



# *The Silver Lining*

*And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun;...*

January 2003

Sermon by Brother Tom Waldbeser, Atlanta, GA

## I Chronicles 29 and Ephesians 2

"In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord:" Ephesians 2:21. As I read that verse, my mind made a connection with the account we read in the Old Testament, the last chapter there in I Chronicles, the end of David's life. If we would have read a few preceding chapters, we would have seen David had a strong desire to build a temple unto the Lord. In fact he started collecting the supplies and so on. He had a desire to do that and yet God told David that it was not in his place to build the temple. It would be Solomon's, a man of peace whereas David had been a man of war.

As I thought of that, my mind went back to the preceding verses in this chapter. We consider the temple of our heart. We consider the temple and the work that God is doing in each one of our hearts. We read here, upon the foundation, first and foremost Jesus Christ, but then upon the apostles, the teachings, the epistles, all the Word of God that has been shared and preserved down through the ages of time unto this time (Ephesians 2:20). Why? For our benefit. That our temple, the temple of God in our heart can be built up a spiritual house for Him. So as we consider this chapter, let us consider the state of our temple, God's temple in our heart.

What is the state of that? We read what the natural state is like. We read what we were born into. In fact, that is what we started out with. The title here in this Bible says, 'the natural state' at the beginning of this chapter. So let us consider that.

He said "And you hath he quickened, (or made alive in the Spirit) who were dead in trespasses and sins;" Ephesians 2:1. We who were dead, we were born into sin. We who were living in sin - dead. Not alive unto God but dead. We were the ones who He quickened.

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:" Ephesians 2:2. Do we even need to elaborate on that? We see the prince of the power of the air - Satan. The one who has been given a measure of power here on this earth to tempt, to mislead, to deceive, to destroy even. In some sense, he has been given power. And it says wherein in time past. He is talking to believers here. Wherein in time past. But those who have not yet placed their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, these words apply also, except that we can take out 'in times past'.

"...ye walked according to the course of this world..." Ephesians 2:2. We talk about the winds of doctrine. We talk about, if you just took a sail boat and put it out on the water and just let it there, what is going to happen to it? It is just going to wander wherever it goes. It is not going to be guided. It needs to have someone that is guiding it with the rudder and changing the sails with the pitch into the wind to guide its course. That is how we are if we lack walking in the Lord Jesus Christ, being led by His Holy Spirit. We are as a wind just being driven with the waves of time, with the influences around us in this world. That is the picture I get.

"...walked according to the course of this world..." Ephesians 2:2, following the wide path. And we know where that wide path leads. "...the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:" Ephesians 2:2. I don't think any of us, when we were unconverted, and those who have not yet believed in the Lord Jesus, I don't think any desire (maybe there is a few — I should not say any — that is pretty strong), that blatantly desire to be disobedient. I don't think any of us consciously said, "I am just going

to be disobedient. I am just going to disobey today." But it happens when we are under the lack of influence of God or under the influence of the devil. Our natural state is that way. Any of us who have been blessed to have children entrusted into our care by God, we know that you don't have

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

## Light From The Word



Writings based  
on God's Word

January 2003

### God's Promises to the Afflicted

The Children of God are not promised a life free of affliction. We are told that there may be hard trials as we serve God: "...behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves" (Lk. 10:3). David, described as a man after God's own heart, knew what it was like to suffer extreme distress. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me,..." (Ps. 22:1)? The remainder of the Psalm details the grief, the helplessness, and the fear that David felt as he struggled to deal with his affliction.

Ten of the eleven faithful disciples suffered a martyr's death and John was banished to the isle of Patmos to live in exile. Jesus, in His most extreme hour of affliction, cried out with virtually the same words that David uttered. "...Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mk. 15:34). Therefore, we should not be surprised if we suffer affliction for our service to God. Peter confirms this in his writing: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (I Peter 4:12-13).

What, then, does a child of God have to look forward to? Is there no hope of escape? Is there neither comfort nor relief for those who suffer for their faith? Although there may be trials, the Lord has many promises for His people which give us hope and courage.

There are situations that we may face in which immediate relief is not promised, but we are promised the grace and strength to persevere. Paul suffered a thorn in the flesh and he fervently asked the Lord for relief. Rather than receiving relief, he was told "...My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness..." (II Cor. 12:9). We will not always see the path to relief as quickly as we may wish, but we will, by God's grace, be able to uphold our faith through severe trials.

Does this mean we can never expect nor even hope for relief? We are promised deliverance and we are promised a brighter day - but it will be according to God's time table, not ours. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Ps. 34:18-19). David also wrote "For his anger endureth but a moment;... but joy cometh in the morning" (Ps. 30:5).

Therefore, we know that God will help us through our afflictions. We can make ourselves more available for His help if we are of a proper attitude. We know that "...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Ja. 4:6). If we humbly approach God's throne of mercy and show true contrition for our sins, God will hear our prayers.

We also are promised comfort in our distresses by being in God's presence. If, for whatever reason, God chooses to not remove our affliction, we have the comfort of knowing He will be with us as we pass through our trial. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Is. 43:2). God's presence in times of affliction is assured.

Afflictions in this life may seem long and harsh. There are times when we really do not see the solution or an end to the trial. Loved ones who are sick do not always recover even if they are not old. Financial set backs may never be completely removed. Consequences of sin may remain with us long after we have repented and been forgiven. Satan is at times permitted to bring distress that we may never understand. Job probably never understood what was happening to him, but he trusted in God and "...the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning:..." (Job 42:12).

We do have the promise of help in this life even if the problem isn't resolved as we may wish it to be. Sometimes, after

having dealt with an affliction for some time, and wondering what the end will be, we can look back and see there really was benefit in our affliction. We are promised that we will actually reach the point where we can say with conviction that "...we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro. 8:28) and that we truly can "In every thing give thanks..." (I Th. 5:18).

In addition to receiving help in this life, we also have the assurance that those who can endure affliction to the end have a promise of God that will reward us eternally if we truly believe in God. Shortly before Jesus' trial, when He told His disciples that they would desert Him, He also assured them that in the end, they would prevail. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn. 14:1-2).

In the book of Revelation, those who endured great tribulation are given a special promise: "...These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14). God also promises to be a comforter at the time of final deliverance for those who endured to the end. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

There are many trials and afflictions in this life. However, there is much encouragement to endure. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair, Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (II Cor. 4:8-10).

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 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

### Group visits Yugoslavia

Our brethren have approved many new projects over the past years for Yugoslavia and Croatia. The Mission Committee approved sending several brethren to represent them on a trip into these nations last fall. Those traveling were Bro. Peter and Sis. Marian Petrovic (San Diego), Bro. Phil and Sis. Maureen Stettner (Bluffton North), and Bro. Dale and Sis. Judy Eisenmann (Chicago). They left Chicago on Thursday, October 10 and arrived in Belgrade, Yugoslavia about 16 hours later.

### Getting acquainted with the brethren

Our visiting brethren were warmly welcomed by a group of Serbian brethren and driven to Novi Sad, about a 50-minute drive from the airport. The group was transported in two vans which had been purchased by World Relief and Mission funds contributed by our American brotherhood. These vans have been a great blessing in providing means by which brethren in outlying areas can be driven to various local churches for worship.

This portion of Yugoslavia has good farmland and a number of the brethren have small plots on which they are able to raise grain and various vegetables as they struggle to make a very modest living. In visiting with the local brethren about the current situation in their country, it was related that things are slowly improving, but there is still much need.

Travel over busy roads with many trucks and bicycles and variable conditions made the visiting group very thankful for all the prayers back home on their behalf. The group was taken to a hotel in Novi Sad which was their base while in Yugoslavia.

### Local relief meeting

On Saturday the elder brothers met with the Yugoslavian Relief Committee which administers the funds we have approved for various projects. Much of the discussion centered around the many self-help and church construction projects as well as personal assistance programs we have in place. Detailed reports were presented on the distribution and utilization of funds. It was reassuring to observe the care that is being taken to account for these funds in order to make sure that they are applied in areas where the greatest benefit can be derived. Discussion of circumstances in the country revealed that inflation is running about 20% per year. With consumer prices steadily increasing, it was felt that the monthly assistance being sent to our brethren in this land will need to increase.

There are several dozen self-help projects currently underway in Yugoslavia and Croatia. Most of these are limited to \$5000 per person or \$10,000 per joint project. The brethren are struggling to make ends meet and these loans have made a great difference in helping some to establish a small business or improve a farming operation. As they are able to repay these loans, and funds are returned, additional approved applicants are funded. There is a local committee of brethren who oversee these projects and report to our European Relief Board. The visiting brothers were able to visit and review many projects and were encouraged to see a glimmer of light for future self-sufficiency.

### Sunday, October 13th

The visiting group was met at 6:30 a.m. by Elder Bro. Karlo Hrubik (Novi Sad) and their van driver. They traveled about 2 hours to the village of Omolica, in the province of Banat. Many villages were passed, including

the village of Titla, where an older sister lives. There were quite a few believers here at one time, but their old church just collapsed one day. This sister is the only remaining believer here. Upon arrival at the new church in Omolica, it was noted that many brethren were gathering for this special day from neighboring churches. This new building was funded by the Apostolic Christian Mission and World Relief Committees. The exterior is stucco with blue trim. There is no parking lot and the only restroom facilities are an old outhouse about a hundred feet from the church. It is apparent that they have used the funds contributed to provide only the necessities for a basic house of worship.

Dedication services were held both in the morning and afternoon. Many friends from the community were also present. There was an outpouring of appreciation from the local brethren for the help from American brethren to make it possible for them to have a decent place to worship. It was inspiring to observe the sincerity of faith and humility of these dear brethren.

### Uzdin and Kovacica

The group left their hotel at 8:00 a.m. on Monday for the little village of Uzdin. Two older sisters with heavy scarves tied under their chin, were waiting at the church. They led the visitors through the sanctuary to a smaller room, no bigger than 10' x 10'. Here there are a few pews, songbooks, Bibles, and a small pulpit. This is where they gather for worship services as there are only two members and occasionally some friends who attend. Through their tears they related that no minister had come to preach to them for three months. Unfortunately there are quite a few churches where there are just a few elderly sisters left. There

is a great need for more ministers who can travel to such churches. Our small group shared in a brief service with Bro. Hrubik speaking in their native language.

A family was visited in Kovacica where four sons are on the Self-Help Program. It is apparent that they are quite industrious and their farming operation has been greatly helped by our assistance. The two older brothers are married and one of them is a minister in the Kovacica church. A visit to the church revealed an old building which had been replastered recently with help from our funds.

Approximately 80 souls worship here, and it was encouraging to see families with children benefiting from the efforts to provide usable facilities. There is need for additional help to further remodel the building.

### **Padina and other Yugoslavian churches**

The Mission and World Relief Committees are financing the construction of an 8000 square foot church in Padina. It was heartwarming to visit this thriving church, with 100 members and a number of children and friends. The building has a modest and practical design and it is to be dedicated by May of 2003.

Many other villages and church buildings were visited throughout the week. A number of examples of new or remodeled buildings were observed. In every case there was deep appreciation expressed. In one case, following a meal served at the local elder's home, he stated with tears flowing that they cannot find words to express their thanks for our help. He said that this makes it possible for them to have decent places to worship and a better chance to keep their young people.

Another thriving church was visited in Banatsko Novo Selo. Their new building was completed six years ago. They have six ministers, one of whom is a young brother who frequently serves the small neighboring churches where there is no resident minister. There were several places visited

where the old church buildings are no longer in use. Due to the years of persecution as well as emigration of many brethren to settle in other lands, some congregations have completely disbanded. Where even a small nucleus of brethren remain, there was always a fervent desire to regain what has been lost.

### **Some individual cases**

Several visits were made to families who are on self-help programs or receiving direct aid. One family has a green house funded by this program which enables them to raise and sell many kinds of vegetables. The operation is doing well. They have a large family and the oldest son is confined to a wheel chair. Another stop was at the home of a middle-aged couple where the husband has only a small portion of one lung functioning. He is unable to work and the labor of their small farming operation falls on his wife. His oxygen generating machine recently broke down and the visiting brothers were able to provide emergency funds to purchase a new one. This was one of many cases of severe need observed, and these brethren will certainly appreciate our prayers.

In the village of Brsadin in Croatia (visited the last three days of the trip) a widow was met whose husband had been killed by an enemy soldier in one of their recent wars. This sister struggles to survive by helping unload corn by hand for local farmers. She did not have funds to purchase fuel to heat her home for the winter, but help will be provided.

Another couple live in a bombed out building in the town of Vukovar. This is a war-torn area as it was the focal point of fighting in the conflict between Serbia and Croatia which took place in the mid-nineties. The wife is converted and the husband is repenting. They are trying to recover slowly from the great material losses which they have suffered. They testified that their trials have brought them to the Lord and helped them find their salvation.

### **Kotlina, Croatia and back to America**

On Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup> the visiting group as well as brethren from neighboring churches gathered to worship at the church in Kotlina, Croatia. They had crossed the border from Yugoslavia into Croatia a few days earlier without incident. Once again, they had been received very warmly by the local brethren. The Kotlina church is a relatively new building which was constructed with funds contributed by our brotherhood. It is a very modest structure set in a beautiful spot in this quaint village. Nearly every pew was filled in the church. Services included parts in Serbian, Hungarian and English. Throughout the visit, it was found to be of great help that the Petrovics are fluent in Serbian and were able to provide translation. However, it was also found that there was no need to translate the strong sense of a common bond of faith in our beloved Savior and to be able to express true brotherly love.

As the visiting group boarded their van to depart on Sunday afternoon, all who were present gathered outside and bid a very fond and tearful farewell. A young convert drove the van through the country-side and onto the Autobahn for the 3 ½ hour drive to Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. The group stayed in a hotel there overnight and rose early the next day to begin the trip home by air. They were very thankful for a safe arrival and for the many prayers so faithfully offered by the American brethren. Of all the memories and unforgettable impressions made by this visit, all would agree that one clearly stands out: the resources being shared with our beloved brethren in these countries are being put to very good use in meeting some great needs in the household of faith; this is a tremendous opportunity for us to continue to share the abundance which God has given to us.

A detailed diary of this trip to Yugoslavia and Croatia has been written and copies can be obtained from Bro. Peter Petrovic, San Diego, CA.

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

This past month has been a very busy, but enjoyable time for the residents and staff. Recognizing that it takes an extreme amount of effort and cooperation for volunteers to organize and initiate the many caroling groups and Christmas parties, we want to say thank you for making the residents' days enjoyable.

How quickly the time seems to go by and we are faced with another year filled with opportunity.

"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*

We want to thank all who have taken the opportunity to do good for those who live at the Home. We are especially thankful for those who have remembered the residents and staff in prayer over the years. We count on your continued support as we face another year of challenges. May God bless you for your support.

FEBRUARY birthdays: Timber Ridge, 2125 Veterans Road, Morton, IL 61550: Eddie Pumphrey (17), John Kamm (18), Lee Anne McKay (19), Ernest Perry (27), Joey Saltzman (27), Guy Maxinelli (28). At Oakwood Estate, 2213 Veterans Road, Morton, IL 61550: Sean Wiggers (10).

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

**Rich and Amber Pfister**

Greetings one and all in the name of our risen Lord and Saviour! As this special season comes to a close, we are reminded of the wonderful gift God gave to the world by giving us His Son. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21). As we gave gifts to those we love, we reflected on the Father who being in glory with His Son, "...loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..." (John 3:16). Furthermore, as we received gifts from loved ones, our hearts pondered the gift that God has given to us, that we must receive. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

We at Gateway Woods praise God for the gift of His Son, as we can testify to Jesus being the One who "turns lives around". Our feet and hands are merely instruments used for His work, and it is not our strength that we rely on, but the strength of the Lord. May the blessing of this past Christmas season help you realize that your strength comes from the Lord as well. God bless you in this new year!

We would like to congratulate residents, Vanessa F. and Dian M., who recently returned to public school after spending some time at Gateway Woods School. Please pray for them as they make this difficult transition. We would also like to welcome John Drasko to our

Foster Care program and Bro. Jim and Sis. Pam Agler (Bluffton) as Foster Parents.

Bro. Rich and Sis. Amber Pfister were recently blessed with the birth of a healthy baby boy, William Andrew Pfister. William joins his sister, Katelyn, in the Pfister household. We rejoice with them!

Over Christmas break, we moved into our new school. We are so thankful for what the Lord has done! On January 10, we have scheduled an open house that will include a speech from US Congressman Mark Souder. The dedication of the building will take place at the 2003 Representatives Meeting on March 22. Everyone is welcome!

Hopefully you received a 2003 Gateway Woods wall calendar. If you have not received a calendar, please call 1-888-443-4283 and we'll be pleased to send you one. In it, you'll find an offer for a free multimedia CD ROM about our programs!

Thanks to all who pray for us and share our vision of helping hurting children and their families. We offer a special thanks for those who have given financially toward our building project and for those who helped fill our 2003 Christmas wish list. However, we realize that without the prayerful support of countless believers across the country, all of our work would be in vain. May God shower His blessings upon all of you in 2003!

## **APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL Melinda Matuch**

Greetings to all in this blessed New Year that the Lord has given us. We are so thankful to all that have willingly donated their time, energy and talents in this past year as volunteers. We are grateful also for all that have supported us financially. We could not do the work that we do without your support. May the Lord bless you richly for all that you have done for us.

After a pleasant Christmas break, we come back refreshed and ready to care for 23 children who have spent two weeks eating Christmas candy. We are pleased that Bro. Sam and Sis. Linda Schlatter (Junction, OH) have come to spend a few weeks with us this winter. Sis. Linda will be teaching the two-year-olds and Bro. Sam will be taking some of the children to computer class each day. Their arrival is exciting for the children as they love to meet new people. Sis. Barbara Coulter, who is usually our substitute teacher, has been teaching the twos all fall due to our current staffing shortage. She is looking forward to having the winter off.

Bro. Tom and Sis. Joan Schrenk, who are the preschool administrator and director, are also taking the winter off and are spending the winter in Zapata, TX. We wish them a joyful season of rest and hope they come back soon.

Please prayerfully consider our need for a teacher. The preschool has an immediate opening for a qualified, experienced teacher to serve as the teacher/coordinator. This is a worthwhile opportunity for a single or married person who would be willing to relocate and support the Athens church.

Attention, all former teachers, board members and volunteers. We are planning a preschool staff and alumni reunion for March 29-30, 2003. We plan to have an open house on Saturday afternoon and singing that night followed by the famous Athens' potluck dinner on Sunday. We plan to send out letters with all necessary details, but, if your name or address has changed, please call the preschool at (256) 233-0591 during the week with the right information, or you may e-mail the preschool at . Thanks and hope to see you in March!

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## **ALABAMA, ATHENS Louise Hall**

Sis. Dessie Siniard went to meet our Lord and Saviour on December 7. She was 91 years old. She had been baptized into the faith more than 60 years ago. Sis. Dessie was survived by two sons, David and Samuel, and a daughter, Magdalene, as well as 8 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great-grandchildren. She enjoyed coming into the Lord's house more than anything else. She will be greatly missed by all who were blessed to have known her. She was buried on Monday, December 9.

