area and gather to worship with us. Bro. Art Ingold (Rittman, OH) was among recent guests to our congregation. We are thankful for his willing service in the ministry.

"For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord;"

Jeremiah 30:17

We are thankful that Dorothy Stevens (Bob) is recovering from knee surgery. We wish her continued strength each day as she heals.

OREGON, PORTLAND

Louisa Gallup

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

Psalms 51:10

On November 11 we had the opportunity to partake of Holy Communion. Elder Bros. Ron Schambach (Sis. Nancy, Elgin, IL) and Art Metz (Sis. Betty, Silverton, OR) led the Communion Service for us, and we sincerely appreciate their efforts. We also thank them for their sermons that day. It was a blessing to have them and their dear wives spend that Sunday with us.

We thank all visitors who came to Portland this past month, especially Bros. Todd Zollinger (Sis. Michele) and Ed Knecht (Sis. Judie), both of Silverton, OR. Thank you for ministering unto us and for your unfailing support.

Since it is that time of year again, we wish everyone a blessed Christmas season.

OREGON, SILVERTON

Rosa Lee Kuenzi

It is so encouraging to see that God is still sending His abundant grace and mercy in these latter times to seeking souls. There have been a goodly number of converts in the past months — from teenagers to those in their nineties; some who were carried into church in their mother's arms many years ago and some who are very thankful to have found this way in recent years. Seems we used to hear the older brothers or sisters say that hopefully more will come "while the waters are stirred".

We rejoiced to hear that Cathy Stadel (Chad) has found that wonderful peace that she has been seeking in her sincere repentance. May she feel our Lord's nearness and strength as she awaits her opportunity to bring her testimony before the brethren. She will certainly be in our prayers.

Also bringing great joy to the church, their families and each other was the recent baptism of Bro. Elmer and Sis. Verna Bolliger. Bro. Elmer and Sis. Verna appreciate the many prayers in their behalf, through the years and even now as they endure the frailty of high age. Even this month Sis. Verna fell and broke her hip and was hospitalized for a time. Such is this life where "joy here alternates with woe" but now they hold dear a lively hope for that realm above where there will be no pain, no tears and they will be ever with the Lord.

Our thanks to Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) for his willingness to stand and proclaim the Holy Word to the Silverton church on a Wednesday evening. Bro. Ron and Sis. Nancy were here for Holy Communion at the Portland church on the previous Sunday.

**PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA**

**Nathan and
MaryElizabeth Gasser**

This month we rejoiced as we welcomed healthy baby Cole Kenneth Beyer to our congregation! We rejoice with his parents, Bro. Ken and Sis. Amy, and wish them God's guidance and richest blessings throughout his life. He joins big sister, Sophie Claire, and grandparents, Bro. Martin and Sis. Karen Beyer (Sabetha, KS) and Elder Bro. Mark and Sis. Beverly Bahr (Detroit, MI).

We were blessed to have many visitors this month, including Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) who shared God's Word with us, and retired Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Morton, IL) who encouraged us in uncertain times to leave our cares with the Lord and not to worry, but rather to trust in Him and His care.

TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE

Mike and Monica Fritz

We were privileged, as a church, to partake of Holy Communion together, along with our Elder Bro. Phil Stettner, on October 31.

The Lord has provided for our needs so bountifully, especially our spiritual needs as we have been encouraged in our Christian walk by our visiting ministers in this past month: Bros. Jaye Rinckenberger (Sis. Peggy, Goodfield, IL), Jeff Streitmatter (Sis. Lynne, Sarasota, FL) and Bill Brake (Sis. Miriam, Sardis, OH). Also, we have been encouraged by the fellowship of brothers and sisters visiting us from Athens, AL; Bradford, Chicago, Goodfield, Gridley, Princeville, and Roanoke, IL; Lester, IA; Latty, and Sardis, OH; and Philadelphia, PA.

If you are traveling in or through the Nashville area, please

plan to worship with us. We will not be having services on 12/23 and 12/30, but then as we begin the new year, the following churches are scheduled for services: Washington, IL (1/6), Rockville, CT (1/13), Bluffton North (1/20), Smithville, OH (1/27). We also usually meet on Wednesday evenings for a song service. If you are planning to worship with us, please call ahead to confirm our schedule, especially during the holiday season. Contacts are Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 662-2946; Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz (615) 952-9933; and Bro. Don and Sis. Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928.