Also passing from us this month was Mary Ray. She was the beloved mother of Bro. Winfred Kelley, Martha Kyle, Annie Russell and Bertha Day. We pray that God will comfort them in their grief.

Our prayers are with those who mourn the loss of their uncle, Henry Haggemaker. They include Bro. Ed Haggemaker, Sis. Joyce Ray and Sis. Clarann Lynn.

Our secret pals Christmas dinner was held at the fellowship hall

on Saturday, December 7. A potluck supper and gift exchange were enjoyed by all who attended. We then enjoyed the children's Christmas Program on Sunday. The children worked very hard and did a wonderful job. We were blessed with visitors from Eureka who joined us for the weekend of fellowship.

We went Christmas caroling twice. The first week was in Athens and the next week a group traveled to visit the George Kelley family who live in Tennessee.

Sis. Doris Moore has been bothered by a sore hip for a couple of weeks. Karla Hargrove (Mark and Debbie) has been in the hospital for tests. We ask the Lord to be with them and heal them according to His will.

Bro. Tom and Sis. Joan Schrenk have left us to spend the winter in Zapata, TX. We will miss them and look forward to their return in February.

Currently, there is a need for a member to reside at the Tennessee Fellowship Center and act as the caretakers of the facility and grounds. The center is located between Nashville, TN, and Athens, AL, just off I-65. Anyone who might be interested in the position should contact Bro. Mike Moore at (256) 232-0629 for details. This would be an excellent opportunity for a newly wed or newly retired couple.

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## **ARIZONA, PHOENIX Ron and Ev Hoerr**

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world... and our children's love for Him radiated the evening of December 15 at our Christmas program. Refreshments were served after the pro-

gram.

We have all seen God's gift of love in the power of prayer. Bro. Todd and Sis. Nicole Steffen were first-time parents on November 20 when Adelayde Rose was born in Peoria, IL. A birth is a miracle. God wanted to grant a second miracle and He did! Grandparents, Bro. Robert and Sis. Christine Baum, joined our dear ones in Illinois when tiny Adelayde had heart surgery soon after birth. Yes, we are still proclaiming His greatness and giving thanks.

Bro. Erik and Sis. Cindy Langhoffer became first-time grandparents on December 3 when Spencer Morgan was born to Vladimir and Carmen Okhmatovski in Illinois. We rejoice with them and pray God's blessings on our new family.

On December 6, Shannon and Kolleen Maurer became second time parents when Sydnie was born. Little Sophia and grandparents, Bro. Howard and Sis. Eileen Maurer, are very happy and thankful.

A fine loving group of sisters, brothers, and friends, as well as children have spent many hours doing special projects for World Relief - for home and elsewhere. Any volunteer work done unto the Lord means double blessings for the giver.

We extend our sympathy to: The Rudy Bertschi family on the death of Sis. Irene Bertschi; Bro. Howard and Sis. Eileen Maurer and family and Bro. Robert and Sis. Christine Baum and family on the death of their brother-in-law and uncle Denny Mohr in Morton; Sis. Eleanor Prieger-Hill on the death of her daughter, Carol Ann

Wohlgenant; and Bro. Chuck and Sis. Marie Kieser and family on the death of Chuck's dad, Bro. George Kieser, who passed away on December 13. We pray for God's grace and comfort for these dear ones. May God comfort all those who have lost loved ones.

We appreciated visits from ministering Bro. Todd Feller (La-Crosse, IN) and Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI). Bro. Mark and our Elder Bro. Jon shared the Conference letter with us on December 11.

Bro. Dick Beery, Dave Maurer, and Bill McClure all submitted to surgery this past month.

Sis. Beth Cooke was honored at a reception December 8 at church. Sis. Beth has graduated as an RN. We also congratulate her children, Aaron and Kelsey, knowing this was God's will for them.

Christmas caroling was enjoyed by many the evening of December 8. After a crispy night, they returned to church for pizza.

Address change for Sis. Ruth Baer: she is back with her sister, Helen, at 20019 N. Concho Circle, Sun City, AZ 85373.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

The family of Sis. Irene Bertschi wishes to express their sincere thanks and appreciation for prayers, visits and every act of kindness shown during the illness and loss of our loved one.

*The Rudy Bertschi family*

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### **ARIZONA, PRESCOTT** **Jane Hodges**

Sine the November reporting was missed, there are several ministering brothers to thank for serving us since October 20. They

include, in order of visits, Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL), Bros. James Emch and Ken Lawson (both of Phoenix), Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL), Elder Bros. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix), Bros. Herb Knochel Jr. (Phoenix) and Gary Endress (Bradford, IL).

On November 17, there were no church services in Prescott, because all but two of our members went to San Diego to witness the wedding vows of Sis. Yasmin Petrovic (Elder Bro. Peter and Sis. Marian) of San Diego and Bro. Terry Koehl (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Mary) of Prescott. Bro. Terry and Sis. Yasmin plan to reside in San Diego, but we hope they will visit Prescott often and pray for God's blessings on their lives together.

After praying for the Lord's will for several weeks, the church members submitted their votes for a minister to Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich. On November 24, with the help and support of Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS), it was revealed to us that the Lord had blessed us with two brothers to serve in the ministry instead of one. They are Bros. Jim Furrer (Sis. Rowena) and his son-in-law, Bro. Dan Dubach (Sis. Bethany). They have both humbly and willingly accepted this service to the Lord and His church. We can feel the Spirit working through them both and feel very blessed by the Lord. Our church will continue to receive ministry support from Phoenix and the other churches two to three times per month for the next year.

Since the two brothers had other duties in the church, a vote was taken to reassign these posi-



tions. Bros. Ed Schambach (Sis. Gail) – Sunday School teacher; Glen Furrer (Sis. Eileen) – Trustee Chairman; Wayne Koehl (Sis. Mary) – Sound room; and Rolf Kaeppler (Sis. Verena) – Usher.

Bro. Henry Volz, Sis. Elena Kornja and her son, George, continue to experience health problems, but assemble with us when they are able.

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### ARIZONA, TUCSON

**Lisa Knapp**

We enjoyed our annual evening of Christmas caroling at two nursing homes and also at the home of Bro. Floyd and Sis. Clara Banwart. As always, we gathered at the church afterwards for hot barbeque sandwiches and lots of holiday goodies. Then on Sunday we were treated to a beautiful Christmas program put on by our Sunday School classes. A holiday thank-you to everyone in the Sunday School for two special evenings.

Bro. Galen Rokey (Bern, KS) and his wife, Sis. Nancy, were with us recently for a day of worship. We thank them for their willingness to travel at this busy time of year. May God add His richest blessing to what we hope was a pleasant trip.

Our Bro. Curt and Sis. Caroline Kaufman will celebrate their 25th anniversary today, December 18. We enjoyed an anniversary cake with them, following our Christmas program. May God continue to guide and bless you both in the years ahead.

We said good-bye, temporarily we hope, to Sis. Krista Banwart, who has left to work and study in Philadelphia until June. We will

miss Sis. Krista terribly, but we are trusting that she will be back in June as she has promised! We pray God will watch over her and help her adjust to life in Philadelphia. We look forward to June and your return, Lord willing, Sis. Krista!

We are having cool, rainy weather, with daytime highs in the 50s and 60s, as we head into Christmas week. I'm sure our reliable sunshine will return soon, as it's never gone for long.

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### CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

**Robin Moser**

“Oh give thanks unto the Lord: for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.”

*Psalm 136:1*

We can all count our blessings as we review God's presence in 2002. Here in Altadena, we are thankful for the Lord's healing hand and His direction as our church has undergone a change in leadership. We are also thankful for the years of service retired Elder Bro. John Klotzle dedicated to our church. He gave a final sermon on November 24, followed by a dinner the congregation hosted to thank Bro. John and Sis. Lois. Many of our San Diego brethren were present, including Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marion) and ministering Bros. Doug Wagenbach (Sis. Lillian) and Jim Koehl (Sis. Hildegard) for the dinner also as Bro. John had the oversight of their congregation in the past.

We were grateful to have visiting ministers again this month. Bro. Loren Schrenk (Sis. Betsy, St. Louis, MO) was with us for our Thanksgiving service and Bro.

Andy Klaus (Sis. Jana, Tokyo, Japan) ministered to us twice in December.

The Sunday School Christmas program touched our hearts as our small but energetic group of children sang with palpable joy to the Lord. May we all be encouraged to be willing to share not only of the birth, but the salvation we have found.

We sorrow with Dorothy Vermillion over the death of her sister, Edith Honegger (Forrest, IL). May the Lord provide comfort to Dorothy and her extended family during this time of reflection. Each passing is a reminder to us all of the brevity of life and the importance of redeeming our time here.

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### CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

**Peggy Jevremov**

Our little Sunday School presented to us their Christmas program on Sunday, December 15. It is so heartwarming to see them sing and speak from their hearts.

As the old year ends and the New Year begins, so often we pause to look back on the past year and reflect upon all God has blessed us with. As we do that, may we also look within and do whatever “housecleaning” we need to do, that in the New Year we may be more like the Master and better able to serve Him as He wills.

*Another Year is Dawning*

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

Another year of service,  
Of witness for Thy love,  
Another year of training

For holier work above.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

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**KITCHENER, ONTARIO  
CANADA  
Nathan Reutter**

Greetings in the name of our Saviour Jesus. We have had a busy yet blessed month leading up to Christmas. We have had three visiting ministers. We have sung in a nursing home. We have enjoyed our annual Sunday School Christmas program. We are now anxiously awaiting the sweet times of Christmas and the beginning of a new year.

Our three visiting ministers this month have been as follows: Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Sis. Marlene, Bay City, MI), Bro. Ray Sinn (Sis. Ann, Latty, OH), and Bro. Ben Manz (Sis. Carolyn, Junction, OH). We have appreciated the brothers sound teachings and pray that they come again soon. These brothers spoke as is written in II Corinthians 3:12: "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech."

Our nursing home visit this month seemed to be well received. The old ladies present wished us to come back soon. Since many of these older people cannot get out to sing regularly, we try to give them the opportunity to sing along with us. Many of them do indeed sing with us when we sing a song they recognize. It gives them the opportunity to fulfill the Scripture that says: "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to

my God while I have my being" (Psalm 104:33). We also reminded them of the upcoming Christmas season by reading to them the Christmas story.

We were also reminded of the coming Christmas season by the annual Sunday School Christmas program. In both song and verse the children told us the old, old story of Christ's birth and His purpose for coming, and our responsibility for this knowledge. We wish to thank God that He worked with the children so well. It reminds us of what the Bible says of us to be like little children. What they did with a willing heart was a blessing to all who witnessed. We should be the same.

May God bless you all this Christmas season and may God grant a spiritually prosperous and happy new year.

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**COLORADO, DENVER  
Ann Gonglach**

Those who can make the trip, continue to travel to Colorado Springs twice a month to sing at the IHS Pike's Peak Nursing Home for Sis. Elizabeth Sheaffer (Bluffton, IN) and other residents there. It takes a little effort to make the hour drive (one way) on Sunday afternoon, but we are blessed when we praise the Lord in song! We extend our prayers and sympathies to Sis. Elizabeth, her daughter, Jane Golden, and her granddaughter, Betty Gram, in the loss of her son-in-law, Charles Golden. May God bring comfort to their lives.

On December 8, our Sunday school children praised the Lord in song and word as they presented a Christmas program about some of

the gifts and miracles that God has bestowed upon us. We were reminded how good our God truly is to us.

How good it is to know that as God has been in the past, He will continue to be in the future.

*Farewell, Old Year!*

With goodness crowned,  
A hand Divine hath set thy bound.  
Welcome, New Year  
Which shall bring  
Fresh blessing from  
My God and King!  
The old we leave without a tear;  
The new we hail without a fear.  
Because I know  
That o'er it all  
Rules He who notes  
The sparrow's fall.

— *author unknown*

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**CONNECTICUT  
ROCKVILLE  
Cherie Galat**

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

By God's grace may we continue to walk upon the path that will lead us to Heaven above.

We welcome back Sis. Jen Kloter who has moved back home from living in Oregon where she attended the Silverton congregation. As she surely will be missed by the Silverton brethren, may He even provide in her new duties at our Longview Village residence as Cook-Custodian. We appreciate the service that Bro. Matt and Sis. Cathryn Couzens have given in the past several years.

Many of us attended the wedding in Rittman, OH, of Bro. Na-

than Hoffman (Bro. Michael and Luann) and Sis. Mary Steiner (Bro. Matt and Sis. Gail, Rittman, OH). We pray that their lives are blessed with His love and peace and hope that Sis. Mary feels at home here among the Rockville brethren. We had a reception with a singing following for them on Saturday, December 7.

On Saturday, December 14, many of us sang Christmas carols to many of our loved ones. We hope that they were blessed as much as we were as we sang songs that both remind us of His birth and uplift us. On Sunday, the children sang songs to the Heavenly Father at our annual Sunday School Christmas Program. May each of us reflect upon His sacrifices not only at this time of year, but every day of our life.

Our sympathy is expressed to the family of Bro. Clifford Farney who passed away on Wednesday, November 13. He leaves his dear wife, Sis. Harriet; daughters, Sis. Amber Fehr (Bro. Jay) and Sis. Anne Gerber (Bro. Loren); his brother, Bro. Clifton (Sis. Bessie); sister-in-law, Hilda Farney; and extended family. Attending the funeral was Elder Bro. Duane Farney (Croghan-Naumburg, NY). We appreciate the support and love that our ministering brethren provide us. May He provide comfort for this dear family.

*Note:* Just a reminder that we will collect the voluntary contribution of \$11 for the Silver Lining beginning in January 2003. Please send to me, Sis. Cherie Galat.

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

By the time this is read the holiday of Christmas will be over. But may the celebration in our heart for the Father sending His Son never be over.

Our ministers the past month were Bro. Paul Gassser (Akron, OH), Bro. Shawn Metzger (Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Sam Schlatter (Junction, OH). Other visitors were from Lester, IA; Morton, IL; Lamont-Gridley, KS; and Lexington, OH.

In January our services will be held the first, second and fourth Sundays.

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, worship service at 10:30; afternoon service begins at 12:15.

If you are planning to visit Washington, D.C. for vacation or business, please call Bro. Barry and Sis. Doreen Steffen (410) 569-3635 or Sis. Henrietta Meyer (703) 904-8301 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 FORT LAUDERDALE**

Whenever someone has surgery, it is always a concern for not only family members, but the church family as well. After back

surgery, Bro. Darrell (Sis. Billie) Klopfenstein is once again assembling with us, for which we are thankful. Bro. Ed (Sis. Vi) Gerber recently had heart surgery and his recovery is going well thus far. God's healing hand is always present among us!

The Fort Lauderdale church was privileged to participate in our annual Christmas Program. After caroling at two local nursing homes, we went back to the fellowship hall for dinner, congregational singing, and the reading of the birth of Christ by our Sunday School students. Our Sunday School is our future church, and we appreciate them.

By the time this issue is distributed, Lord willing, we will already be in 2003. May God provide for you and your family in this New Year.

### **FLORIDA NORTH FORT MYERS Mary Masters**

A wonderful time of blessed fellowship and delicious food was enjoyed by a group of 55, at the home of Bro. Vic and Sis. Dorothy Beer in November. Opportunities to gather together and unite in heart and mind are precious in our lives.

Visiting minister this month was Bro. Ben Wiegand. We enjoyed having him and his wife and family with us for a Sunday. Thank you, Bro. Ben, for your service to us.

As we celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday, we pondered our many blessings here in this great nation that God has given us. Some of the "things" we hold dear today, may not be the "things" we'll treasure tomorrow. For instance, a hard earned trophy

may be a prized possession when we're young, and yet when gray hairs grace our head, that same trophy may be put out with the garbage. "Things" don't maintain value, but people and our salvation in Christ Jesus becomes more valuable each day. This is where the Bible reminds us to put our hearts and minds and energies (II Peter 1:1). Through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, we have received a faith that is precious.

We now turn our thoughts to the blessed birth of Jesus. What a sacrifice He made for us, to come down from glory and endure ridicule, pain, and hardship for us. We were reminded recently that the world would like to take away the true meaning of Christmas by inserting so many other symbols of Christmas that have nothing to do with Jesus! Let's do our part to make sure we keep Christ in Christmas in every possible way.

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**FLORIDA, SARASOTA**  
**Carol Koehl**

Our Sunday School presented the wonderful story of "Christ's Nativity" in verse and song on Sunday, December 15. We want to thank everyone involved for the uplifting program and for the refreshments that followed.

We appreciated having Elder Bros. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) and Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) bring us the Word this past month.

Bro. Orval and Sis. Doris Rocke welcome visitors at their new residence at the Pines of Sarasota. We really miss having them worship with us at church.

Sis. Suellen Kaeb received a good report after surgery. She and

Bro. Virgil wish to thank everyone for their prayers.

Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann is now shepherding our congregation, as Elder Bro. Doug Sabo is taking an extended medical leave from the ministry and eldership. We are grateful for Bro. Doug's twenty-five years of service to the Sarasota church. Our love and prayers are with Bro. Doug and Sis. Linda, and their family.

Recently we were privileged to help celebrate Bro. George and Sis. Betty Siladie's 50th wedding anniversary with a surprise reception.

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**GEORGIA, ATLANTA**  
**John Brewer**

As we individually prepared for the Christmas season and family gatherings, our congregation was fortunate to take time to celebrate and remember the reason for Christmas. On December 15 we had the privilege to go Christmas caroling at two local senior citizen care centers. As we sang, the Sunday School had the opportunity to pass out small cards with candy canes on them wishing them a blessed Christmas. Even though the token was small, the gifts and songs cheered those whom we visited.

On December 18 was our annual Christmas program. The Sunday School again reminded us of the real reason we honor Christmas. The program dealt with the promises of the Old Testament that foretold the birth of a Messiah that would bring us hope and salvation. They also gave us new testament scriptures as well of the fulfilling of those promises and why because God keeps His promises is one of the reasons why

Christmas is so full of hope and joy.

We are thankful for the visiting ministers that have come down in December. Bros. Ralph Garber (Sis. Lynn, Morton, IL) and Dan Koch (Sis. Julie, Tremont, IL) came down to share the Word with us and we appreciate the time they took to come.

If you plan to be in the Atlanta area we would invite you to worship and fellowship with us. We start song service at 10:15. We also gather on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 7:00 pm. Our church is in Fairburn, Georgia off I-85 southwest of Atlanta. We are 15 miles south of the airport on exit 64 (Jonesboro Rd.) 4 miles due west after you get off the exit. Please contact Bro. Tom Waldbeser 770-463-4788, Bro. Keith Kaufman 770-304-8335, Bro. Linn Stoller 770-631-4554 or Bro. John Brewer 770-304-8706 if you need more information.

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

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God..."

*Psalm 66:16*

Retired Elder Bro. Nate Steffen and Bro. Dave Steffen (Elgin, IL) were our visiting ministers this month. We are thankful we could gather to hear the Word.