**TEXAS, SAN MARCOS
Dale and Amy Ringger**

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

Psalm 89:15

What is that joyful sound? We read this verse at home some years ago and Dad asked the children that question. One of the children thought it might be the sound of the trumpet when Jesus comes back.

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" Many of our Christmas hymns express the joy at Christ's first coming. Will we know that trumpet sound as joyful when Christ returns? If we do, we shall be a blessed people, walking in the light of the Lord's countenance looking for His return.

We have appreciated the visits of these ministers: Bros. Alan Schambach (Sis. Sara, Remington, IN), Todd Zollinger (Sis. Michelle, Silverton, OR), Shawn Metzger (Philadelphia, PA) and Paul Messner (Sis. Jan, Winthrop, MN). We were blessed with visitors from

Indianapolis, Fairbury, Phoenix and West Bend.

The schedule for the beginning of the year 2002 is the following: January 6 (Congerville, IL); January 13 (Leo, IN); January 20 (Goodfield, IL) and January 27 (Cissna Park, IL).

We continue to meet for services 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 southwest side access road.

We extend a welcome for anyone who may be in the area to worship with us. Also, let us know if you would be available for fellowship on Saturday or Sunday evening or during the week. 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; Dale Kaisner (512) 255-7583; Bro. David and Sis. Shella Brummitt (512) 360-3379; Sis. Dorothy Martin (210) 658-1968; and Bro. Dale and Sis. Amy Ringger (512) 933-1380.

**TEXAS, ZAPATA
Joyce Nohl**

As we were traveling to Illinois this past month, we were delighted to view the season of fall in action. The view was, to say the least, picturesque. Our six - year - old daughter looked out the window and with a deep sigh of delight exclaimed, "It is beautiful, it's just beautiful!" We haven't seen fall in color for several years and this was Erika's first time to see it. I had forgotten how beautiful God's handiwork really is. When I saw it every day, I took it for granted and it was just something that happened. Is this what happens in our

spiritual life? Do we as Christians sometimes forget how delightful it was as the heavy load of sin was lifted and that peace that passeth all understanding came into our hearts? Maybe now that the holidays are upon us, we could reflect back for a moment and remember the beauty and delight of God's peace and blessings He has given each of us; during the time we called out to Him in sorrow and distress and as we now journey towards our heavenly home.

God's plan fulfilled as He had willed,
Then came the Christ on earth.
The star so bright in deepest night
Foretold His blessed birth.
The angels' throng with joyous song
Appeared to shepherds meek
The angels' word the shepherds heard
Then went they forth to seek.

The blessed Child so meek and mild
At Bethlehem they found,
In manger low where cattle low
And sheep did gather round.
In swaddling clothes there to repose
And lying on the hay
What glorious sight in that dark night
Where Christ the Saviour lay!

From lands afar led by the star
The wise men came to see

The Saviour King rich gifts they bring
For Christ's nativity,
This story sweet I would repeat
And praise Him with my voice.
For he who finds Christ's peace of mind
He cannot but rejoice.

Hymns of Zion #35

We wish each one a blessed and joyous Christmas season.

The following article was submitted by Sis. Jennifer Kellenberger:

"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

Lamentations 3:22-23

That is a promise that has become very real to me during my first year down here working with ICCD in Rio Bravo, Mexico. I can hardly believe that it has already been one year. During this past year I have learned just how faithful our Heavenly Father is. What an awesome Lord we serve.

The past two months down here in Rio Bravo have been busy ones. Although we have not had any work teams come down for a couple of months now, we never seem to run out of things to do. Our Mexican laborers keep busy with the construction of the school and our deaf students continue to advance in their studies. It is so exciting to

watch the deaf children sign their names for the first time. God never ceases to remind us of why we are here: so the deaf may know Christ. What a blessing to think the first name they will hear will be the name of Jesus.

God has had many lessons for all of the staff here in Rio Bravo, myself included. We have been learning a great deal about what it means to be a team and to be united. As our team continues to expand, we all have to adjust to the changes and the new personalities. Speaking of our expanding team, Corry Moore will be joining us in December or January. Corry graduated in May from the University of Tennessee with a Masters in Deaf Education. She will become our head teacher and we are looking forward to her arrival. We believe that with God's help and the skills she has acquired that she will be able to take our students to the next level. That is an encouraging thought for all of us: one step closer to understanding language means one step closer to learning more fully who Jesus is.

As the holiday season approaches, we wish all of you a blessed time with family and friends and may Christ's grace abound more fully to each of you in the upcoming year. We ask that you continue to pray for the ministry of ICCD and seek God's will as to how you may become more directly involved. Feel free to visit our web page at iccd.net.



Sermon continued from page 2

if we think about who is missing in that link, but who we know who is not saved, the person who is not there.

Then we are reminded about the true fact. Family or not, whether we knew them in the young group or not, or whoever they are, the real thing we miss in someone who is not saved, is that they are not saved. They are not one with us. We don't have a promise of eternity with them and that we don't sense our common bond — not a completed common bond — even now, do we? We long to reach out and touch in a spiritual and emotional way. Sometimes even in the physical life and sometimes we want to do it that way because we want to take someone and say, "Here, let me hold your hand and I'll show you where we need to go." Surely, it is something that we share.

I don't want that in any way to be heard in this message that it is missing in who we are. I don't think it is missing; I think we just want to be sure we focus on it and that we understand the immensity of the gift that we have. The joy of being able to say when we greet one another, we know what that is about, that it can become a formality of something that we practiced from the time we were young. When we were first converted, when we saw our parents do it, what we say when we greet someone as a brother or sister, what do we mean by that? When we think about it, do we just mean that we greet them because they are a member in the Apostolic Christian Church? Or, do you greet them and call them that because they recognize God as their Father like you do and then that establishes them as a sibling? Do you recognize that and are we thankful for it that we share the same Father?

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort," II Corinthians 1:3. These next two verses, I have always felt a little bit like they were a tongue-twister to me. But when we undo that and think about what he is saying, and think about what our responsibility is, it is God! 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," II

Corinthians 1:4. I want to stop there for just a moment. When you go through a hard time (even as we read this morning in the Psalm when David went through those), and you feel God's hand on you and stuff starts to come together, even if there are not any answers, but then you feel the comfort of God around you.

Why do you think God is doing that? What is he saying here? We have a tendency (maybe I should owe it as I have a tendency) but I think it is a pretty common trait of human nature. It is a tendency to feel like God is doing it to help us feel better. That is what it feels like, isn't it? He is doing it to help us feel better.

But what does he say here? He said, "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble," II Corinthians 1:4. Maybe this is just to think about, and maybe it would take a little study, but I wonder if there is any gift that God gives us which isn't for the purpose of sharing it. I can't think that fast up here, but maybe some of you can. I wonder if there is any gift God gives us that He doesn't give us so we can share it, which doesn't mean it is not for us, too. But when we were given the gift of salvation, do you believe that any person is given the gift of forgiveness and salvation to keep it? Do you think there is any one of us that when we repented and God forgave us and we knew it, do you think there is any one of us that was given that without a responsibility to then give it to someone else?

Do you think there is any one of us that feel the realness of God's love, that wasn't given that love specifically to give it to someone else? There is an old phrase. I wish I could think who said it but it was some old, old church father who said this phrase (maybe some of you know it), A bell isn't a bell until you ring it, and love is not love until you give it away. You know what you feel inside you isn't really happening until you share it with someone else. In the same way, it is not literally true but there is no purpose to a bell until you ring it. God's love in your heart is for you, but the realness is for you to share

it with someone else.

So he said that God comforted us so that you can comfort someone else in need. Do you do that? If the purpose of these gifts is to share them, then the question for us is not do you have the gifts, but do you share them? In some way tell or let it be seen that the shed blood of Christ rests upon you. Do you in some way comfort another person? We are different and we don't expect everyone to act like everyone else and comfort is not only given by a big warm hug or some warm wonderful thing to say to them. There are other ways to do it, but do you see when someone is hurting? Do you remember thinking, "I was hurting, too, and God reached out and touched me? So I should reach out and touch that person some way."

We can be awfully intimidated about doing that in fearful of responses but when you think about it, do you remember how hungry other people are to be comforted? You did and they sent you a card. It did not make any difference what was on the card. In fact, in some ways it mattered more what was on the return label, who it was from. Isn't that really what mattered—that someone you knew cared enough to send it to you? If I asked you right now to remember what people said to you in those cards, my guess is very few of you could remember what was said. My guess is you could remember who sent it.