Bro. Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN) had our monthly Bible Study in Madison, WI, on "Our Relationship With Others Believers". "Be ye kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Romans 12:10) was one

of our reference verses. We surely thank Bro. Dewayne for his time spent teaching us.

Our congregation enjoyed going Christmas caroling at several nursing homes followed by a chili dinner. We were blessed to have many visitors from the Young Group of several congregations that same weekend.

Our Sunday School classes brought us the message of salvation through their songs and verses of our Savior's birth during our Christmas program.

"...the joy of the Lord is your strength"

*Nehemiah 8:10*

I was stopping at a 4-way stop sign when a man in a car pulled up to the sign on my right. He flashed me a radiant smile. I immediately felt uplifted: full of peace and joy. It made me suspect he was one of God's angels. We, too, can be one of God's messengers with the simple act of smiling. Let us carry our joy from the Christmas season over into this new year.

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## ILLINOIS

### BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

**Ann Kellenberger**

**Rebekah Kaufmann**

We thank Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) and Bros. Keith Beyer (Detroit, MI), Brian Huber (Francesville, IN), Nate Lehman (Denver, CO) and Bob Beebe (South Bend, IN) for sharing God's Word with us this past month. May each of these brothers and their families be blessed for willingly sharing God's Word with our congregation.

What a joy it was to listen to the

testimonies and witness the baptisms of three converts on November 16-17. Our new brothers in faith are Brian and David Mariani (Bro. Larry and Sis. Jeannine) and Chris Hattan. May each of them continue to grow spiritually, building a firm foundation on that "Solid Rock" so they'll stand prepared should the storm of life come their way.

We extend our sympathy to Dennis McDugle and his family following the passing of his mother, Hazel McDugle, from Pontiac, IL. We're praying that God will comfort them during this time of loss.

Our Topical Bible Study entitled "Dare to Believe the Wonder of Christmas" was held on December 4 by Bro. Mark Streitmatter. Many families came and heard this inspiring message and enjoyed the blessed evening.

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## ILLINOIS, BRADFORD

**Steve Endress**

We were reminded in a recent sermon to be "careful to maintain good works." All around us we can see the deception resulting from those who want to be called by Christ's name, but not follow him or walk as He walked. (Isaiah 4:1) Gospel Hymns #641 reminds us of the end of those who disobey God.

*"Nothing But Leaves"*  
 Nothing but leaves! The Spirit  
 grieves o'er years of wasted life;  
 O'er sins indulged while con-  
 science slept,  
 O'er vows and promises unkept,  
 And reap from years of strife -  
 Nothing but leaves!

Ah, who shall thus the Master

meet and bring but withered  
 leaves?

Ah, who shall at the Saviour's feet  
 Before the awful judgment seat,  
 Lay down for golden sheaves,  
 Nothing but leaves!

We can be so thankful that, if we commit our lives to God, we will not be unfruitful.

We rejoice with Bro. Tyler Joos and Sis. Tonya Gudeman (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Jenny, Bro. Brad and Sis. Teresa) as they were united in Holy Matrimony. Our church was filled with visitors, and consequently, warm Christian fellowship.

We were also thankful to witness the marriage of our Bro. Scott Endress (Bro. Gary and Sis. Ev) to Sis. Mary Ehnle (Bro. Kurt and Sis. Jane, Princeville, IL). We pray that the three-fold cord will continue to grow stronger as the days go by.

Our Bro. Lucas Gudeman (Bro. Brad and Sis. Teresa) has felt the Spirit of God moving him to take Sis. Diana Beutel (Bro. Fred and Sis. Jeannette, Tremont, IL) for his wife. We rejoice with them and pray that the Lord's blessing will be upon them.

We were thankful to have two visiting ministers preach the Word of God to us this past month. Bros. Rex Frieden (Lamar, MO) and Paul Zimmerman (Forrest, IL) were used of the Lord on our behalf. We also appreciated having Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL) and ministering Bros. Dan Stoller (Remington, IN) and Ron Joos (Pulaski, IA) with us.

Our prayers are with Sis. Esther Streitmatter (Bro. Leroy) as she is recovering from a difficult illness. We are thankful for the

times God reminds us that He holds our life in His hands.

Troy and Sis. Heather Pyles were blessed with a baby girl. Leah Mae is welcomed home by three brothers, Morgan, Logan and Abram.

At his passing, we are reminded of the years of service our Bro. George Kieser (Sis. Esther, Princeville, IL) provided to our church. He was one of the members of the original Bradford church building committee and served as trustee before moving back to Princeville.

*Note:* Taken from Tyler and Tonya's reception at the Princeville Fellowship Hall: Ladies size 10 tan double-breasted long spring coat. Size 16 petite tan all-weather coat with lining left in its place. Please contact Evelyn Endress (309) 853-3109.

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**ILLINOIS  
CHAMPAIGN-URBANA  
Janelle Schlipf**

We wish to extend our congratulations to John Simpson and Ann Marie Lentz, who were recently married in Orlando, Florida. The couple plans to reside in Orlando where John has been living for the past few years. John's parents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Wilma Simpson of Champaign.

Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) assisted our Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart in the reading of the Memorandum after our regular services on Sunday, November 17. We are thankful for the brothers who are willing to share this encouragement with us.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, our Sunday School children spent

Saturday, November 23, putting together food baskets for needy families in our community. While the older children were out shopping for the groceries, the younger children colored and decorated the boxes. As a group, they then delivered the baskets to three families. This annual tradition is always enjoyed by the children and their Sunday School teachers as we have the opportunity to give of our abundant blessings to those who are in need!

We are excited to welcome two little additions here in Champaign this holiday season. Carmen and Vlad Okhmatovski are the proud parents of their first little boy, Spencer Morgan, who was born December 2. His grandparents are Bro. Erik and Sis. Cynthia Langhofer (Phoenix, AZ) and Ivan and Tatiana Okhmatovski (Moscow, Russia).

Hannah, Leah and Seth Waibel, along with their parents, Bro. Brian and Sis. Wendy, are thankful for their new little girl, Addie Mae. Addie was born December 14 and her grandparents are Bro. Eldon and Sis. Marge Waibel (Forest, IL) and Bro. Warren and Sis. Dolores Zehr (Fairbury, IL).

Amidst the busy holiday season, the students set aside the first Saturday in December as our annual baby-sitting day. Between baking cookies, making Christmas cards and playing games, everyone worked together to make Christmas shoeboxes for children who attend the Matthew House, an organization here in Champaign. The children were able to pick out a number of toys and gifts that had been bought by the students earlier in the week. With a little help,

they then wrapped the shoeboxes and made special name-tags for each child. A special thanks to each one who gave of their time and effort to help with this project. It is always a blessing to see the relationships that form between our Sunday School children and the college students as they spend this day together.

Of the many opportunities that we have around the Christmas season, Christmas caroling is always a favorite! The students met on Thursday, December 12, to sing at a local nursing home and the homes of several others in our community as well as those that assemble with us in Champaign. As we spread the joy of Jesus' birth through many of the familiar hymns, may we always be reminded of God's greatest gift and the true joy of Christmas.

"Tell Me the Old, Old Story" was the theme for our Sunday School Christmas program this year. The children did a wonderful job as they took the opportunity to share with many of their parents, grandparents and friends about the story of Jesus' birth. We especially want to thank the Sunday School teachers for their time and efforts in bringing this special afternoon together. Following the program, we went Christmas caroling to several local care centers and then ended up back at church for our annual chili supper.

A special thanks to Bros. John Hartman (Fairbury, IL), Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL), Warren Zahner (Rockville, CT), Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL), Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL), Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL) and their families for visiting us in the

past month. It is always a blessing to have visitors and we appreciate the time and efforts of these brothers as they shared the Word with us!

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## ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

**Jill Rager**

A new year often makes us think about new beginnings in an effort to improve upon past mistakes. In a sermon this past month, one of our home brothers warned us not to compare ourselves among ourselves because God has called us to a higher calling. We are called to perfection, not just to be a little better than some other imperfect person. As I pondered this thought, I began to wonder just what would a "perfect" me look like. We often strive toward perfection, but does our picture of perfection match God's picture of perfection? If those two pictures don't match, let's submit our picture to God and allow Him to perfect us in His way this year.

On Wednesday, November 20, our Bro. Lenny Meyer shared a topical Bible Study with us regarding the topic of "Obedience". Bro. Erik Givens (Princeville, IL) was in Chicago on December 1, and shared the Word of God with us. We thank these brothers for their ministry to us.

We have the privilege of welcoming two baby girls to our church family. Zoe Grace, born November 21, is the daughter of Tibor and Maggie Bozzay. Big sister, Abigail, and grandparents, Judith Febus and Bro. Tibor and Sis. Pearl Bozzay (San Diego, CA), are rejoicing with this new addition to the family.

Aridio and Sis. Katrina Cordero

are first-time parents to Yirenni, born December 14. Baby Yirenni has also made first-time grandparents of Bro. Jim and Sis. Kathy Schlatter.

We offer our prayers of thanks for the safe arrival of these two precious babies and our prayers for wisdom as these parents seek to raise these children to love God.

December 14 was also the day of our Sunday School Christmas program. We pray that the praise that was offered by our Sunday School students can be a "sweet smelling savour" to God as we reflect upon the priceless gift presented to us on that first Noel.

### *Note of Thanks:*

I would like to thank each one that has remembered me with thoughts, cards, gifts, visits and most importantly, prayers during the seasons of change in my life recently. Your love and support have been, and continue to be, so important to me and a blessing I am very thankful for. May God richly bless you for caring and sharing.

*Mabelle Welk*

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## ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

**Susan Waldbeser**

**Denise Walder**

We have been blessed with the following ministers: Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN) and Bros. Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), Jim Kaeb (Bern, KS) and Tom Waldbeser (Atlanta, GA). May God bless these brothers for being willing servants of God.

We are thankful that little Brooke Walder (Bro. Jim and Sis. Beth) had only a short stay in the hospital and is back home doing fine. We are also thankful that Sis.

Kate Young was spared serious injury in a car accident. We continue to pray for her as there will be a time before she is fully recovered.

We extend congratulations to Bro. Dennis and Sis. Sharon Walder on the birth of another granddaughter. Hannah Sue was born to Bro. Josh and Sis. Tina Walder from Lester, IA.

Our all-church Christmas caroling was held on December 1. What a blessing it was for many of us to go to various nursing homes and shut-ins to sing praises.

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## ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

**Arlene Banwart**

As we enter a new year, this poem seems meaningful.

### *Morning*

This day is new and clean, dear Lord,  
I have not talked to anyone,  
Spoken a careless word,  
Made a mistake,  
Yet!

This day is new and unused, Lord,  
I have not said a loving word,  
Or helped someone in need,  
Or tried to be a friend,  
Yet!

This day is new, help me, dear Lord,  
Not only to avoid the wrong,  
But seek to do some good,  
And make this world a better place  
Now!

—*Author unknown*

"... Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

*Hebrews 4:7*

We rejoice with Bro. Duane and Sis. Jill Gudeman in the birth of

their first daughter, Kendra Marie, on November 15. Her brothers, Daniel and Brandon, happily welcome her along with grandparents, Bro. Don and Sis. Mary Gudeman (LaCrosse, IN) and Bro. Ron and Sis. Jane Isch (Lamont-Gridley, KS).

December 12, Bro. Brad and Sis. Carla Walder were blessed with a son, Cade Rustin. His sister, Aubrey, welcomes him as do grandparents, Elder Bro. Bob and Sis. Gloria Walder and Elder Bro. Ken and Sis. Linda Indermuhle (Sardis, OH).

We are thankful Hallie Schieber (Bro. Mike and Sis. Mary) has repented and found peace with God.

Visiting ministers who blessed us with God's Word were Bro. Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL), Mike Bauman (Mansfield, OH) and Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH). Our appreciation is extended to them and also to our home ministers who faithfully proclaim God's Word.

A warm welcome is extended to Bro. James and Sis. Carrie Tate and children, Jonathan and David, who now worship with us.

Bro. Glen Knapp and Sis. Mary Steffen spent time in the hospital, but we are thankful they can assemble with us again. Sustaining injuries at work were Bros. Ralph Gudeman and Troy Luthi. Bro. Charlie Rinkenberger has not been able to assemble with us due to illness. Our prayers go out for all of them.

Sympathy is extended to Bro. Vernon and Sis. Judy Wettstein in the death of his brother, Loren.

Note: On December 18, the

night of our Sunday School program, a light tan ladies coat, size 12, was taken by mistake. Near the label on the inside is the name Mary Steffen. A similar coat (with the lining in) was left. Please call (309) 448-2334 if found.

### ILLINOIS, ELGIN

#### Amy Gasser

We are thankful to Bro. Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL) for ministering to our congregation this past month.

Bro. Jason and Sis. Karen Schambach welcomed a new baby girl, Sarah Anne, on November 24. Her grandparents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie Schambach and Bro. Gary and Sis. Edie Anliker.

Sis. Sandy Kinsinger (Bro. Bill) and Sis. Betty Bachtold (Bro. Sam) have undergone surgery recently. We pray for God's healing power.

Our Family Christmas Caroling was held on December 8, followed by a chili supper at the Fellowship Center.

On December 15, our Sunday School children presented the annual Christmas program.

We rejoice with Morris and Pat Young and their son, Lucas, as they have found peace and are awaiting baptism.

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

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

Another year of progress,  
Another year of praise,  
Another year of proving

Thy presence all the days.

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

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

*Note of Thanks:*

The family of Bro. Morrie Willaert wish to thank each and every one for the love and deeds of kindness shown us all through the years and especially at this time. He was finally free from toil and struggle on this earth and we praise our Saviour for His goodness and mercy and shedding His blood on the cross for each and every one of us.

### ILLINOIS, EUREKA

#### Janet Zimmerman

Bro. Mark and Sis. Brenda Nenadov are thankful parents of their first child. Laura Kay was born December 9. Her grandparents are Bro. Gerald and Sis. Ruby Grimm (Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn Nenadov of Eureka. May God be with them as they raise their child and teach her the love of Jesus.

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

*Luke 15:10*

We rejoice with Sheila Blunier (Bro. Ted and Sis. Donna) as she has begun her repentance. May God grant her grace as she begins



her walk with the Lord.

We wish God's blessings to Bro. Maury and Sis. Joyce Crawford as they observe their 50th wedding anniversary on December 28.

Our Sunday School Christmas program was December 15. It gives us joy to see each student singing hymns unto our Saviour. May each one be blessed.

Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with Wilma McCanness (Phil) who underwent knee surgery and suffered other complications. May God be with them.

Bro. Steve Sauder (Sis. Mary, Tremont, IL) was our visiting minister on December 8. We were thankful to have him with us and look forward to more visits.

Our prayers are with Sis. Ruth Martin (Bro. Les) and Bro. Sam Schmidgall (Sis. Gladys) on the recent death of their sister, Sis. Eileen Musselman.

The engagement of Sis. Leann Stoller (Bro. Stan and Sis. Lola) to Bro. Derek Sauder (Bro. Steve and Sis. Mary) of Tremont, IL, was announced on Thanksgiving Day, November 28. Also, the engagement announcement of Sis. Cheryl Stoller (Bro. Stan and Sis. Lola) to Bro. Nathan Wiegand (Dale and Sis. Freidora) was made known on December 15. We wish God's blessings and guidance to both couples as they prepare for their weddings.

Thinking that a New Year is just around the corner, a hymn from our Zion's Harp comes to mind.

Safe beneath His staff,  
I go on my journey, to and fro,  
Into pastures sweet and verdant,  
Finding joys and food abundant;  
And my thirst to quench,

He knows where the sweetest  
fountain flows.  
Shall I not then happy be?  
Jesus loves me tenderly.  
When my earthly days are ending,  
With the angel host ascending,  
In my Saviour's arms I'll be  
Blest in all eternity!

*Zion's Harp #17, vs. 2,3*

We wish each one God's blessings in the New Year.

*Note of Thanks:*

Since Lewis' accident and the months of recuperation, we wish to extend a very special thanks and appreciation for the many prayers, cards, calls, visits, gifts of love and caroling groups. May God richly bless each one for your kindness and love.

In His love and ours,  
*Bro. Lewis and Sis. Arletta Martin*

*Note:* For Eureka subscribers, Silver Lining dues are due the month of January.

**ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY**

**Joann Zehr**

**Tammy Hinrichsen**

New Year's greetings to all of our loved ones! Two families have been blessed with baby girls this month. On December 5, Chalise Marie Steidinger was born to Bro. Rick and Sis. Kim Steidinger. She is welcomed home by big brothers, Clayton, Jordan and Trevin. Grandparents are Bro. Warren and Sis. Shirley Fehr and Bro. Tom and Sis. Dianne Steidinger. Bro. Philip and Sis. Lana Steidinger became parents of their second daughter on December 17. Cloe Abigail was welcomed home

by big sister, Naomi. Grandparents are Bro. Norman and Sis. Lola Young and Bro. Dennis and Sis. Jane Steidinger. We are thankful that all went well for these precious little ones and their mothers.

Sis. Jami Walter (Bro. Jim and Sis. Juanita) and Bro. Adam Luginbuhl (Daryl and Sis. Norma) of Philadelphia, PA, have announced their engagement to be married. It is always exciting to see how God works to bring a brother and a sister together! May Jami and Adam continue to feel God's love and guidance as they prepare for their upcoming marriage.

Two of our sisters have spent time in the hospital this month. We pray that our Lord will comfort and heal Sis. Lola Steffen (Bro. Henry) and Sis. Barb Meiss (Bro. Marion).

On November 20, Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary Ann) was given the support of our brethren to once again carry the responsibility of being a minister in our church. Assisting our Elder Bro. Art Bahler that Wednesday evening was Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL). We would like to express to Bro. Rick, Sis. Mary Ann and Bro. Joel how thankful we are that they are here and Bro. Rick willingly accepts this duty. May God bless you!

Other visiting ministers this month were Bros. Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL), Alan Schambach (Remington, IN), Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA), Hartzell Kaisner (Detroit, MI) and Paul Gasser (Akron, OH). Many thanks to each of these brothers, their wives and families for spending a Sunday or Wednesday night with our congregation.

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**ILLINOIS, FORREST**
**Linda Anliker**
**Lori Dotterer**

We are thankful that God's Word is so freely spoken by willing servants. Sharing God's Word with us this month were Bros. Bill Hodel (Roanoke, IL) and Wayne Laubscher (Cissna Park, IL).

November 2 was the wedding day for Theresa Ifft and Derek Sutter. Their parents are Paul and Luann Sutter (Fairbury, IL) and Bro. Duane and Sis. Mary Ifft.

Believing God has directed their lives, Bro. Andy Dotterer (Smithville, OH) and Sis. Valarie Rinkenberger's engagement was made known. Their parents are Dale and Sis. Elaine Dotterer (Smithville, OH) and Bro. Bob and Sis. Sally Rinkenberger. May they continue to trust in the Lord as they make their wedding plans.

Two families in our congregation were blessed with the birth of daughters. First-time parents Bro. Mike and Sis. Marsha Lanz are enjoying Marissa Kate. Marissa's grandparents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Mary Bachtold and Bro. Elmer and Sis. Lavonne Lanz.

The precious gift of life was given to Bro. Ron and Sis. Vicki Mueller with the birth of Chloe Darlene. Her brothers, Raegan, Royce, and Rollie, and her grandparents, Bro. Eldon and Sis. Darlene Steidinger (Fairbury, IL) and Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida Mueller, are thankful for her arrival.

Those spending time in the hospital this month were Sis. Pauline Wiegand and Sis. Lavonne Lanz (Bro. Elmer).

The funeral service for Edith Honegger was held December 13. We extend our sympathy to her children, Janet Payne (Butch, St. Louis, MO), June Meletzke (Otto, Myrtle Beach, SC), Jean Chairney (Leonard, Edwardsville, IL), Keith Honegger (Joy, Glen Carbon, IL), and Joellen Short (Brian, Forrest, IL) and families and to her sisters, Dorothy Vermillion (Altadena, CA) and Sis. Marian Rieger (Bro. Rich).

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**ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD**
**Heather Hohulin**
**Rita Bauman**

We were so very blessed to have ministering Bros. Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction, OH), Jon Zeller (Sis. Christy, Morton, IL), Ted Hirstein (Sis. Joyce, Morton, IL), and Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL) this past month bring us the Word. We pray the Lord will richly bless them for their efforts. The announcement was made known of Sis. Rosie Zeltwanger (Bro. Dale and Sis. Rachel, Morris, MN) to Bro. Trent Strahm (Bro. Carl and Sis. Sharon, Sabetha, KS). May they look to the Lord for direction and wisdom as they plan their future together as one.

"... In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

*St. John 16:33*

Prayer and encouragement is important for our hospital patients this past month. They were Tim Mullins (Roger and Sherry), Dave Wiegand (Janet), and Bro. Daniel (Sis. Verla) Wiegand.

Our congregation was blessed

to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of Angie Schmidgall (Bro. Randy and Sis. Cindy). We welcome her as a sister in Christ, and may God bless her as she lives out her covenant of faithfulness to Him.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Norm and Sis. Barb Ricketts on the death of his mother, Margaret Ricketts, of Morton, IL. Also to Bro. Harold and Sis. Carol Hohulin on the passing of his mother, Esther Hohulin. May these families feel God's loving arms around them and the prayer of many as they mourn the loss of their loved one.

December 14 was the wedding day for Blake Gerber (Bro. Roger and Sis. Trish) and Kristin Knepp (Bro. Curt and Sis. Denise, Roanoke, IL). May the Lord bless them as they walk this life's journey as one.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jeremiah Araujo as he is working in Texas, and is worshipping with the Central Texas congregation.

Our Sunday School children relayed to us the blessed story of our Savior's birth in presenting the Christmas program on December 15. We thank each student that participated in telling of this wonderful story. We enjoyed hearing all the beautiful Christmas songs and verses.

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

"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

The above verse is displayed

near my desk at home and every time I notice it I am convicted.

"Only what's done for Christ will last." How true, and how sobering. Indeed, we speed through life and are often distracted by so much that is not spiritual. Earthly, carnal things can occupy a needless portion of our lives if we let them.

Yet, the Lord has summoned us to a high and holy calling. We have been called out of sin and darkness to do the Lord's work. Each one of us has been set in the body (of Christ) as it pleases God (I Cor. 12:18).

May each of us find grace to build our treasures in Heaven, and realize our life is soon over – and that fame, wealth and a high standing soon fade away.

In church one morning, we recently sang from a gorgeous hymn, "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds". These words resounded with meaning. Verse five reads: "I would Thy boundless love proclaim, with every fleeting breath; So shall the music of Thy name, refresh my soul in death." The presence of the Lord Jesus in our hearts is a treasure!

On December 8, Bro. Kyle Wettstein was married to Sis. Tara Gramm. His parents are Bro. Lyle and Sis. Linda Wettstein. She is the daughter of Bro. Roger and Sis. Darleta Gramm. May God richly bless their union. They will reside in Goodfield.

We were blessed by a topical Bible presentation on December 11 on commitment to our faith and practice. Elder Bro. Earl Ringger gave us encouragement. We have a precious heritage. May God grant us grace to preserve it.

On Tuesday, December 10, we had an all-church Christmas caroling event. A lunch was then served at the Fellowship Hall. It was a nice time of family togetherness.

Our Sunday School students presented their annual Christmas program on December 15. Our thanks to the children, along with their teachers and Superintendent, Bro. Keith Zimmerman.

Sis. Marge Meiss is undergoing treatments for a serious illness. Bro. Bill Schrock was under medical care for testing. We thank God for His healing powers.

We also thank God that souls are repenting. This should encourage our ministers, who labor on week after week. God bless them for all their labors, and their continuing efforts in preaching repentance and conversion.

Visiting ministers were Bros. Jim Butikofer (Iowa City, IA), Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO), Brace Wieland (Leo, IN) and Jim Kaeb (Bern, KS).

Bro. Buck and Sis. Taunia Henry are the parents of their first child, Samaria Joy, born on November 29. Grandparents are Dr. Reginald and Edith Henry, Hudson, and Bro. Roger and Sis. Elaine Witzig. Great-grandparents are Bro. Elmer and Sis. Marjorie Witzig. May God be with them as they raise this little girl.

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### ILLINOIS, MORTON

**Julie Bahr**  
**Christie Zeller**

Carson Rinkenberger is happy to have a new little brother. Quinn Allen was born to Bro. Bart and Sis. Janelle on October 26. Loving grandparents are Bro. Jaye and Sis. Peg Rinkenberger (Goodfield,

IL) and Bro. Wendell and Sis. Karel Anliker (Francesville, IN).

Sis. Margaret Ricketts passed away November 23. She is a sister to our Sis. Marie Pflederer.

Sis. Irene Musselman (Pulaski, IA) passed away. She is a sister to our Bros. Harry, Clarence and Irvin Schmidgall.

Bro. Fred Koehl passed away. He is a brother to our Sis. Matilda Kaiser and Sis. Aldeine Witzig.

David Hoffman passed away November 30. Our church ministers had his funeral and he is buried in our church cemetery.

Gene Jones passed away December 4. He is the father of our Bro. Dave (Sis. Sherry) Jones, Bro. Steve (Sis. Susie) Jones and Bro. Ron (Sis. Liz) Jones (Silverton, OR).

Bro. George Kieser (Princeville, IL) passed away. He is a brother-in-law to our Bro. Bob Knobloch.

Bro. Ken Roeschley went to be with the Lord December 13. He is the husband to our Sis. Dorothy.

May our Heavenly Father continue to comfort these dear families in their loss.

Bro. Ted Hirstein had our family worship for December 4. His topic was on "Silver Boxes". Let's always remember to "build up" or edify one another.

Our annual Christmas Caroling was held December 8. An enjoyable evening of song and fellowship was had by many.

Our Christmas program was held December 15. All the children did an excellent job. May we all remember the "reason for the season".

Our visiting ministers for the month were Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis.

Carla, Chicago, IL), Bro. Dean Steffen (Sis. Carol, Belvidere, IL) and Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS). May our many thanks go out to these brothers for lending themselves.

*Notes of Thanks:*

Words cannot express our sincere thanks for the kindness shown to us at the loss of our mother, sister, and grandmother. The prayers, visits, phone calls, food, cards, flowers, and memorials in her memory are sincerely appreciated.

*The family of Sis. Margaret Ricketts*

The family of Sis. Irene Musselman would like to express our deep appreciation and thanks for the outpouring of love, prayers, calls, cards, flowers and memorials at the time of the death of our beloved Mother and Grandmother. We very much appreciated the food received and prepared for us at the church. May the Lord richly bless you.

*Cheryl and Ed Duke*

*Roger and Nancy Musselman and family*

*Arlyn and Carol Musselman and family*

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**ILLINOIS, PEORIA**

**Peter and Mabel Weber**

On the crisp, sunny Sunday of November 17 we welcomed many visitors for the wedding of Bro. Brandon Knapp and Sis. Amy Knobloch. Special thanks to Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield, IL) and Bros. Ron Heiniger (Bloomington, IL) and David Marquart (Taylor, MO) for their service to the church. Love of God

and love for one another is a wonderful experience when it comes down from God to man and into marriage. Psalm 37:3-7 mentions the valuable ingredients of trust, delight, commitment, rest. May the Lord bless their union.

Do we see the Devil as just a mythological figure and symbol, or as being REAL? "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons" (Acts 1:7). Are you ready NOW? Or do we have to get ready (get oil) because "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5:2). (Bro. Tim Funk 11/24)

The pilgrims came in 1620 from England for freedom of religion and a new home in a new land. Today we have the opportunity to examine our hearts whether we have a home in Heaven. In Luke 17, one of the ten lepers gave thanks. Are we thankful that God has provided for us? "Rejoice evermore. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thess. 5:16, 18). (Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer 11/28)

The engagement of Bro. Derrick Menold and Sis. Wendy Rieker was announced on November 28 and we wish them the Lord's richest blessings as they prepare for a life together.

Jonathan Aupperle, Joseph Davidovics, Chris Esterling and Magan Kieser have repented, removed the barriers to faith and we welcome them into our brotherhood. They gave their testimonies on November 30 and were baptized on December 1. We thank Elder Bro. Ted Witzig (Morton, IL) for his assistance and ministry. God gives us this time to accept His mercies and be close to the shepherd so He can make our life joy

and gladness, because when He says, "Come!" we must go - into eternity.

"The shepherds' return" was Bro. Ken Hoerr's topic on December 4 for our family night service. He stressed their desire to see the Lord, leaving in haste for Bethlehem without procrastination. When the sky became bright, their eyes were opened and they saw the angels and were available to hear God's message about the birth of Jesus. The angels, the shepherds, even the whole creation, praised and glorified God as mentioned in Luke 2 and Psalm 145 and 148. Then they returned to their work, praising, glorifying and living for God and Jesus. Could we return to Jesus if we have not always stayed close to Him? We thank Bro. Ken for his message at this Christmas season.

"Jesus we trust YOU" ... but in the back of our mind we question what He is doing! In Luke 5, Jesus told Peter to let down his NETS, and Peter let down ONE net (vs. 5). "I trust You, Lord!" but we really don't. Peter was surprised at the huge catch in one net, which should have been in many nets. If he would have done what Jesus told him in the first place, this would not have happened. Then Peter called his partners, and both ships began to sink (7). When we are out of fellowship with God, we call on our friends and bring them into the same mess (Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer 12/8).

Sis. Carol Rieker spent a few days at Mayo Clinic and Sisters Judy Martin and Frances Wiegand also were hospital patients. All have returned home and we trust they have fully recovered.

We thank Elder Bro. Wendell and Sis. Marcella Gudeman (Francesville, IN) for their visit and Bro. Wendell's funeral service on December 9 for Bro. Donald Geef (91), who went to his rest on December 6 at the Skylines. When earthly and spiritual benefits come together, we have the fullness of God and the promise of eternal life through God's grace. "When the roll is called up yonder I'll be there." We express our sincere sympathy to his daughter, Pat, and her husband, Sam Rubinfeld, and the rest of the family.

Acts 1 describes Jesus' completed redemption. He came in the humblest scene in a manger, then went back to Heaven to be our Saviour, Redeemer, Advocate. God hears our prayers and tenderly pleads for us to come, never forsake the avenue of prayer and let not our sights diminish. We thank Bro. Ron Joos (Pulaski, IA) for his ministry on December 15.

Bro. Nathan Herman and Sis. Brooke Esslinger were united in Holy Matrimony on December 15. When choosing a mate, we ask God to provide someone who stands beside us in all joys and cares in every area of life. Keep your marriage a triangle with the Lord at the top. May they be blessed this day and their entire lifetime together.

*Note of Thanks:*

I would like to thank everyone for their gifts, flowers, good wishes and cards given to me for my 99<sup>th</sup> birthday. God bless you all.

*Sis. Anna Schneider*

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**ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE**  
**Phyllis Knobloch**  
**Crystal Streitmatter**

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

*John 10:10*

We are thankful that Tonya Martin (Bro. Craig and Sis. Terri) has come to the realization that turning to the Lord in true repentance is the step that results in abundant life. Our prayers are with you, Tonya.

December 1 was the wedding day of Sis. Mary Ehnle (Bro. Kurt and Sis. Jane) and Bro. Scott Endress (Bro. Gary and Sis. Evelyn) of Bradford. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Matthew 19:6). Visiting Elders for the day were Bros. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL) and Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL). Visiting ministers present that day or other times during the past month were Bros. Gary Endress (Bradford, IL), Dale Stoller (Fairbury, IL), Rick Plattner (Fairbury, IL), Tim Roecker (Peoria, IL) and Myron Knobloch (Lester, IA). We appreciate the abundance of ministers who visit us from other congregations.!

Bro. Herman Baer (Sis. Mary) has been experiencing a long hospital stay and recovery. We continue to pray for him and his family who have been so faithfully by his side.

Three funerals have been held in our church this past month. These included services for the oldest Brother (Harold Streitmatter) and oldest Sister (Lillian Stahl) in our Princeville congrega-

tion as well as Bro. George Kieser (Sis. Esther). We are thankful that all three of them sought the Lord many years ago and have lived faithful lives. The parting time is still difficult, but we are glad to see their suffering relieved. Our congregation will miss these loved ones.

Our sympathy and prayers go to the family of Bro. Harold Streitmatter and especially his children in our congregation, Sis. Mary Jane, Sis. Arlene and Bro. Bob Scholl, Bro. Norman and Sis. Joyce, Bro. Floran and Sis. Twylla, and Bro. Bill and Sis. Diane.

Bro. Ron and Sis. Jackie Rumbold, Diane Stahl, and Dean Stahl have experienced the loss of their mother, Sis. Lillian Stahl, who was residing at the Peoria Skylines Nursing Home.

Bro. George Kieser was also laid to rest and we pray for his wife, Sis. Esther, and children in our congregation, Sis. Nancy and Bro. Bob Wieland and Bro. Randy and Sis. Brenda Kieser. Many grandchildren and other relatives too numerous to mention are feeling these losses as well.

*Note of Thanks:*

The family of Bro. Harold Streitmatter wish to express heartfelt thanks to all for your prayers, expressions of sympathy, memorials, food, cards and other deeds of kindness at the time of his passing. May God richly bless each of you.

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**ILLINOIS, ROANOKE**  
**Joan Leman**  
**Jenell Hodel**

"O Praise the Lord, all ye na-

tions: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.”

*Psalm 117*

We have so many blessings to be thankful for and to praise God for. We so appreciate our country setting aside a day of Thanksgiving. May we be more thankful and content every day. Our church enjoyed our annual Thanksgiving singing on November 24. It was a special blessing to have our young group sing for us. We also enjoyed our annual All-Church Caroling and Chili supper on December 8. What a blessing to be with our church family – young and old – and share the good news of Jesus with others.

“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; What can I give Him? I’ll give Him my heart. – Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart Lord Jesus, Come in today, come in to stay, Come into my heart Lord Jesus.” This was a song sung to us at our Sunday School and Bible Class Christmas program. How beautiful it was to hear these meaningful words sung by some of the students. We appreciated the efforts made by the 3 year old students through the Bible Class along with their leaders and teachers. What a fitting way to get our hearts focused on the true meaning of Christmas.

We were excited to hear of the engagement of Sis. Mindy Rumbold (Bro. Rol and Sis. Carol) and Bro. Michael Anliker (Bro. Wendell and Sis. Karel,

Francesville). May God bless and direct them as they prepare for their upcoming wedding.

Our thoughts and prayers have been with those who have spent time in the hospital this past month. They are Bro. Ryan Lemam (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Julie), Jon Braker (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Janice), Sis. Pat Sauder and Sis. Mardell Bowald (Bro. Dick). May they continue to heal and gain strength.

We appreciate Bro. Frederick Knapp (Congerville) sharing God’s Word with us this past month.

Our prayers are with Chris Lang as he has decided to serve the Lord and begin repenting. May he allow God to mold and shape him according to His will.

*Note of Thanks:*

I would like to thank everyone for the gifts and cards I received for my birthday and Christmas. Also all the love and concern shown to me this past year. God bless you all.

*Sis. Doris Bowald*

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**ILLINOIS, TREMONT**  
**Heather Rassi**  
**LaVonne Wagenbach**

“For unto us a child is born,  
unto us a son is given...The mighty  
God...The Prince of Peace.”

*Isaiah 9:6*

Once again we were able to hear the Christmas story told in verse and song by our Sunday School children. What a blessing to see their enthusiasm! As we begin a new year, let us strive to keep the Christmas spirit in our hearts all

year long.

We welcome Sis. Betty Mogler (West Bend, IA). Sis. Betty has been worshipping with us for some time, and we appreciate her very much.

We are very happy to welcome four new brothers-in-faith. Our new brothers are Mark Sauder (Bro. Howard and Sis. Janice), Dale Koch (Bro. Dave and Sis. June), Tim Ropp (Ken and Joyce), and Tim Beutel (Bro. Dean and Sis. Karen). We wish them much grace to stay close to their Saviour.

We appreciate the visiting ministers this month: Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield, IL), Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA), and Bro. Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL). We want to thank them for their labors.

We rejoice with newly engaged couples: Bro. Derek Sauder (Bro. Steve and Sis. Mary) to Sis. Leann Stoller (Bro. Stan and Sis. Lola, Eureka, IL); and Sis. Diana Beutel (Bro. Fred and Sis. Jeannette) to Bro. Lucas Gudeman (Bro. Brad and Sis. Teresa, Bradford, IL). We wish them God’s blessings.

Our sympathy goes out to Fred Endress (Ruth) on the passing of his sister Sophie, of Germany. We remember the family in our prayers, as well as those in the hospital and those at home recovering. Dear ones spending time in the hospital this month are Bro. Glenn Dill (Sis. Marilyn), Sis. Evelyn Sauder (Bro. Rich), Della Schweigert (Willard), and Sis. Dorothy Wagenbach (Bro. Bob). May God continue to strengthen each one of them.

We are saddened to bid farewell to Bro. Glen and Sis. Rachel Steiner and family as they move to

Winthrop, MN. We will miss them dearly. What a great heritage we have that we can find the same Apostolic Christian fellowship many miles away. We wish them God's nearness as they make the adjustment.

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## ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

**Marcia Koch  
Dianne Wyss**

We are thankful for the safe arrival of two new baby girls in our congregation. Erica Marie Mangold, daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Judy Mangold, is welcomed home by big brother, Michael. Grandparents are Bro. Clyde and Sis. Mary Sue Waibel. Bro. Todd and Sis. Nicole Steffen's first child, Adelayde Rose, also made her arrival. Grandparents are Bro. Robert and Sis. Chris Baum and Bro. Keith and Sis. Cathy Steffen. When little Adelayde was only 5 days old, she required surgery. Thankfully, the Lord has heard many prayers and she is home and doing well.

Sis. Marti Teubel (Bro. Mark) was hospitalized but has also received the Lord's healing mercies.