Let's remember to do those things and to notice what Paul teaches in the New Testament. He teaches clearly that we have different gifts, but there are some things we are all responsible for. Some things we can't say are just the gifts of others and this is one. We cannot say it is the gift of others to witness. It may be the gift of others to preach or to teach or to heal, but it is not the gift of others to witness. It is the gift of all to witness. I would say from what Paul shared here, it is not the gift of others to comfort either. It is the gift of all to comfort others which isn't any trouble in the same way that we are comforted of God.

"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." II Cor. 1:5. Let's just stop there for a moment. What is it

that gets in the way for us reaching out to other people? If I were to ask that question again for all of us, some of you would say, "I'm just not good at it." Some of you would say, "I'm afraid of what I am going to say." Some of you would say, "Well, I don't know how and I don't know what to do."

But how many of us, if we were honest, would say, "It is because we are focused on other things?" How many of us know that you should have said something, stopped and talked to somebody, sent something but you were on your way to somewhere else or doing something? How many of you do not notice other people who are hurting because you are so wrapped up in your own responsibilities?

How many of you are in the busyness of whatever? Let's just go down to family for a minute. How many of us as parents and as spouses don't notice when our spouse or our kids need some comforting because we are so focused on getting the crops out of the field or getting to work or getting home from work or bringing problems home from work or making phone calls or not work at all? Sometimes we don't notice people around us who need comforting because we are so caught up in the fun we are ready to have or the trip we are off to take or the people we want to go with or the good times we are going to have. What really stands in the way of us reaching out to other people? Is it really a lack of confidence? Or, is it fairly often because we are so busy we don't practice noticing?

I wonder if it is enough to just wait and see if something comes our way or if we ought to be specifically focused on looking for needs. I wonder if we should think specifically about who is around us and look for it.

"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is steadfast; knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the con-

solation." Paul goes on and talks about his own struggles a little. "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." 2 Corinthians 1:5-9.

I don't know specifically what Paul is thinking of here, but when I read that, how many of us remember that we have the sentence of death upon us? Somebody asked someone at work, what is the one condition that is always fatal? It is life. Did you remember that ...that you are going to die from living? Of course we remember it but we lose focus of that, don't we? Now we are talking of physical death. The sentence of death rests upon every one of us and sometimes we become so caught up in needing to have good health or having our resources built up or whatever is coming or being concerned about problems that are coming that we forget that the sentence of death rests upon every one of us. All we are talking about is the difference of a few years.

In the big scene of time, the difference of ten or twenty or thirty years is not a lot, is it? The sentence of death rests upon every one of us. I wonder if that is a bit of what Paul was saying in the fear of all that was happening. There was a reminder that if some people take a life (or in this case he doesn't talk about that) but a wild animal or

health condition or whatever it is, do you remember really how much does that matter? You are going anyway and in a sense not all that long from now you are going. We should not use that as an excuse to give up. We have work to do but we need to use it as a reality base of how we are dealing with it spiritually. We are not talking about it in a physical way. We are not talking about a tiny eternal life. We are talking about purchasing a few more years.

Even a really good health plan when we are in trouble (I don't mean insurance part, but a good plan for cancer, diabetes or whatever it is), all we are talking about is buying a few years

whatever the response is. Good things to do and we are thankful that God has given them, but let us not lose focus on the fact we all have the sentence of death upon us.

I suspect that Paul also (and maybe he is not referring to it here) but reminding that the sentence of eternal death is upon all who do not purchase salvation. We don't purchase salvation; God purchased it for us. We don't attain unto salvation. There is not a soul (the Bible is clear) on the earth who does not have the sentence of death of sin upon them. That sentence we can remove, can't we? We can remove eternal death, but we cannot remove physical death. We are going to die fairly soon of our physical afflictions. Even if you don't have any, you are going to get them fairly soon and you are going to die from them. We do not have to die of spiritual affliction. That we can remove.

Why don't we focus a little different when we think about it? Why do we invest such huge amounts of money and time and emotion on buying a few years physically and invest so little (that is a little too strong but sometimes it is true) in purchasing for ourselves or others eternal life? Why the disparity there? Well, I think it has something to do with the fact that when you poke yourself with a pin, you feel it right now. When you experience something spiritually, it is not so acute and you can ignore it, can't you? Too bad.