We enjoyed the Peoria Choir at our monthly hymn sing.

Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Sis. Karen, Kansas City, MO) was here to minister to us this past month.

We enjoyed our annual church Christmas caroling and dinner. It is such a blessing to be able to tell the Christmas story through song. Our Sunday School children also did a fine job relaying the story of our Lord's birth at their Christmas program. In this new year, may we all with greater desire, walk closer with our Saviour.

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## INDIANA, BLUFFTON

**Elizabeth Aschliman  
Tiffany Aschliman**

Our congregation has been blessed with many new babies this month. Bro. Ron and Sis. Nicole Aschliman welcomed their first-born on November 18, Trevor Joe. His grandparents are Bro. Ralph and Sis. Rosie Aschliman.

Kaylie Jo was born to Bro. Dean and Sis. Marlene Vanhorn on November 27. She joins Elise, Madison, and Joshua at home. Her grandparents are Bro. Ralph and Sis. Lucinda Steffen.

Bro. John and Sis. Trudy Eisenmann welcomed twin sons, Jason Remington and Jeremy Steele on December 1. Their grandparents are Bro. Ramon and Sis. Lorena Steffen, Arlen and Jeanne Gerber, and Roger and Linda Eisenmann. They join Danielle, Alyssa, Erika, and Andrew at home.

Rebecca Ann was born to Bro. Gary and Sis. Stacey Fiechter on December 5. She joins brothers, Luke, Matthew, Nathanael, and Daniel, as well as sisters, Elizabeth, Sarah and Rachel, at home. Her grandparents are Herman and Sis. Phyllis Fiechter.

Bro. Nathan and Sis. Leslie Isch welcomed their first child, Cora Rose, on December 6. Her grandparents are Bro. Barry and Sis. Imogene Isch and Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy Stoller (Bluffton North).

Little Saige Elizabeth was welcomed by Bro. Luke and Sis. Jamie Rinkenberger on December 10. She joins her brother, Jaxson, at home. Her grandparents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Jeanne Rinkenberger.

Bro. Chip and Sis. Angie Topp welcomed a new addition to their family this month. Eighteen-month-old Marianna was adopted into their family. Marianna's birthday is June 21, 2001. She joins a sister, Alivia, at home.

We rejoice this month with three souls who have turned to Jesus Christ as their risen Lord and Saviour. Trevor Tonner (Bro. Dean and Sis. Julie), Alyssa Tonner (Bro. Brian and Sis. Joy), and Bethany Gerber (Bro. Dean and Sis. Jacki) have all begun the repentance process. We pray God's blessings on them as they begin their walk with the Lord.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

*John 14:21*

On November 24-25, we heard and witnessed the testimonies and baptisms of five young souls. Bro. Justin and Sis. Jenna Imel (Bro. Dave and Sis. Sharon), Sis. Elise Vidrine (Bro. Paul and Sis. Connie), Sis. Leah Baumgartner (Bro. Craig and Sis. Beth) and Bro. Jason Schwartz (Bro. Dale and Sis. Joni) were all welcomed into the fold this past month.

Spending time in the hospital this month were our convert Terry Goodpaster, Steve Stump (Sis. Arlene) and Matthew Gerber (Bro. Gene and Sis. Becky). Our prayers are with them as they recover.

Our prayers are also with the family of Lula Baumgartner in her recent passing. Specifically, we are

prayerful for her sons, Bro. Ed Baumgartner and Phil Baumgartner, and her daughter, Sis. Becky Neuenschwander (Bro. Rex); as well as her brother, Bro. Ervin Schwartz (Sis. Alice); and her sisters, Sis. Martha Gerber, Sis. Alice Steffen and Sis. Ada Gerber (Bro. Harry). We are also prayerful for our Bro. Chris Pulver (Sis. Kara) in the passing of his brother, Phil Pulver. Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Chuck Geisel (Sis. Marci) in the passing of his father, Bro. Harold Geisel (Sis. Ellen, Bluffton North).

We were blessed with a couple of visiting ministers this month. Bro. Roger Sauder (Sis. Judy, Fort Lauderdale, FL) and Bro. Jerry Bauman (Sis. Martha, Rittman, OH) visited and shared the Word with us. We are thankful for the willing spirits of these brothers and their families.

“Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth.”

*Colossians 3:2*

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**INDIANA  
BLUFFTON NORTH  
Tiffani Schladenhauffen  
Ann Meyer**

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

*Psalms 23:4*

Our dear Bro. Harold Geisel heard the Master calling him Home on December 13 after 78 years on this earth. He will be greatly missed by Sis. Ellen and his children, Bro. Stan (Sis. Cindy),

Sis. Valerie (Bro. Lynn) Kipfer and Bro. Chuck (Sis. Marcia, Bluffton) and their families. Our sympathy also goes to his siblings, Sis. Lorene Geisel, Sis. Delores (Bro. Eugene) Maller, and Bro. Vernon (Sis. Luella) Geisel (Bluffton). We extend our sympathy to Sis. Aldulla Pulver in the loss of her stepson, Phil Pulver, as well.

We were blessed this month to have Elder Bros. Marvin Leman (Sis. Jane, Bradford, IL) and Ron Messner (Sis. Pam, Washington, IL) share God's Word with us. We felt the Spirit in their messages. We all enjoyed the Christmas program the Sunday School presented this year.

Bro. Jadon Rauch believes the Lord's helpmeet for him is Sis. Tunde Namenyi of Budapest, Hungary. His parents are Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kathy, while hers are Bro. Janos and Sis. Irma. May the Lord bless and prepare their hearts for their life together even while they are still an ocean apart. They are planning a March 23, 2003, wedding in Budapest.

Bro. Sam and Sis. Mary Jo Gerber's daughter, Kristen, became the wife of Ryan Graft on October 26. We wish the Lord's blessing on their union and their home in Carmel, IN.

Baby Chloe Michelle Jolloff was born December 14 to excited new parents, Bro. Tim and Sis. Robin. Thrilled to become grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Bev Jolloff and Mike and Karen Todd.

Bro. Ted and Sis. Deb Neuenschwander are also first-time grandparents with the birth of Willow Rae Wolf on October 28. Little Willow's parents are Shelane and Brian.

Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy Stoller were also blessed with a sweet granddaughter, Cora Rose. Bro. Nathan and Sis. Leslie Isch (Bluffton) are her joyful parents. May all these new little ones be brought up in love and nurtured in the fear of the Lord.

Our prayers are with Sis. Imogene (Bro. Walt) Aeschliman as she has suffered a stroke, besides other health problems this past year. Bro. Mick (Sis. Coleen) Culp also spent some time in the hospital. May they both feel the Lord's strength in their time of need.

As we start a new year, we hope it will be a year of peace instead of turmoil. With God in our hearts, we are promised peace no matter what.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

*Philippians 4:7*

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**INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE  
Pam Huber**

Another year of service,  
Of witness for Thy love;  
Another year of training  
For holier work above.  
Another year of dawning,  
Dear Father, let it be,  
On earth, or else in heaven,  
Another year for Thee.

As we look forward with expectancy on the new year, may our hopes and plans be centered around God's will for our lives for we know not when our soul shall be required of us.

We have had many reasons to



rejoice and give thanks to the Lord this past month. Two little ones were welcomed into the church in November. Bro. John and Sis. Jessica Murray, along with Bryce, Gage and Vanessa, were blessed with little Broderick Jaymes on the 25th. Grandparents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Sharon Denton and Shirley Murray of Webster, IN. Bro. James and Sis. Tenessa Washburn with Larissa were also very thankful at the coming of their dear son, Haydn James, on the 30th. Grandparents are Bro. Doug and Sis. Margaret Leman and James and Deb Washburn.

Congratulations to our Bro. Michael Anliker (Bro. Wendell and Sis. Karel) who announced his engagement to Sis. Mindy Rumbold (Bro. Rollie and Sis. Carol) of Roanoke, IL. "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour." (Eccles. 4: )

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing sheaves with him."

*Psalm 126:5-6*

Beverly Hendershot, mother of our dear Sisters Connie Linback (Bro. Larry) and Karen Eide, went on to be with the Lord. We lift them up in prayer, that they and their families feel the love and peace of God at this hard time.

Many others in our congregation have been in the hospital this past month and are also in need of prayers. Bro. Phil Gutwein (Sis. Carol) had a heart attack, but is now recovering, for which we are very thankful. Bro. Carl Gutwein

(Sis. Yvonne) had eye surgery and we are thankful he is also doing well. Bro. Joe Gray (Sis. Esther) spent some time in the hospital again and is still in need of our prayers.

Our friend, Thom Salyers, will be moving and we will miss his presence with us. We hope that our paths will cross again one day, and until then, may "the Lord bless thee, and keep thee" (Numbers 6:24).

Thank you to Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL) who joined us for the reading for the Conference Memorandum. We also appreciated having Bro. Greg Lehman (Wolcott, IN) with us this past month.

*Notes of Thanks:*

*Friends, Family, Brothers and Sisters,*

We would like to express our gratitude to one and all for the prayers, cards, phone calls, visits and love that you gave so graciously while our son, Bryce, was in the hospital. We had the opportunity to see what the power of prayer can do. Bryce is back to normal and loving the fact that he can be back in school and with his family and friends.

Love in Christ,

*Bro. John and Sis. Jessica Murray*

*Dear Church Family and Friends,*

Over the past five years we have received so much from you - prayers, love, gifts, food, cards and visits. These have all meant so much to us and we have wanted to thank you for quite awhile, hoping we could also share that we had fi-

nally recovered. However, as we have found that Joe will have this cancer for the rest of his life, we wanted to take the opportunity now. Words just don't seem adequate to say how thankful we are for all you've done. It is truly better to give than to receive and we so appreciate your giving to us in our time of need.

In Christ,

*Bro. Joe and Sis. Esther Gray*

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**INDIANA  
INDIANAPOLIS  
Sandy Lichtle  
Sue Levy**

We rejoice with our new sister, Anna Pfister, who was baptized on November 17. The Lord is faithful in answering the prayers of those who call upon Him for deliverance. Our hearts were touched as Bro. Ron Bollier gave instruction from the Word to his daughter, Sis. Sara, and his son-in-law, Bro. Lon Vogt, of Francesville. Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein united them as husband and wife on November 24. Also in Indianapolis for the wedding were retired Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman, and ministering Bros. Mark Gerber, Steve Ringger and Robert Meyer. Bro. Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL) also served the Indianapolis congregation on December 1. We were thankful for members of the Grimm and Hohulin families who worshipped with us while in the area.

Our Sunday School Christmas program taught us of God's unspeakable gift on December 8. We appreciate the students, teachers and parents who gave time and effort to tell us about the birth of Jesus. May we all give thanks in this

season for Jesus, who was born in a humble stable and provided the way to Heaven. After the program gifts were distributed to needy families and carols were sung. Everyone returned to church for a warm chili supper and fellowship.

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### INDIANA, LACROSSE

#### Eric and Bobbi Ann Heinold

Once again, we were reminded of Jesus' lowly birth in the manger in Bethlehem through the young voices of our Sunday School children in song and in readings. To see the little ones to those in Bible Class tell us about our Saviour's birth is such an uplifting time for the congregation.

We look forward to the testimonies and baptisms of Megan Wuethrich (Bro. Chris and Sis. Carla) and Fern Antrim on January 11-12. May they feel the support of the church as they await this very special time.

A special thanks to Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH) for bringing forth our Thanksgiving Day message. May God bless you for your labors of love and willingness to share the Word of God with our small church.

Bro. Keith Elcock (Sis. Ruth) has had surgery this month but is home and slowly recovering. We pray that God's healing hand will continue to be upon him.

John and Carol Ailes are the blessed grandparents of Jonah Shay born to Jim and Donalda Garrett of Pennsylvania on December 6. Jonah is welcomed home by siblings, Selena and Sean.

As we prepare for the New Year, may we take time to look at this past year and thank God for all the

blessings He has bestowed upon each one of us and for the grace He has given us to face each trial we may have encountered. Also, let us be mindful of the courage and hope the Lord promises us for the future, if we continue to lean on Him and look to the Lord for our support and guidance. May God bless you all in 2003!

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### INDIANA, LEO

#### Ethelyn Schlatter

We appreciated the visit of Bro. Walter Herrmann and Sis. Betty (Princeville, IL) and were blessed with his message on Thanksgiving day.

Brenna Octavia Bowie was born December 8 to Bro. Ron and Sis. Christie Bowie. She was welcomed by Alicia, Lydia, Matthias, Will, Teagan, Tallia and Taryn. Congratulations and the Lord's blessings.

We had a large group to go Christmas caroling on December 12. We divided into four groups, then returned to church for a lunch and fellowship.

On December 15, the Sunday School presented the Christmas program. Sis. Laura Fischer composed the program which took us through Bible history, Genesis to Revelation and the thought to watch for Jesus' return.

Philip Pulver, 60, died December 10 at home. He was a feed rep at Milan Center Feed and Grain for more than 40 years. He was looking forward to seeing Jesus and Bro. Marvin Stieglitz. His father was the late Bro. Lester. Surviving are his wife, Mary Mae; three daughters, seven brothers, three sisters and his stepmother, Sis. Dulla Pulver, of Bluffton. Our

prayers are with the family, including Sis. Irene and Bro. Sylvan Pulver from our congregation, his aunt and uncle.

As we look forward to a New Year, may our hearts embrace David's words in Psalm 119:47-50, "...I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes. Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me."

Ich Dien - The crest of the Prince of Wales bears the simple watchword, "I serve", and no more princely motto can be found.

We cannot determine whether our faces shall be beautiful or ugly, our bodies graceful or deformed. But the shaping of our life is in our own hands. We make that great or small, noble or mean, as we will.

The motto, "I serve" always betokens real power and lasting authority. More, it is a truly Christian motto and proclaims eternal kinship with the highest.

—George Henry Hubbard

Sacrifice - There can be no real and abiding happiness without sacrifice. Our greatest joys do not result from our efforts toward self-gratification, but from a loving and spontaneous service to other lives. Joy comes not to him who seeks it for himself, but to him who seeks it for other people.

—H.W. Sylvester

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**INDIANA, MILFORD****Stacey Feller  
Paula Haab**

Bro. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL) was kind enough to bring us a Thanksgiving message when he came to be with his wife's (Sis. Julie) family. May God richly bless him.

As a church family, we've been blessed by being able to spend an evening working on World Relief projects. Many young people learned to knot comforters. We also spent an evening caroling throughout the community and then fellowshiping together. We enjoyed our Christmas program when all of our Sunday School children took their turn telling of Jesus, our Saviour and King. The choir always adds special praises. A group of Chinese students from Purdue attended our program as guests of some of our Brothers. May it have been a blessing to them.

It always seems a little bit special to become first-time parents and grandparents. Such was the case when Justin Alan was born on November 19 to Bro. Marc and Sis. Jodi Beer. His pleased grandparents are Bro. Lee and Sis. Sandy Beer and Bro. Rick and Sis. Dawn Dotterer (Rittman, OH). On November 22, Tessa Beth was born to Todd and Chrystal Beer (Bowie, MD). She has twin brothers to help take care of her. Also willing to help take care of her are her grandparents, Bernard and Peg Beer. May God watch over these little ones and give Godly wisdom to these new parents and all parents.

On Thanksgiving day, Bro. Morris Beer needed to have additional surgery and spent several days in the hospital. We are so

thankful that God has allowed recovery enough for him to again come to church. David Vice is hospitalized and awaits more heart tests. He needs our prayers for both body and soul.

God has promised to be with us even unto the end, so let's take comfort in His promises as we go into 2003 and the many unknowns of this time.

**INDIANA, REMINGTON****Beth Virkler  
Rochelle Ward**

As always, the Christmas season seems to rush by so quickly and we approach a new year. God tells us in His Word that we should not worry about tomorrow and that He will provide for us daily the things that we are in need of if we trust in Him. May this be our attitude in 2003!

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sis. Norm Wasner as she has been in the hospital. May God continue to give her a daily ounce of strength and comfort as she recovers.

We would like to thank ministering Bros. Ed Fritz (Sis. Sally, Washington, IL) and Ken Weerts (Sis. Myrna, Cissna Park, IL). While here visiting their son and daughter (Bro. Dan and Sis. Denise Weerts), we were blessed with them sharing the Word of God with us.

On December 15, we enjoyed our Sunday School Christmas program. The Spirit of God truly filled the sanctuary in beautiful songs and recitations. Thank you to all who took part to make this a special celebration of the birth of Jesus!

**INDIANA, SOUTH BEND****Samantha Gramm  
Kara Beebe**

When pure and upright hearts,  
by flames of love ignited,  
Are by the bond of faith  
more firmly yet united,  
The light of hope beams forth  
in radiance far and nigh,  
Invites us to partake  
the blessings from on high.

*Zion's Harp #79*

Our hearts were rejoicing on December 1 with Bro. Richard Gramm (Bro. Ed and Sis. Lucille, Eureka, IL) and Sis. Samantha Schafer (Bro. Scott and Sis. Gigi) as they were united in marriage. We wish them God's richest blessings.

Bro. Nelson Beer (Milford, IN) shared the Word with us on the wedding day.

As we begin this new year, how thankful we are for a God that walks with us each step of the way.

"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. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him.

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

*Lamentations 3:22-26***INDIANA, VALPARAISO**  
**Darel and Janet Walker**

We were privileged to have Bro. Arnold Gerst (Sis. Marge, Taylor, MO) visit last month to share our

pulpit and God's Word with us. Bro. Arnold reported on the history and the activities of the Apostolic Christian World Relief during the afternoon service. It was a blessing to hear about God's work being accomplished in Europe, the Caribbean, Mexico, and in Jamaica by members of our church.

"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*

We enjoyed a nice Christmas program on December 8 featuring the Sunday School children. They presented the Christmas story and sang several songs about the birth of our Saviour. We wish to thank our Sunday School teachers for their efforts in preparing the children for the program.

We held our annual Christmas Dinner on December 13. Sis. Hope Bucher and Sis. Marsha Weiss sang a few lovely Christmas songs. We read the Christmas story from St. Luke's Gospel and enjoyed a poem entitled, "Let Every Day Be Like Christmas" by Helen Steiner Rice. We completed the night with a nice meal and a gift exchange.

On December 15 we spread a little Christmas cheer by caroling at several nursing homes and for elderly shut-ins in the community. What a blessing it was to see the joy in the faces of those listening to the Christmas carols. We finished the evening with some hot cocoa and sandwiches back at the church.

## INDIANA WEST LAFAYETTE

**Diana Houston  
Nettie Haab**

We are always thankful for our visitors, and especially the ministers who have come to share God's Word with us. They have been Bro. Ed Sauder (Sis. Bonnie, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest, IL), Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN), and Bro. Greg Lehman (Sis. Mary Beth, Wolcott, IN).

Also our dear retired Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman (Sis. Marcella, Francesville, IN) was with us for the Purdue Christmas Program. He reminded us that it was 12 years ago that we met for the first time in our Fellowship Center where we are now holding our church services.

We are happy to welcome Bro. Lonnie and Sis. Sara Vogt to our congregation. They are making Lafayette their home after their recent marriage in Indianapolis.

We rejoice with Bro. Kevin and Sis. Laura Gutwein as they welcome a new son, Carl Brecken, into their family. Big sister Kaitlin and grandparents, Elder Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda Gutwein (Francesville, IN) and Bro. Mike and Sis. Mary Schieber (Congerville, IL), are also thankful for this precious gift from God.

We extend our love and sympathy to Sis. Diana and Sis. Teresa Houston in the death of their father and grandfather, Dean Norman.

On December 15, we had our Christmas program and our Sunday School children told us the real meaning of Christmas. May they always remember and keep the verses and songs they learned

in their hearts.

## INDIANA, WOLCOTT

**Erica Wagenbach  
Luann Gerber**

We thank Bro. Garry Bucher (Valparaiso, IN), Bro. Ted Steffen (Alto, MI) and Bro. Randy Gudeman (Francesville, IN) for sharing God's Word with us this month.

"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*

The annual Church caroling was December 14. What a blessing to sing praises to our Saviour as we rejoice in His birth in this Christmas season. The Christmas program was December 18. The Sunday School children told through verse and song the story of our Saviour's birth. We thank each one who had a part in the program.

**IOWA, ELGIN  
Gloria Frieden  
Heidi Butikofer**

Once again, we are starting a New Year and, as always, we know not what its days will hold. But, according to the teachings of Solomon and as previous years have confirmed, there will be times to get and times to lose, times to plant and times to harvest, times to weep and times to laugh. Solomon also writes that "all is vanity". So may we take heed the "conclusion

of the whole matter" found in Eccles. 12:13, "Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

As we look back on the closing of 2002 we want to thank our Sunday School youth for presenting the story of the birth of Jesus in verses, songs and scripture. May the true meaning of Christmas ever remain with them and with all of us.

Also as the year came to a close, there were times to be born for Peyton LaVerne Halverson (Wade and Michelle) and Trevin Christopher Jensen (Rhett and Amy). Peyton joins his siblings, Callie and Easton. His grandparents are Roger and Sharlene Halverson. Trevin made Bro. Tim and Sis. Kathy Butikofer first-time grandparents and our retired Elder Bro. Paul Butikofer and his wife, Sis. Millie, first-time great-grandparents. Also becoming first-time great-grandparents are Bro. Alvin and Sis. Phyllis Banwart (West Bend, IA).

And, "a time to die" for Bro. Orville Moore. Our sympathy is extended to his brothers, Herman (Elsie) of Union Bridge, MD, and Bob (Myrna), Fredricksburg, IA, and many nieces and nephews.

Visiting ministers since our last issue have been Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) who was with us on Thanksgiving Day, Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (Sis. Kathy, West Bend, IA) and Bro. John Steiner (Sis. Carol, Oakville, IA). May God bless each one for their faithfulness to their calling.

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**IOWA, GARDEN GROVE**  
**Willa Clark**

As we close the book on 2002 and 2003 opens before us, we find

blank pages ready for the writing. What will it be? Will the pages be filled daily with our love for God and fellow mankind, or will we fill the pages with thoughts and works of the world, with hardly a word of praise and of working for our Saviour? Let us live in Him daily, even by the minute and second, so that each moment of our lives is filled with His love, His goodness and His direction.

We have been blessed by visits from Bros. Tim Zimmerman (Lamont-Gridley, KS), Ron Joos (Pulaski, IA) and our Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA). May God richly bless them for their labors for us.

Brethren from Pulaski and Burlington congregations gathered with us as we caroled for the elderly in Garden Grove. One recipient commented, "I wondered if anyone would remember me this year." The tone of her voice indicated few had. Again, we must remind ourselves, there are those about us whom it is so easy to overlook. Have we spread God's love today?

The Sunday School Christmas program brought us a three-fold message. First, our Saviour came as a Babe in Bethlehem. Secondly, "but Easter Day is when Jesus did die, shed His blood, our salvation to buy." Thirdly, are we like the innkeeper, not recognizing Him and turning Him away, or like devout Simeon and the prophetess Anna, "Will we know Him when He comes?"

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**IOWA, IOWA CITY**  
**Diana Butikofer**

We thank our Sunday School students and teachers for giving us

a Christmas program to tell us how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the promised Saviour and remind us that it was the significance of Jesus' death that made His birth so important.

Alas, how many only know  
The Saviour as a child...  
'Tis not the manger, but the cross  
That sets the Spirit free.

*Hymns of Zion #36*

We were happy to hear of the engagement of Ryan Eland and Beverly Ello. Their parents are Bro. Brad and Sis. Joyce Eland and Rolando and Cresencia Ello (Port Charlotte, FL). We pray for our Lord's care and guidance of them as they prepare for their February wedding and a lifetime together.

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

Bro. Jon and Sis. Tricia Blomgren are thankful for a healthy daughter, Kara LaChelle, who was born on November 27. Kara's sisters are Kinzi and Kaysha. On December 11, Bro. Josh and Sis. Tina Walder became first-time parents of Hannah Sue. Her grandparents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Sharon Walder (Cissna Park, IL), and Bro. Roger and Sis. Janet Knoblock are the happy grandparents of both of these new babies. Sis. Zelma Knoblock is their great-grandmother.

Mary Moser (daughter of Jim Moser) has announced her engagement to Christopher Fagerness. They are planning a July wedding.

We rejoice with Janet Oleson (Kevin) and her family as she has

heeded the call of repentance. May she find the grace and courage to draw closer to the Lord and follow His Word.

Sis. Emma Meyer, Sis. Elaine Kellenberger and Eric Hartter (Bro. Jerome and Sis. Gail) were hospital patients this month. May they each be restored to good health.

December 14 was a very special day for Ross Metzger (Bro. Jim and Sis. Lois) and Heather Walhof as they were united in Holy Matrimony. The following day, December 15, Sis. Carolyn Knobloch (Bro. Art and Sis. Elgeva) and Bro. Dale Hartzler (Rittman, OH) became one in the Lord. We will certainly miss Sis. Carolyn as she leaves to make her new home in Ohio. May God's blessings be upon these two couples as they walk the path of life together.

Our annual Christmas program was presented by our Sunday School children on the evening of December 15. Are we thankful every day for God's wonderful plan to send His Son to walk among man and experience our every sorrow and temptation?

Throughout the month we had many visiting ministers with us. Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA), Bros. Roger Aberle (Sabatha, KS), Roy Koehl (Morris, MN) and Mark Streitmatter (Bloomington-Normal, IL) were in our congregation on Thanksgiving Day. Bro. Pat Zaugg (West Bend, IA) preached the Word the following Sunday. And, the weekend of December 15 brought Elder Bro. Merle Hartzler (Rittman, OH), Bros. Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH), Dale Moore (Elgin, IA), Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA),

Roy Koehl and Beirne Messner (Morris, MN) and Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN) as guests for the wedding.

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

As we reflect over the past year, we truly have to be so thankful that God has blessed us so abundantly and provided for us once again much more than what we are deserving of. Let us always remember that there are others who are hurting and do not have the privileges and abundance that we have been given. May our daily walk and service to God always glorify His name that others may observe and know that the Spirit of the Lord is with us!

Our children participated in the annual Christmas program and what a blessing we received as we heard their innocence and witnessed the love they have for the Savior. We need to strive each day for that childlike faith and innocence. Our lives would be less stressed and we would certainly have a brighter light burning in this wicked and sinful world.

With great joy and thankfulness to God for His healing mercies and miracles, we welcomed Bro. Robby Lanz home and to church on Christmas Day. Nearly five months after his accident, he was able to come home from the Head Injury Rehabilitation Center in Ankeny for a couple of days at Christmas. Please continue to pray for Bro. Robby and his family as he still will need to undergo more therapy in his recovery.

Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA) and Bro. Jeff Thames

(Washington, IL) have recently visited our Oakville congregation and we were blessed by their willingness to submit to the Lord's direction and feed us from His Holy Word.

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

Our congregation rejoices with Barbara Schock (Elder Bro. Doug and Sis. Clara) and Boni Wettstein (Bro. Jon and Sis. Rita) as they have made the choice to follow our Saviour and seek Him in repentance.

Sis. Irene Musselman was relieved of her suffering here on earth and went Home to be with her Lord on November 24. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family, Bro. Roger (Sis. Nancy) Musselman, Cheryl (Ed) Duke, Arlyn (Carol) Musselman and their families. A funeral service and burial was in Morton, IL.

It was a blessing to be at the Sunday School Christmas Program and have the story of Jesus' birth retold by the children. May God bless them for their willingness to do this.

*Note of Thanks:*

The family of Sis. Irene Musselman would like to express our deep appreciation and thanks for the outpouring of love, prayers, calls, food, cards and flowers and memorials at the time of the death of our beloved Mother and Grandmother. May the Lord richly bless you.

*Cheryl and Ed Duke*  
*Roger and Nancy Musselman*  
*and family*  
*Arlyn and Carol Musselman*  
*and family*

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**IOWA, WEST BEND**  
**Lori Skoglund**  
**Berniece Banwart**

Still upward be thine onward  
 course:

For this I pray today;  
 Still upward as the years go by,  
 And seasons pass away.

Still upward in this coming year,  
 Thy path is all untried;  
 Still upward may'st thou journey  
 on,  
 Close by the Saviour's side.

Still upward e'en though sorrow  
 come,  
 And trials crush thine heart;  
 Still upward may they draw thy  
 soul,  
 With Christ to walk apart.

Still upward till the day shall  
 break,  
 And shadows all have flown;  
 Still upward till in Heaven you  
 wake,  
 And stand before the throne.  
 —*Streams in the Desert*

Three new members of our congregation have chosen the "Upward Way". May they ever feel the Lord's presence in their lives. Bro. Rustin Metzger (Bro. Harlan and Sis. Shirley), Bro. Carl Gerber (Bro. David and Sis. Diane) and Sis. Joleen Grimm (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Rose) gave their testimonies and were baptized on December 7-8. Assisting Elder Bros. were Gerry Hertz (Sis. Ellen, Sabetha, KS), Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL) and Doug Schock (Sis. Clara, Pulaski, IA). Other visiting ministers for this occasion were Bros. Dale Wulf (Sis. Becky, Lester, IA), Floyd

Frieden (Sis. Jan) and Dale Moore (Sis. Cheryl), both of Elgin, IA; Dean Messner (Sis. Wanda, Winthrop, MN) and Bill Emch (Sis. Susan, Lamont-Gridley, KS) who gave their support in speaking the Word, prayers and in Sunday School.

Looking forward to this blessed event in his life is Greg Fehr (Bro. Dan and Sis. Eunice) as he has found peace.

Three brothers, Nathan, Nolan and Coleman, are happy with the addition of another boy in their family. Creytan Dennis was born on December 1 to Bro. Jordan and Sis. Ann Grimm. He is fortunate to have two sets of grandparents living nearby: Bro. Wayne and Sis. Rose Grimm and Bro. Dennis and Sis. Judy Fehr.

Upon our request, the following article was humbly submitted by a brother in faith:

As I think upon the dawning of a new year, St. John 1:1 comes to mind. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

As we begin a new year, are our lives in agreement with the Word of God? "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." (John 5:7-8). There are so many books we could read and so many seminars we could attend, but there is no better source to teach us how to live than the Holy Bible which reveals unto us Words of Truth.

Recently a convert was asked

about his relationship to God. The first thing he said was "a servant". When we look into God's Word, do we have a prayer on our heart that God will reveal to us how we can serve Him better? Are we reading God's Word with a desire that God will show us how to serve one another? Jesus Christ, by word and example, teaches us how to be a servant.

Many of us look at our lives and see the years going by so quickly. What are we doing with those years? "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:17,20).

Are we ready for the Lord to come and have His Word be our judge? "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." (Revelation 22:21).

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

It is Christmas time again, and we are so thankful that we can yet have the privilege to celebrate the birth of Christ in our hearts, homes, and churches. Early this month we collected used clothing for the Salvation Army. Some goes to the homeless and others is displayed on a bazaar to sell. The proceeds are used for their activities in helping others.

As Christmas day is a regular working day in this country, our services were all held on Sunday, December 22. In the afternoon we enjoyed the program of recita-

tions, songs, a flannel graph story and crossword puzzle. All of these items told aspects of Christ's birth, and not forgetting to include the most important part of Jesus' life that He grew to manhood, died, and rose again for the sins of the whole world. The question was asked by the last boy if we are preparing our life to see Jesus by believing and obeying the message we heard today.

When the children gathered for their practice and party, one of the mothers asked why we didn't have a Christmas tree in our church. She was told that we only want to encourage the true meaning of Christmas which is Christ's holy and humble birth. Questions like these help us to think deeply concerning what we think and do at this season.

Bro. Ben Pearson, Indianapolis, IN, is visiting here, and we so appreciated his part in our services along with Bros. Kan Umemura and Makoto Inoue who are studying in the states but have returned here for the holidays. As the year end approaches we so look forward to more visitors including Elder brethren for the dedication service for our newly remodeled building on January 5, 2003. Our many plans depend on God's provisions, and we trust He will bring them to pass according to His will.

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### **KANSAS, BERN**

**Sally Strahm**

**Lori Baumgartner**

A new year is upon us. May we be ever so thankful God was by our side in the past year whether we went through trials or He blessed us in one way or another. If we have faith, He'll continue to go

with us in the New Year ahead.

Bro. Dwight and Sis. Anita Rokey were blessed with a new baby boy on November 29. They named him Brandon Eugene. Excited siblings are Leigha, Amanda, Benton and Dillon to welcome him into their family circle. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Allan and Sis. Glenda Rokey and Eugene and Judy Edelman.

Michael and Sis. Lucy Goodman were likewise blessed with a new baby boy on December 2. They named him Brett Michael. Brett's siblings are Jodi, Kara and Chad. His thankful grandparents are Elvin and Bev Goodman and Eugene and Judy Edelman.

Bro. Todd and Sis. Cynthia Fehr also welcome a baby boy, Kenton John, into their family circle. Excited siblings are Logan, Leanna and Rachel. Grandparents are Bro. Fred and Sis. Joann Edelman and Bro. Warren and Sis. Shirley Fehr (Fairbury, IL). We pray God will be with these three dear couples as they raise and nurture their blessings from Heaven.

We are happy to announce the engagement of Thatcher Reist and Anne Hanzlick. Parents are Dave and Marci Reist of Highland, KS, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hanzlick of Colby, KS. We wish them God's blessings in their marriage.

It's always a special privilege to have visiting ministers with us from Sunday to Sunday. Elder Bro. Don Braker (Sis. Eileen, Kansas City, MO) was with us on November 17 and Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS) was with us on December 15. Thank you, brothers, for lending yourself as servants.

Our thoughts and prayers have

been with Gregg Grimm (Sis. Marie) who has spent time in the hospital this month.

We wish Sis. Stella Moser (Bro. Reuben) a blessed 90th birthday. May God grant you many more happy, healthy years.

On December 8, the Bern church had their all church Christmas caroling and soup supper. It was a blessed evening enjoyed by those who caroled and those who were caroled to .

The Bern Bible class hosted the Sunday School Christmas caroling and supper on December 11. Joining them was the Sabetha Bible class.

The Sunday School Christmas program was held December 15. It was such a joy to watch all ages as they proclaimed Christ's birth. May we remember what a responsibility we have in teaching our children.

Semester graduates from Kansas State University include Troy Kaeb (Bro. Paul and Sis. Joan) and Thatcher Reist (Dave and Marci). We wish them God's blessings as they enter this next stage in life.

Our mid-week services with the Sabetha congregation began December 4. We will alternate every week till Easter.

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### **KANSAS, FORT SCOTT**

**Ruth Bahr**

The Sunday School has plans to carol at the three nursing homes and finish the evening with a chili supper at church.

We were blessed to have Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Sis. Gloria, Congerville, IL) feed us from the Word in November.

Have you made Jesus your Friend



and your Saviour,  
Renouncing the world and forsaking  
all sin?  
Have you returned to His love and  
His favor,  
Resolving a heavenly life to begin?

Have you decided to follow the  
Saviour,  
To be His disciple and serve Him  
always,  
Leaving the pleasures and joys of  
the world,  
To walk with the Lord in the heavenly  
way?

Are you now living the life of a  
Christian,  
Devoting yourself to His service of  
love,  
Trusting, beyond all earth's toiling  
and praying,  
To reign with the Saviour in man-  
sions above?

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### KANSAS, KIOWA

**Jenny Stewart**  
**Laura Wagenbach**

Greetings to all and happy new year! May the Lord bless you this new year and draw you closer to His precious side.

The Sunday School performed a wonderful Christmas program to celebrate the wondrous birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Young voices raised in praise to the newborn King! It was a heartwarming sound.

Our congregation has been blessed with a new sister in Christ. The testimony and baptism of Sis. Tifani Bahr (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Janice) was witnessed over the weekend of December 14-15. Many visiting friends and family were present to greet their new sister. We want to thank everyone for coming to share this most special time of Tifani's life with her and

our congregation. It is always a time to look back on our own conversion and ask ourselves, where are we now? How much have we grown since that day?

Our hospital patients this month were Sis. Mildred Farney and Erlene Farney. Sis. Mildred was hospitalized for heart problems. Erlene underwent a gallbladder surgery. Our prayers are with Bro. Larry Frieden as he continues treatment.

In this new year let us remember to keep God's Word close to our hearts!

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

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

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### KANSAS LAMONT-GRIDLEY

**Sarah Somerhalder**

We rejoice and are thankful that God is still calling souls in our congregation. Aaron and Marie Luthi (son and daughter of Elder Bro. Jay and Sis. Jane) have been announced as having peace in their hearts. We look forward to hearing their testimonies and witnessing their baptisms.

Thanks to our visiting ministers this past month. They were Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Bro. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO). May the Lord richly bless them for their willingness to labor for the Lord in our behalf.

On December 15, our church enjoyed hearing the Sunday School tell the old story of our dear Lord's birth in poem and song. That afternoon the Sunday School

students and teachers enjoyed caroling at several homes. Following caroling, there was an all-church chili and soup supper at the Gridley Community Building.

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### KANSAS, SABETHA

**Jeanelle Plattner**  
**Mary Kay Wenger**

Our Sunday School Bible class recently had the opportunity to share their abundance of youthful energy. They worked together to rake leaves for several people in the community who are no longer able to do the job themselves. We know there were many thankful hearts as they watched these willing workers from their window. God gives each of us the same number of hours in a day. Do we take the time to lend a helping hand from time to time? The students from all classes also shared their love by taking a collection for a needy family during this Christmas season. We know God has richly blessed each of us, and we're thankful that we are able to share with others. Our annual Christmas program was once again enjoyed by all. We pray that this special Christmas season will continually mean more to each young heart as they grow older.

God's messengers that fed us the Word this past month were Bro. Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA) and Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI). We're thankful that family ties bring these two brothers to our church often.