I wonder how our response would be if we felt with that kind of acute or that physical the spiritual things that happen to us, if we might not respond a little bit better. We need to remind ourselves of which is more important, to not just respond to the pain that we feel that makes us think, "I'm not giving into that and I'm not giving into that." The sentence of death rests upon us so let us think about and talk about how I can have a few good years. A few good years doesn't mean good health. A few good years means years lived well for the Lord. Be sure and keep our focus right there.

"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the

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dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; Ye also helping together by prayer for us... For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward." II Corinthians 1:9-12.

Again, Paul is really just talking about priorities, isn't he? Just listen as we spend a little time on this verse. He said, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." It goes back to a question we have asked lots and lots of times, where do you put your trust? How bright do you think you are, really? How much wisdom do you think you really have? How much do you think you really know? How much do you really think you have things figured out? Again, I think we might feel a little embarrassed if we were forced to honestly admit how much we trust in ourselves. We all like to say that is not true; we put our faith in the Lord, and we don't really trust in ourselves.

But I wonder if we were really honest if we wouldn't all be embarrassed with the answer about how much we do think we have things figured out and know what to do and work them through and how little we really depend upon faith. Really, we ought to be depending on the grace of God, not in yourself, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom.

"And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?" II Corinthians 1:15-17. Let us talk about this a little bit. Paul says that there should

be yea yea and nay nay.

"But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea." II Corinthians 1:18-19. What again is he talking about? I don't claim to have deep wisdom in this, but I think about he said it was not yea and nay, but it was yea. It seems that what he is teaching is our salvation is not yes and no and it is not maybe. It is not sometimes and sometimes not. It is certainly yea.

The things that are uncertain are our response to it. The things which are uncertain is our willingness to repent. The things which are uncertain is our willingness to be obedient and our willingness to stay close to God. But there is no uncertainty in the power of His shed blood. There is no uncertainty in the salvation of a believer. There is not yea and nay. It is not yes on some days and no on others. It is not there when we feel good and not there when we feel bad. Again, when we read through the Psalm which we read this morning, David expressed the heaviness of heart, didn't he? He talked about being far from God and the heaviness on his soul. Some times when we have that, we go through this thing of wondering where God is and I wonder if I am right with God and I wonder if I am saved. We begin to take away the absoluteness of the power of Christ's shed blood.

We don't need to wonder if we are saved. The only thing which could remove that is our willing disobedience and abandonment of it. This yea and nay which we feel is the doubt which Satan puts on our soul and we feel it, don't we? We can be honest. We feel sometimes this tug of where we are and doubt creeps in and uncertainty tests us and our faith is pulled here and there, but the power of Christ's blood is not pulled here and there. It is yea. It is certain. It is not yes sometimes and no sometimes. It may be hard for us to lay hold on that and hang onto it, but even if we can't always remember in our heart, at least remember in our head the truth. The truth is that if we are re-

deemed by the shed blood of Christ and continue to live with Him and for Him that we are saved. We don't lose it on our bad days.

God doesn't take it away on our days when we struggle a bit. I don't want to take away from the fact that it can be lost. I am not talking about that. The Bible is clear that if we turn against God, turn away from God, it is not talking about our bad days, but if we turn away from God and willingly serve Satan and abandon Him, it can be lost. But let us remind ourselves and remind each other of the strength and power of Christ's shed blood. Satan has no tool against it. Satan cannot take that away. He cannot reduce the effectiveness of it or make it maybe. It is not yea and nay. Our salvation is yea.

"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest" or the down payment "of the Spirit in our hearts. Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand." II Corinthians 1:20-24. Paul wanted to make clear that he was there to help. He was there to encourage. He was there to admonish. He was there to correct, but by faith ye stand. We stand and we will stand alone. We stand together today.

We were told clearly in the beginning part of this chapter we are responsible for each other, to comfort, to strengthen, and to hold each other up. But we will stand before God alone with just the shed blood of Christ. Unless we turned against God or thrown away that mantel, it will be a simple yes. Think about it. Think about standing before God and giving an answer for your sins. You know there will be no answer except uncovered by the shed blood of Christ. Yes. It will be yes.

CARIBBEAN BOARD PROJECTS - 2002

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. For Jamaica, direct your inquiry to Bro. Kevin Sauder, Ph./Fax 309-925-2409 or E-mail ksss@dpc.net.

HAITI						
ORG.	DATE	AREA	COORDINATOR	PROJECT	CAPACITY	PERCENT FILLED
MEBSH	Jan. 4-11, '02	Les Cayes	Craig Emch	Grade School	9	(*) 40%
AWA-FRW	Jan. 17-25, '02	Les Cayes	Duane Schieler	Voc. School	4	100%
AWA-T	Jan. 17-25, '02	Les Cayes	Derek Sauder	Water Aid	5	100%
AWA-B	Jan. 17-25, '02	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Voc. School	2	100%
SEED	Jan. 24 - Feb. 1, '02	Les Cayes	Art Mueller	Agriculture Aid	9	0%
MEBSH	Jan. 31 - Feb. 8, '02	Les Cayes	Dean Pashak	Grade School	9	(*) 100%
Palm Grove	Feb. 15-23, '02	Les Cayes	Tom Hitz	Grade School	11	100%
SEED	Mar. 7-15, '02	Les Cayes	Robert Beebe	Agriculture Aid	11	0%
MEBSH	Mar. 14-22, '02	Les Cayes	Jim Walter	Grade School	9	(*) 100%
Palm Grove	TBD	Puit Sales	Tom Hitz	Grade School	11	0%
MEBSH	May 16-24, '02	Les Cayes	Phil Isabel	Grade School	9	0%
AWA-FRW	May 9-17, '02	Les Cayes	Duane Schieler	Voc. School	4	100%
AWA-T	May 9-17, '02	Les Cayes	Derek Sauder	Water Aid	5	100%
AWA-B	May 9-17, '02	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Voc. School	2	100%
JAMAICA						
CCCD	Jan 2-11, '02	Montego Bay	Mark Criss	Deaf School	50/60	90%
CCCD	(**) Mar 8-16	Kingston	Terry Miller	Deaf School	40	(*) 40%
CCCD	(**) Mar 8-16	Deaf Village	Nate Wiegand	Work Place	40	70%
CCCD	May 17-25, '02	Deaf Village	Kevin Sauder - TBA	Work Place	40	20%
CCCD	(*) Apr 1-8, '02	Kingston	(1) Roanoke Bible Class	Deaf School	50/60	95%
CCCD	May 31-June 8, '02	Deaf Village	(2) Taylor/Princeville BC	Work Place	50/60	100%
CCCD	July 6-13, '02	Knockpatrick	(3) Mansfield Bible Class	Deaf School	40	80%

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
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
(*) = Changes or additions since last issue
()** = Spring Break Timeframe

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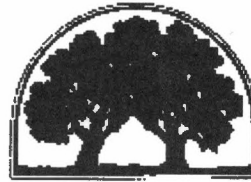
USED EYEGLASSES ARE NEEDED FOR FREE IXTLAN CLINIC

A free eye clinic is being established in Ixtlan, Mexico, by Bros. Dr. Loren Schrenk and Dr. Bryan Stoller. Used eyeglasses are needed to support this effort. Please send your used prescription eyeglasses (with cases if available) to:

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**Gateway Woods Auction
August 17, 2002**

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 distribute them in the name of Jesus Christ.

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World Relief Child Sponsorship Program

In 1998 the World Relief Child Sponsorship Program was established by the National World Relief Committee to give the members and friends of the Apostolic Christian Churches an opportunity to be directly involved in the lives of children that are born in economically distressed areas of the world.

At this time the program offers students for sponsorship in Haiti, Jamaica and Mexico. The Lord has blessed this work and we now have approximately 550 students and 63 schools sponsored through this program. The small monthly donation enables the student to receive a Christian education and learn a basic academic curriculum. The donation helps with the student's school tuition, school uniforms, supplies, and more, depending on the country.

An important part of the sponsor's contribution is to pray for the student on a regular basis. The students, in turn, are encouraged to pray for their sponsors. Blessings are received by both the students and the sponsors.

We are thankful our God has blessed this work. If you would like information on sponsoring a child, please see the Child Sponsorship Brochure made available in your church. Or you may write, Child Sponsorship Board, PO Box 36, Morton, IL 61550 to request a brochure.