On November 24, Bro. Trent Strahm was announced to be married to Sis. Rosie Zeltwanger (Goodfield, IL). Bro. Trent is the son of Bro. Carl and Sis. Sharon Strahm, and Sis. Rosie's parents

are Bro. Dale and Sis. Rachel Zeltwanger (Morris, MN). We rejoice with them as they take this important step in life and plan a March wedding.

Bro. Gerald and Sis. Ruby Grimm joyfully welcome their fourth granddaughter, Laura Kay, into their family circle. Laura's parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Brenda Nenadov (Eureka, IL).

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Jeanette Huber in the recent passing of her mother, Sis. Minnie Nohl. Sis. Jeanette has certainly been in our prayers at this difficult time. May God's presence be felt as she looks forward to many heavenly reunions.

Our prayers are with Sis. Lucille Kellenberger as she awaits surgery. Sis. Marian Kellenberger and Opal Steiner spent time in the hospital. We're thankful that they have felt God's healing touch and are assembling with us again.

Christmas caroling, followed by a potluck soup supper, was enjoyed by all of us during this special time of year. What a wonderful feeling we received as we saw the faces of those we sang to lighten up as they heard those familiar songs about our precious Saviour's humble birth.

Since Thanksgiving, our Sunday evening song services have ceased, and Wednesday evening services have resumed.

#### *Notes of Thanks:*

I wish to express my sincere thanks to each one who remembered me on my 80th birthday with so many lovely cards, phone calls, and notes. They were all very much appreciated. May God bless each one for your love and

thoughtfulness.

*Sis. Irene Lehman*

Deepest thanks are extended to all who have remembered us in thought and prayer at the time of the loss of our husband, father, and grandfather. Your gifts of memorial, flowers, cards, phone calls, and food are deeply appreciated. "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you."

*Jeanette Huber*

*David Huber*

*Martin and Karen Beyer and family*

*Gordon and Sharlyn Huber and family*

*Eric and Marcel Huber and family*

#### **KANSAS, WICHITA**

**Emma Miller**

With the short holiday season between Thanksgiving and Christmas, it is difficult to focus on either of them. This article will not appear until the New Year and the holidays will be a memory. It is up to each of us to choose the memories we want to keep. Hopefully we can each recall the blessings that came our way in spite of the hardships or disappointments. Surely, those who took part in caroling and planning the Christmas program and dinner will feel a blessing as a result of their participation.

One blessing we in Wichita can claim is for the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Many visitors worshipped with us that day. Elder Bro. Jay Luthi and his family were among those present.

The following week, we had our first taste of winter in the form of a beautiful snow. The precipitation

was welcome and the five to seven inch blanket of white was beautiful. We in Kansas often make the remark that if you do not like the weather we have having, just be patient, it will soon change. As of this writing, we are back to light jacket weather.

Several from our congregation joined with others from the various Kansas congregations for a day of work at the MCC work center at Newton on December 10. This was my first opportunity to be among those who came to work. I am happy to say it was a rewarding experience.

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#### **MEXICO, IXTLAN** **Gloria Gonzalez**

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

*I Corinthians 13:13*

On December 1, our congregation rejoiced with the third wedding in Ixtlan. Bro. Eduardo 'Lalo' Ugalde (Jose Luis Ugalde and Maria Elena de Santiago) was united in marriage to Sis. Silvia Cabrera (Salvador and Sis. Guadalupe Cabrera). May our Lord bless them as they walk in His steps each day of their life together.

*Meet Sis. Nancy Roque:*

My name is Nancy Roque (Bro. José Roque and Sis. Irma). I live in Ixtlan, Michoacán.

There are four children in my family. I am currently 14 years old and the oldest in my family. My father and mother are both converted. When I was eight years old my father began attending the Ap-

ostolic Christian Church in Ixtlan. Soon afterwards, our entire family started coming to church together. I started attending Sunday School. At first I enjoyed it, but later I would get tired in Sunday School and did not like it very much. When I started attending Young Group functions and Bible Studies, I found it much more enjoyable.

Before I started repenting I would lie to and get angry with my family a lot. I was tired of being that kind of person. Eventually, I began to notice the joy that others who attended the church had and desired to have the same in my life. I began repenting when I was 12 years old and was baptized on July 22, 2001. Now my life is different – I have joy and happiness. I want to be an example to the younger brother and sisters and to the rest of my family. I am very happy to be a child of God and I now live with the promise of being with Him in eternity.

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### MICHIGAN, ALTO

**Terri Huber  
Rose Watson**

Elder Bros. Curt Frank (La-Crosse, IN) and Ray Sinn (Latty, OH) visited to assist the church and our Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen with the Lord's work of selecting and installing a new minister. Bro. Ned Stoller and his wife, Sis. Heidi, saw that they have the full support of the congregation as Bro. Ned enters the ministry.

Two of our own have sought and found the Lord's will for a shared future. The engagement of Bro. Brett Plattner (Bro. Howard and Sis. Kristen) and Sis. Laura Blough (Bro. Jim and Sis. Julie) was announced this month. May

God bless them as they commence planning a wedding and future!

Joy comes to the Steffen household in the form of Rachel Joy, new baby of Bro. Ted and Sis. Sandy. Tasha, Heather, Nicole, Abigail, Michael, and Daniel are having fun caring for their littlest sister.

By the time this is printed, the "Holiday Hurries" will be over...our prayer is that everyone took the time to slow down and thoughtfully appreciate the precious gift of a Saviour for whom the holiday is named: CHRISTmas. Some of our worthwhile activities included caroling at fourteen homes of seniors or shut-ins. Further peace and appreciation came from hearing our Sunday School children sing and recite the prophecy and miracle of the season during the annual Christmas Program.

At this writing, Bro. Dennis Koehl is currently hospitalized and needs our prayers.

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### MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

**Sarah Knochel  
Janelle Ramseyer**

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

*Matthew 1:21*

As the Christmas season is rapidly approaching, may each one remember the blessedness of His birth and rejoice that He will save us from our sins.

Who at my door is standing,  
Patiently drawing near,  
Entrance within demanding  
Whose is the voice I hear?

### *Hymns of Zion #81*

We are blessed to see that the Lord is still calling souls and they are answering when He calls. Our prayers are with Andreas Schlatter (Bro. Jay and Sis. Carola) as he has answered the call of the Lord and has begun the repentance process. We pray that the Lord will be with him and be his constant provider.

Thou, my everlasting portion,  
More than friend or life to me;  
All along my pilgrim journey  
Saviour, let me walk with Thee.

*Hymns of Zion #223*

The Bay City congregation was uplifted and encouraged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of our new brother and sister in faith, Bro. Mike and Sis. Nancy Ruegsegger. We pray that the Lord will continue to be with them and guide and direct them as they walk forward together as new children in Christ. We appreciated having Elder Bros. Aaron Steffen (Sis. Loretta, Alto, MI) and Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH) with us for this special weekend. We are so thankful for their endless efforts of love.

We also want to thank Bro. Hartzell Kaisner (Sis. Mary, Detroit, MI) for being with us on a recent Sunday. May the Lord richly bless him for his kindness.

The Sunday School presented the church with an evening of hymns and verses related to the Christmas season. We are thankful for each of the students and for their willingness to share God's love.

Many from our congregation have experienced infirmities of the

flesh during this past month. We entreat God's nearness and healing on Sis. Marie Waibel, Sis. Winifred Gorney, Bro. Jonathon Jacobs, and Jennifer Curtis. We also pray for the family of Sis. Inez Grew as they are witnessing the frailty of life on their dear loved one.

As 2002 draws to a close, may we look forward to 2003 as another year of service to the Lord.

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

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

Another year of service,  
Of witness for Thy love,  
Another year of training  
For holier work above.  
Hymns of Zion #150

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**MICHIGAN, DETROIT**  
**Sarah Beard**  
**Holly Barton**

December 15 we enjoyed hearing the children tell the birth of Christ through poem and song. May God bless their young hearts and minds to be open to Him.

We apologize for failing to mention the birth of Nicholas (Ed and Sue Orcsik). He was born in July. Happy Grandparents are John and Ester Orcsik.

We are thankful God has seen fit to bring two lives together. Bro. Brett Plattner (Bro. Howard and Sis. Kristen, Alto, MI) and Sis. Laura Blough (Bro. Jim and Sis. Julie, Alto, MI) were announced to be married on November 24. Bro.

Brett is a student here at Wayne State. We wish them God's blessings and happiness in the future. We thank Bro. Neil Ramseyer for serving us at Woodhaven this month.

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**MINNESOTA**  
**MINNEAPOLIS**  
**Diane Stewart**

How joyful it was to hear the Sunday School tell us the story of the Christ Child's birth in their yearly Christmas program. The enthusiasm flows from their faces.

Let us continue to uphold in prayer Sis. Rachel Kent and her family.

Visiting ministers this past month have been Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Sis. JoAnn) and Bro. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Maggie), all of Winthrop.

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**MINNESOTA, MORRIS**  
**Heidi Messner**  
**Cheryl Messner**

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

*Galatians 6:2*

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Bro. Todd Stoller (Latty, OH) brought us the Word of God, for which we are thankful.

Bro. Mark and Sis. Lori Mattson welcomed another precious baby daughter into their family on November 13. Lindsey Marie joins sisters, Sabrina, Ashlyn and Haley. We pray the Lord will grant abundant grace and wisdom to these parents. Grandparents are Bro. Aldean and Sis. Charlotte Luthi and Rodger

and Patty Mattson.

A beloved sister in faith has gone to her reward. Sis. Minnie Nohldied on December 2 at the age of 93. Her husband, Bro. Alvin, passed away in 1998. She is survived by four sons: Elder Bro. Arthur (Sis. Sandra), Robert (Marilyn), Alvin, Jr. (Kathy) and Bro. DeWayne (Sis. Janice), all of Hancock; one daughter, Sis. Jeanette Huber (Sabetha, KS). We offer this family our love and prayers. Sympathy is also extended to Bro. Frank (Sis. Gladys) Messner, a brother to Sis. Minnie.

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**MINNESOTA, WINTHROP**  
**Marilyn Messner**  
**Ginny Stoll**

Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Oakville, IA) traveled here for the reading of the Memorandum. We thank them for their efforts of sharing and using God's Word to teach and warn us.

Now thank we all our God  
With heart 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*

We were blessed with an abundant harvest as we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Bro. Donald Miller (Sis. Bernadine, Minneapolis, MN) spent a Sunday with us. We appreciate their special efforts to fellowship with us.

Hospital patients were Sis. Sophie Miller and Sis. Delores Messerli. May God continue to

give them strength.

Then He shall come gently,  
Lead us by His hand,  
From our weary journey  
To the Fatherland.  
There where strife is over,  
Praise to God we'll bring,  
With the righteous chorus  
"Hallelujah" sing.  
*Zion's Harp #149*

Sis. Geri Messner's (Bro. Marvin) mother passed away and Bro. Ed Stoll's (Sis. Ginny) father passed away. May God comfort them in their grief.

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#### **MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY** **Garry and Marty Rokey**

Once again our congregation was blessed with visiting ministering brothers. On Thanksgiving Day, Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev, Detroit, MI) brought us God's Word. We were also privileged this month to have Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. Lavonne, Sabetha, KS) on the pulpit. May God richly bless these brothers for their willingness to stand before us.

December 8 we enjoyed our annual Sunday School Christmas program prior to our afternoon church service. Our children did a wonderful job! We are mindful of how much effort went into preparing for this presentation and want to thank not only the children, but also the Sunday School teachers for all their work.

After church, we gathered at two nearby nursing homes to sing Christmas carols for the residents and then returned to church for a chili and soup supper. It was a day filled with God's blessings!

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#### **MISSOURI, LAMAR** **Kristen Leman** **Becky Marti**

Bro. Calvin and Sis. Jodi Luthi were thankful for the safe arrival of Austin Leonard on November 18. Welcoming him home were Audrey, Jared, Jessica, Ryan, Caleb, Nathan and Amber. Grandparents are Bro. Raymond and Sis. Violet Luthi and Bro. Orlan and Sis. Mary Kellenberger (St. Louis, MO). May all parents always look to God for His direction as they raise these little ones entrusted to them.

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#### **MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS** **Betsy Schrenk**

Christ said in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

When a person hears Christ's voice and opens the door of his heart and invites Christ in, he has practiced his first act of Christian hospitality. And with such remarkable results! For Christ brings light and cleansing and peace. All of the dark corners and shameful secrets lose their power when exposed to the Light. Satan is defeated. The Prince of Darkness flees in the presence of Jesus. If you have not yet answered that knock, hurry to open your heart's door and sup with the Lord and marvel at the blessings.

We thank the following visiting ministers from this past month: Bros. Ben Wyszog (Sis. Janice, Sabetha, KS), Jim Vierling (Sis. Linda, Eureka, IL) and Bill Dotterer (Sis. Sharon, Lamar,

MO).

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#### **MISSOURI, TAYLOR** **Susan Haerr**

Just last month, we shared news with you of our rejoicing over new converts. Now, just one short month later, we are rejoicing over one of those souls already spending eternity with Jesus! Jeremy Haerr (Bro. Norman and Sis. Sally) passed away the morning of November 30 while in Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. We miss him so much but can't help but be in awe as we think of him walking those streets of gold this Christmas! Jeremy had the opportunity to share how joyful and full of peace he was shortly before he died. May we all be so blessed.

We have had a number of special events to help celebrate Christmas. We had our church caroling, followed by a meal on Sunday, December 8. On Sunday, December 15, we were very blessed by our Sunday School as they "told us the story of Jesus". Thanks so much to all of the kids, parents and teachers who worked to make those blessings possible.

Our visiting minister in the last month was Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS). We are thankful that family draws you this way from time to time and pray that God will bless you for sharing His Word with us.

Hospital/medical patients in the last month include Nikki Haerr (Bro. Norman and Sis. Sally), Sis. Penny Knochel (Bro. Eric), Jody Meyers (Danny) and Sis. Loida Hodel. May God heal you completely.

*Note of Thanks:*

We want to thank each of you for your outpouring of love, prayers and concern for us during Jeremy's illness and death. We praise God for Jeremy's conversion and are comforted to know that he is safe in the arms of Jesus.

Humbly and with grateful hearts,

*Bro. Norm and Sis. Sally Haerr, Nikki and Sarah*

*Bro. Shon and Sis. Peggy Haerr and family*

*Bro. Scott and Sis. Dawn Wegman and family*

*Bro. Shannon and Sis. Susan Haerr and family*

**NEW YORK  
CROGHAN- NAUMBURG  
Hope Graves**

We are thankful that Sis. Rachel Snyder has been able to return to her home and is again able to assemble with us. We gathered together in her home for a singing on December 1 and pray the Lord will continue to grant her strength and recovery.

Our prayers are also with Urban Karcher as he has been hospitalized, and we pray that the Lord will grant him a measure of healing.

May God's comfort be with the family of Bro. Ted Herzig, who passed out of this life on December 9. We are thankful that he was able to return home briefly after an extended illness and hospitalization and before entering the nursing home for a short time. He leaves his wife, Gertrude; sons, Bro. Ronald (Sis. Eleanor) and Benjamin; and daughters, Donna Johnson (Stewart) and Linda Arnette (Timothy); as well as sev-

eral grandchildren.

We realized that even as there are many sad moments in life, we also celebrate many joyous times together. On November 24 we were able to spend some time with Kermit Virkler on his 50th birthday. We pray the Lord will continue to provide for his needs in the future.

It seems that these joyous times are especially plentiful as we celebrate the time of Jesus' birth. We have been able to gather together to sing Christmas carols to the residents of the Halmark Nursing Home on December 6 and to the patients and residents of the Lewis County General Hospital and Residential Health Care Facility on December 13. We are thankful that, even as we have two dear sisters-in-faith who reside there, one was able to accompany us in her wheelchair as we made our way through all of the floors.

On December 16 we put together several fruit baskets for those unable to get in and out this holiday season. We pray that the love God has given the church may be reflected as we give of the abundance with which He has provided us. May we especially reflect on His greatest gift of all, His Son.

From heaven in the dark of night,  
He came and brought eternal  
light.

Behold now how this light divine  
Throughout this pilgrim's dale  
doth shine.

And in the Father's image pure  
He came earth's trials to endure.  
He leads us with a gentle hand  
To that long cherished, happy  
land.

He, who in glory there doth reign,  
Did dwell on earth as humble

man;

That through His noble sacrifice,  
We find the path to paradise.  
And when our days here are complete,  
As brethren, we our Lord shall meet,  
And be transformed before His sight  
To glory and celestial light.  
Hallelujah!

*Zion's Harp #7 vs. 2-5*

**OHIO, AKRON  
Joyce Gasser**

We appreciated visiting ministers Bro. Wayne Wiegand (Goodfield, IL) and Vic Bauman (Smithville, OH). God bless them for their service.

Norris McClure and Bro. John Graf were hospitalized and are at home recovering. We wish them speedy recoveries.

This year we were blessed to have five new members, there were five births, there were eight marriages, and there was one death in our congregation.

**OHIO, COLUMBUS  
Nancy Banks**

Our visiting minister this month was Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH). We were happy to have Bro. Ken and Sis. Linda with us for our annual Christmas caroling and chili supper.

Our little congregation wishes all a very blessed new year!

**OHIO, JUNCTION  
Cindy Schlatter**

Sis. Gina Schlatter (Bro. Ray and Sis. Corrine) underwent surgery this past month. We are

thankful that God's healing hand went with her and she is doing well.

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

*John 14:27*

This wonderful gift of peace has again been given to two of our dear converts. Justin Gherian (Bro. Paul and Sis. Sharon) and Kari Manz (Bro. Lester and Sis. Karen) feel this peace in their hearts and are looking forward to the weekend that they are able to express what God has done in their lives through their testimony. We are looking forward to that time, too, and will keep these souls in our prayers.

Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz welcome another little grandson, Owen Andrew, into their family circle. Owen's parents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Jennifer Manz (Latty, OH). We trust God to continue to be with us all as we daily strive to raise our children in the fear and admonition of Him.

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#### **OHIO, LATTY**

**Bonny Wenninger  
Kathy Sinn**

With thankfulness we report that Allison Stoller (Bro. Dwight and Sis. Lori) has made a beginning in her walk with God. We wish her the Lord's guidance and blessings as she begins this most important step in life.

We rejoice with Bro. Marvin and Sis. Jennifer Manz in the birth of their son Owen Andrew. Welcoming him home are siblings

Lauren and Levi. Grandparents are Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Gwen Manz (Junction, OH) and Bro. Dwight and Sis. Lori Stoller. Owen spent a couple days in the hospital, but is now doing fine. We wish them God's loving guidance as they raise little Owen.

Also hospitalized this month for surgery were Bro. Darl Stoller and Roger Gerber. May God continue to touch them with His healing hands.

Among our visitors this month were Bro. Gene Lehman (Wolcott, IN), Bro. Dale Wulf (Lester, OH), and Bro. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH). We thank them, and may the Lord bless their efforts.

We want to welcome Bro. Jason and Sis. Lori Whitman (Bro. Richard and Sis. Eileen Whitman and Bro. Rod and Sis. Edie Laukhuf) as they moved back to Latty from Columbus.