World Relief - USA Board Announces New Project

The USA Board has a new building project, located on the Navajo Indian Reservation in northeastern Arizona. The project is to build a housing unit for abused and neglected Navajo children. The Navajo Christian Foundation will use the facility, as a social outreach, in their mission to bring "Jesus Christ to the Navajo people." The need for the facility is very great due to alcoholism, which is exacerbated by the lack of opportunity for meaningful employment, on the reservation. The current rate of unemployment is 50-55%.

The 4,112 square foot living area of the building will be a single level frame built slab-on-grade. The design is patterned after the homes at Gateway Woods, near Leo, Indiana.

Work teams will be needed throughout the coming volunteer season. It is hoped that the project can be completed by the spring season. This is an opportunity to volunteer to fulfill a need to help disadvantaged children. The project will require all construction disciplines. Experienced work team leaders will be necessary. Teams of framing crews are currently being scheduled for the week beginning December 31, 2001, and week of either January 28 or February 4, 2002. Please contact Bro. Arnold Gerst, 1107 Madonna Drive, Quincy, IL 62305-7149; phone (217) 223-8424, Fax (217) 223-0116; or e-mail agerst@rnet.com.

Heft Cassette Tapes

Selling these lovely tapes has proved to be such a blessing to us, and we hope to all who have purchased them as well. We enjoyed "meeting" all of you who ordered them by phone, mail, or in person.

Though we still have a nice supply on hand for sale, we will not be reordering any more tapes. These cassettes make wonderful gifts for all occasions.

The early proceeds from the sale of these tapes were donated to the Vienna church renovation project, then for relief work in our churches in Romania after "the wall" came down, and now the moneys are being used for the Hallein, Austria church addition and remodeling effort.

Through the years, \$32,000.00 from the sales of 4600 tapes has been sent to Bro. Josef Farkasch, the producer of these lovely cassettes. The 3 cassettes contain the first 48 hymns from our old "Heft Long Book", most of which are instrumental in nature. Bro. Farkasch is now the elder of the Hallein church and it appears these demands will prevent him from producing the 4th cassette. However, we will make them available should he complete this project.

Cassettes now available as long as the supplies last may be obtained from:

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Business Manager Needed

Gateway Woods has an opening on our administrative team for a brother or sister to manage our financial operations. We are seeking someone who desires to serve in a ministry that serves hurting children and reunites families. The Business Manager is a key full-time position that offers responsibility, management and creativity. If you have training and experience in the areas of accounting and/or finance and possess good analytical, organizational, communication and computer skills, please contact one of the brothers listed below for more information and a job description.

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REMEMBERING

Our Spiritual Heritage

This is the second in a three - part series entitled, "Applying God's Word", a historical analysis of the origins and development of our church.

Fulfilling Scriptures

To fulfill the Scriptures the church helped define its teachings with respect to standards, styles and boundaries. This was done both in lifestyle (conversation) and in liturgy (worship). In both categories, the intent was to establish a Godly order that met the Word's standard; and which would provide an order for future generations because they knew Satan would seek to incrementally undermine and/or water down the church's sense of sanctification.

The order that followed became an expression of how they interpreted the Word. The lifestyle definitions they gave (regarding separation, nonconformity, chastity, shamefacedness, holiness, humility, submissiveness, etc.) were put into practice. Their doctrinal applications thus reflected the Word's instructions.

The believers of Bro. Froehlich's time (i.e., the first generation of our brethren) saw the devoted attempt to "follow" Christ and the Apostles as being fulfilled by their liturgical and lifestyle practices (in everyday living).

The brethren surely caught the eye of their social counterparts as they reflected a humble, outward holiness, and a lifestyle that disdained a love for worldly things.

Resisting Deception

As the Word was applied in a practical way, and a visible tradition of holiness resulted, Satan tried — and continues to try — to dismantle and/or dilute such a Bible-expressing obedi-

ence.

The enemy is sometimes skillful in this by persuading people they are only following tradition instead of the Word of God. In this, some fail to perceive that practical holiness and separation from worldliness propose only to express/reflect the Word.

The first generations of the faith — who were devotedly willing to support this newly-formed church body — could clearly comprehend the application-tradition equation that was initiated (i.e., holiness patterns, separation, nonconformity, etc.). For clarity, the leaders defined the Word. The "definitions" the brethren embraced per holiness were seen as following the Word. The interpretation-application link was very well understood, and a lure to souls seeking a true faith.

Thousands of people fled the state church along with the Catholic and Lutheran bodies, to repent and become converted in a manner that fulfilled the Word of God.

Close adherence to the Word's instructions, and fervent preaching, led to a new denomination called the Evangelical Baptists (changed to Apostolic Christian in America). Actually, the proper German name was *Gemeinschaft Evangelisch Taufgesinnter*.

A total of 110 new congregations were formed in 35 years, from nothing! This amounted, incredibly, to an average of a new congregation every 4 months for 35 years. Fervency, not casualness, led to this awakening. A Bluffton College historian said, "It was like the time of the Apostles."

This was a church order born out of brotherly esteem where lowliness of heart and annihilation of self bred a Godly closeness among the believers. A deep Spirit-led sensitivity allowed the

brethren to comprehend what was Godly and what was worldly. They proposed to avoid the latter and embrace the former with all their hearts.

When the forefathers came to America, the application-tradition understanding was very much alive and their sense of holiness and doctrinal separation (from all that was false) continued to see our faith remain as closely-knit.

Contending for the Faith

But as time unfolded — and the church began experiencing growth and prosperity — it began to face the forces of pluralism and diversity (which were developing ideals of the culture at large). The church was affected by the society's influence since more and more members were becoming integrated into the educational and occupational spheres of American life.

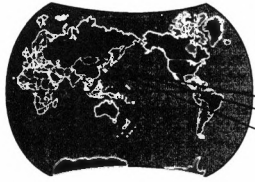
As this happened, and decade after decade passed by, there was always the possibility that some would have a varied view of how to apply Scriptures. Inconsistency wanted to manifest itself.

In this, the applications (of the Word) had become normative to the point that it was possible for some to conclude that brethren were following tradition instead of the Word. A sense of not being linked, understanding-wise, to the original intent (of the early days of our church) to define and follow the Word, could have led, in part to this attitudinal pattern.

By: Perry A. Klopfenstein

Next issue:

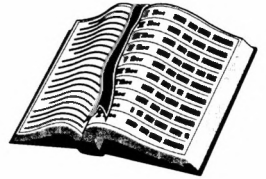
The concluding remarks on "Applying God's Word."



The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

希望の光



“Fulfillment”

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

Do you have fulfillment in life? Do you have the feeling that your station in life is important and that you are accomplishing something worthwhile? Life without any fulfillment is a bit disconcerting.

When Christ was born, the angels had fulfillment because they could announce His birth. “And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God.” (Luke 2:13)

When Christ was born, the shepherds had fulfillment because they did go to Bethlehem to look for the child. “And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.” (Luke 2:16)

When Christ was born, the wise men had fulfillment because they followed the star, “Which stood over where the young child was.” (Matthew 2:9)

Joseph and Mary had a measure of fulfillment because their baby had been born safely but they probably had some anxiety

about the future and their responsibilities. Thirty - three years later after Christ arose from the grave, Mary must have had a great measure of fulfillment, while it is assumed that Joseph had already died because he isn't mentioned at the time of Christ's crucifixion.

On the cross, Christ suffered an eternity of hell for us, but after the resurrection He must have experienced a great sense of fulfillment, such as, “It is done, it is accomplished.”

It is important that you and I also have fulfillment in life. I may not be able to do much but maybe I can be kind to someone, including members of my own family. Maybe I can speak softly and lovingly in cautioning someone about his or her failures, realizing that I also sometimes fail. The way we speak and the way we do should give us a sense of fulfillment. Life can be rather cruel to some people and we all need to be like angels of mercy,

while gently exhorting each other.

Maybe all we can do is pray for others. That, too, should bring a sense of fulfillment. Prayer is a very precious activity, according to God's Word. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16

If you can manage to smile, there is great fulfillment in smiling. You yourself feel better and those around you get a big boost.

If you can greet someone with love and respect, you are fulfilled, that is, you have accomplished something very worthwhile.

This Christmas, let's be very humble and obedient to the Word of God. There is a great deal of fulfillment in being obedient. That obedience should include the best Christmas gift you can give anyone, your love and respect.

希望の光



And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

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