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#### **OHIO, MANSFIELD**

**John and Marci Pfeiffer**

A precious daughter was born to Bro. Jason and Sis. Nora Sabo on November 26. Her name is Sophie Nicole. Excited grandparents are Bro. Greg and Sis. Sharon Sabo and Carl and Lila Schuster.

At our Annual Member Meeting, the following duties were assigned. Bro. Jeff Webel (Sis. Julie) is our newest Trustee. Sis. Joy Sauder (Bro. Dave) will serve on the Kitchen Committee. Sis. Betty Dotterer (Bro. Gaylord) was chosen to be on the World Relief Committee. We want to thank Bro. Dave Eyerly (Sis. Edna), Sis. Delores Hill (Bro. Mick), and Sis. Lilly Bauman (Bro. Mike) for their years of service with the positions they had fulfilled. May God richly

bless each one for their many labors and give grace to those with new duties.

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

*Isaiah 9:6*

Our Sunday School Christmas Program was on December 8. Many families enjoyed a blessed evening.

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#### **OHIO, RITTMAN**

**Anna Schar  
Sandy Zollinger**

Many visiting ministering brethren shared the Word to us this past month. They were Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL), and Bros. Duane Reutter (Rockville, CT), Trent Meiss (Eureka, IL), Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), Nelson Beer (Milford, IN), Steve Pamer (Akron, OH), and Matthew Rassi (Chicago, IL). We thank each visiting minister and also thank our home ministering brothers for your constant giving of yourself by going to the pulpit.

With joyfulness we announce that David Arnold (Deanna Brown and Bob Arnold) is seeking the Lord in repentance. It is encouragement to know that God still does call!

Bro. Nathan Hoffman (Rockville, CT) and Sis. Mary Steiner were married on November 11. Bro. Nathan's parents are Bro. Michael and Luann, and Sis. Mary's parents are Bro. Matt and Sis. Gail. Sis. Mary has left our as-

sembly, but we believe she and Bro. Nathan will be an asset to the Rockville church. Also married were Bro. Dale Hartzler and Sis. Carolyn Knobloch on December 15. We hope Sis. Carolyn feels at home in our fellowship. This is certainly a change for those families, but when the Lord is in it, we trust all will be well!

First-time parents Randy and Julie Call welcome Riley Dale to their hearts and home. Grandma Sis. Nancy Bauman now has a precious grandchild to embrace. Bro. Rick and Sis. Dawn Steiner also had a boy, Jordan Ray. Born on December 11, Jordan's big sister and brother, Claire and Elijah, are at that "helpful" age and will probably keep their mom busy! Jordan's grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Ruth Steiner and Bro. Ray and Sis. Carol Stoller (Latty, OH).

Our Bro. Harlan Stoller (Sis. Jean) was hospitalized for surgery this past month. May God grant Bro. Harlan's body healing as He sees fit.

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### OHIO, SARDIS Terry Zollinger

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

*St. Luke 2:7*

What a joy to listen to the children recite and sing praises to our Lord Jesus! The children gave their program on the evening of December 15 to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Our little church has grown over the years, and it is wonderful to see all the children

come to church with their parents and go to Sunday School to learn about the ways of God. May God bless the Sunday School teachers for their efforts.

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you."

*Exodus 12:2*

It is well into the beginning of the year. Christmas season is over. Another year with many grateful blessings and too many that are taken for granted. May we be more thankful for small, as well as big, blessings in 2003.

Grandparents Elder Bro. Ken and Sis. Linda Indermuhle are thankful for the arrival of a new grandson, Cade Rustin Walder, on December 12. Cade decided to come a little early, but seems to be doing well. He has a big sister, Aubrey, to help out when needed. Cade and Aubrey's parents are Bro. Brad and Sis. Carla Walder (Congerville, IL). They also have grandparents Elder Bro. Bob and Sis. Gloria Walder. Great-grandma Sis. Martha Indermuhle is anxious to meet Cade Rustin, too.

"For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledgeye them that are such."

*I Corinthians 16:18*

Visiting ministers for the month were Elder Bro. Merle Hartzler (Rittman, OH) and Bro. Matthew Rassi (Chicago, IL). May the Lord always give the Holy Spirit to these servants as they do the Lord's work. May the Lord

bless their families to be pillars in the faith.

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### OHIO, SMITHVILLE Carrie Stoller Ruth Gasser

Protect, O Lord, Thy children,  
As we still tarry here,  
That we in realms of glory  
May then with Thee appear.

*Zion's Harp #49*

As we enter another year, we realized how heavily we lean upon our Father's grace to face a world of uncertainties. It is comforting that we can place our hand into the hand of the One who holds the future.

We appreciate the visits of the brothers who recently ministered the Word to us at Smithville: Bros. Bill Brake and Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH), Jon Zeller (Morton, IL), and Steve Pamer (Akron, OH). Also, Elder Bros. Dave Graf (Akron, OH) and Merle Hartzler (Rittman, OH) assisted our Bro. Andy as four souls gave a testimony of their conversion and faith.

On December 1, we welcomed four young souls as sisters-in-faith: Jeni Klotzle (Bro. Bob and Sis. Shirley), Sharla Steiner (Bro. Mark and Sis. Sue), Autumn Miller (Bro. Max and Sis. Diane), and Jill Maibach (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Lois). We pray that their faith might continue to grow and they will be able to live overcoming lives by God's grace each day.

We extend our love and sympathy to Nathan and Bonnie Bauman, whose infant daughter, Precious Hope, was taken to her



heavenly home on the same day as her birth. She leaves grandparents Daryl and Ivy Bauman, a sister Samantha, and many other relatives behind.

We hope that Sis. Shelly Beery (Bro. Dwaine) is feeling stronger after her recent hospitalization.

Bro. Andy Dotterer (Dale and Sis. Elaine) and Sis. Valerie Rinkenberger (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sally) of Forrest, IL, have felt the Lord's leading to become husband and wife. Their engagement was announced on December 15. May they feel the Holy Spirit's direction as they prepare for this union. May God bless the recent marriage of Stuart Riggenbach (Bro. Art and Lynne) and Joni Piatt.

Bro. Kirby and Sis. Carrie Stoller are feeling their dependence on the Heavenly Father as they entrust their infant son into His hands. Wynn Andrew was born prematurely on December 14 and is receiving specialized care as they wait for God's plan to be revealed. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Andy and Sis. Roberta Stoller and Bro. Larry and Sis. Edith Miller.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

*Jeremiah 29:11*

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**OHIO, TOLEDO**  
**Rebecca Beard**  
**Dee Beard**

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

*II Timothy 3:15*

On December 8 our Sunday school gathered to give praise and honor to the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ through songs and recitations. What a blessing it is to hear of God's Word through our youth.

Sis. Mary Ann Weigele was hospitalized for back surgery. May she continue to feel God's healing touch.

We wish to remember Joe and Sis. Mary Croy in the passing of Joe's father.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season;"

*II Timothy 4:2*

Bro. Victor Bauman (Smithville, OH) was our visiting minister this month. May God richly bless him for his service.

We wish Sis. Cindy Manz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen, Junction) God's blessing as she leaves our congregation to be united in marriage to Bro. Chad Indermuhle (Bro. Dwaine and Sis. Joan, Rittman).

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**OREGON, PORTLAND**

**Louisa Gallup**

Greetings everyone!

One of the joys of the Christmas season was listening to our Sunday School children telling us, in song and poem, the age-old story of Christ's birth. It was a pleasure and a blessing to watch and hear these dear children. May the Lord bless and guide them as they grow up, and may they always remember what they learned in Sunday School.

We are happy to welcome to Or-

egon Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz Jones (Moser) and their children: Lee, Tristan, Sis. Adriana, Rebekah, and Nathanael. They moved here from Fort Lauderdale, FL. May the Lord bless the Jones family in their new home, and our fellowship with them. Bro. Ron had barely moved his family here when news reached him from Morton, IL, that his father had passed away. Gene Jones was living in the Restmor home there. We are thankful with the family that Gene had found peace with God before he passed on. We wish to extend our sincere sympathy to the Jones family, including Gene's other children: Bro. Dave and Sis. Sherry Jones (Morton, IL) and Bro. Steve and Sis. Susie Jones (Washington, IL).

Visiting ministering brethren this past month were Bros. Todd Zollinger (Sis. Michele) and Bro. Ed Knecht (Sis. Judie) from Silverton, OR. We thank them for their efforts and truly appreciate them and every other visitor who joined us for worship.

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**OREGON, SILVERTON**  
**Kelsey Kuenzi**

Our thoughts oft return to the day  
long ago  
When heaven looked down on the  
grief and the woe  
Of a world so estranged from the  
Father above  
That He sent His dear Son in His  
infinite love.

The glory of Israel had vanished  
away,  
And prophets lamented and  
grieved in their day  
For the hardness of heart and the  
darkness of mind,

Corrupt was the priesthood and  
morally blind.

The offering of bullocks and lambs  
was in vain,  
The reconciled feeling they could  
not attain.  
The knowledge of God but to few  
was revealed,  
And few were the hearts that with  
goodness were sealed.

But the Father whose love is as  
wide as the sea  
Looked down on the world He so  
longed to make free.  
So with plan of redemption, the  
world to reclaim,  
The Son of the Highest, the dear-  
est One came.

—*First four verses of "A Christ-  
mas Meditation" by Bro. Henry  
Beer*

On December 8, the Sunday School brought the Christmas story to us in a program of songs and verses. We appreciate their joyful efforts in sharing with us the account of our Lord's humble birth and the reminder that it is "not the manger, but the cross, that sets our spirits free." A special thanks to the Sunday School teachers and song leaders who worked with them.

This month we rejoice with two young couples as they joined their hearts and lives in marriage. Bro. James Schneider (Bro. Jim and Sis. Sandra, Forrest, IL) and Sis. Tonya Kuenzi (Bro. Bob and Sis. Linda) were married on November 24. Bro. Kevin Dettwyler (Bro. Loren and Sis. Marlene) and Sis. Jill Dietrich (Bro. Jim and Sis. Joan) were united on December 1. Our prayers are with these couples as they begin their lives together.

We are thankful for Daniel and Sis. Rebecca Von Flue in the birth

of their son, Benjamin Daniel, on November 30. Also welcoming him are his siblings, Eleanora, Nicholas, and Elise Mary. Grandparents are Arnold and Carolyn Von Flue. Children are gifts from the Lord. May He grant them wisdom in raising them according to His leading.

We also rejoice with Bro. Nick and Sis. Lori Stadel with the birth of a daughter, Miranda Rose, on December 13. Excited to have a new sister are Trever, Kiersten, Malinda, and Kassandra. Grandparents are Norman and Maryann Stadel and Bro. Perry and Sis. Carol Virkler (Minneapolis, MN). May the Lord grant them continued wisdom in raising their children.

This month, two members in our congregation were in the hospital. We are thankful that they are again able to assemble with us. Our prayers are with Bro. Clarence Dietrich (Sis. Bess) and Bro. Lynn Kuenzi (Sis. Marilyn).

With having two weddings in the past month, we were privileged to have many visitors, including ministering Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA) and their family with us. May the Lord continue to bless those that willingly share the Word with us Sunday after Sunday.

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#### PENNSYLVANIA PHILADELPHIA

##### Nathan and MaryElizabeth Gasser

As the world rushed around preparing for "the holidays" this year, we were glad to have many opportunities to be reminded of the true meaning of Christmas and share it with others. We went

caroling to several homes and nursing homes on two occasions this month, and we enjoyed hearing the Sunday School children relate the story of Christ's birth in their Christmas program.

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Ray Sinn (Latty, OH) and Bro. Everett Gerber (Rockville, CT) visit us and share God's Word with our congregation this month. When Bro. Ray was here, we were able to gather together on Saturday evening and hear the Conference report. We are thankful for the encouragements and exhortations, and trust that each one of us can apply them to our hearts. We were also blessed to have Bro. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH) and his family with us for Christmas Day services, and thank him for his service to our congregation.

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#### TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE Mike and Monica Fritz

This has been somewhat of a slow month for visitors here in Nashville, with all of us traveling over the Thanksgiving holiday. Nonetheless, we have been blessed by the ministry from the Word. Our visiting ministers this month have been Bros. Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth, Goodfield, IL) and Bill Brake (Sis. Miriam, Sardis, OH). We are also thankful for the fellowship of brethren and friends from Goodfield, IL and Junction, OH.

If you are traveling in or through the Nashville area, please plan to worship with us. The following churches are scheduled for services in the near future: Wolcott, IN (1/19), Bay City, MI (1/26); Bloomington-Normal, IL (2/2); Sabetha, KS (2/9); Washing-

ton, IL (2/16) and Milford, IN (2/23). 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. Contacts are Bro. Don and Sis. Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928; Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz (615) 952-9933; and Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 662-2946.

### TEXAS, SAN MARCOS Carrie Beyer

Bro. Bill Zeltwanger wishes to thank the many people who thoughtfully sent him cards in recognition of his seventieth birthday in December. As a church, we'd also like to thank Bros. Brace Wieland (Leo), Edward Knecht (Sis. Judith, Silverton), Sidney Kaufmann (Sis. Sandra, Cissna Park), and Wayne Grimm (Sis. Rose, West Bend) for taking the time to travel to San Marcos as ministers last month.

The calendar shows that the following churches will send ministers during February: Lamar (2-2), Congerville (2-9), Lamont/Gridley (2-16), and Goodfield (2-23). We extend a hearty welcome to anyone else who may be in the area to worship with us. Please call ahead to help us plan for serving lunch and other activities. If you are available for fellowship on Sat. or Sun. evening or during the week, we'd be happy to plan something then as well.

Please contact Bro. Dale and Sis. Amy Ringger (512-933-1380) or Bro. Bill Zeltwanger (979-249-5102).

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. Take Exit #206; the hotel is on the southwest side access road.

### TEXAS, ZAPATA Joyce Nohl

No parting words shall e'er be spoken

In yonder home so fair,  
But songs of joy, and peace, and gladness,  
We'll sing forever there.

*Hymns of Zion #122*

We extend our deepest sympathy to Sis. Tiffany Wieland in the death of her grandfather, Bro. George Kieser. May God comfort her during this time of sorrow.

As we approach the new year, we sometimes ask, "What will the new year bring?"

I know not what awaits me,  
God kindly veils mine eyes,  
And o'er each step of my onward way

He makes new scenes to rise;  
And ev'ry joy He sends me, comes  
A sweet and glad surprise.

One step I see before me,  
'Tis all I need to see,  
The light of heav'n more brightly shines,  
When earth's illusions flee;  
And sweetly through the silence, came  
His loving "Follow me."

O blissful lack of wisdom,  
'Tis blessed not to know;  
He holds me with His own right hand,  
And will not let me go,  
And lulls my troubled soul to rest  
In Him who loves me so.

So on I go not knowing,  
I would not if I might;  
I'd rather walk in the dark with God  
Than go alone in the light;  
I'd rather walk by faith with Him  
Than go alone by sight.

Where He may lead I'll follow,  
My trust in Him repose;  
And ev'ry hour in perfect peace I'll sing,  
He knows, He knows.  
*Gospel Hymns #181*

May we put our faith and trust in the One who knows and only asks that we will follow.

Any winter visitors planning to visit the Valley for Sunday worship may want to contact Bro. Leland Plattner (956) 765-5612 or Bro. Lloyd Nohl (956) 581-8166 for location and schedule.



*Sermon continued from page 2*

to teach them to be disobedient. You do not have to teach that. But it happens. We are no different, each one of us. We have the propensity to be disobedient, whether we intend to or not. And that is when we are being directed and guided, or maybe when we are just lax in being diligent in our hunger and thirst for righteousness.

"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past..." Ephesians 2:3. All. Notice the inclusion. All. Just as we read in Romans, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" Romans 3:23. "...There is none righteous, no, not one:" Romans 3:10. Not one of us of our own volition is righteous before God. We all in times past were in this situation. "...in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Ephesians 2:3. By nature the children of wrath ...that is harsh language, isn't it? Children of wrath. Not of righteousness. The opposite of that.

Then the beautiful turn. Then the story of hope. The message of salvation that Jesus Christ brings. "But God..." Ephesians 2:4. But God -the transition. We just saw the picture that is not so pretty, that we all were or are in. It is not a pretty picture. It does not even go into where that leads to. In Romans it tells us, "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Romans 7:5. We did not follow that path all the way, but that is where this leads, sin leads to death.

But God... "But God, who is rich in mercy..." Ephesians 2:4. I often think of God's mercy. He had a beautiful creation, a marvelous creation. We can read that in Genesis. The world was created and He said it was good. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good..." Genesis 1:31. We were created good.

But then sin came into the world and God hates sin. Sin is the most detestable thing that is possible to God. He cannot be a part of it. So here is this holy, righteous, omnipotent Creator, God, looking down beholding His creation, that were created perfect and good. They turned their backs on Him and sinned, despised Him. Basically just turned our backs. The greatest rejection possible we did to God.

And yet, "But God, who is rich in mercy..." Ephesians 2:4. Despite that, in His mercy He looks down and beholds each and every one of us. In His mercy and love - just as the shepherd who went out and left the ninety nine to seek the one sheep that was gone astray. That is our God who is rich in mercy. He is seeking each one of you and me. He desires our heart. All of our heart. All of our heart every day. When He does not receive that, it is us who is rejecting Him. But He is still rich in mercy and even in those situations, He will not relent. He will continue to pursue and to seek us because He loves us.

"...for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ..." Ephesians 2:4,5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath he quickened us together with Christ. Mary and Martha said, "...Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." St. John 11:21,32. He would not have died. Here He says when we were dead. We were already dead. But Jesus is still there. The hope is there. Just as Jesus told them, if ye believe, Lazarus will arise. They said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." St. John 11:24. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life..." St. John 11:24. So by Christ Jesus.

"...(by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" Ephesians 2:5,6. What a different picture that is. So we look as we put out the picture that we just

read here in these six verses. We saw the dismal state of the natural man and our natural tendency to sin and to disobey God. Then we saw the love and mercy of an omnipotent Creator, God. Then what did we see? Did you notice that? It said, and hath raised us up into heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He raised us up. Brought us out of the pit, up to Him where He is in the high places.

"...raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" Ephesians 2:6. Those heavenly places, dear ones, can be many places here. This is one of them. The places where we draw nearer to Him. Where we draw near to His heart. Where we seek His heart. Those are the heavenly places. It could be in the quietness of our home. It could be wherever we are at as we commune with Him. But He desires us, to raise us up. To bring us out of the mire and the sin and the muck of this world. To raise us up in the Spirit to Him. Just as we sang in that hymn, "Our Conversation Is In Heaven", Zion's Harp #198, where it talks about: "Jesus, like a magnet, raises, Our faint spirit to the skies; And we seem in pray'r and praises As on eagle's wings to rise..."

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Ephesians 2:7. That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace and kindness toward us... It is through all generations, dear ones. From all generations, from time past to time in the future. God's plan is that all would come to Him. And in ages to come and as long as He carries, this plan will be extended, this grace to all who are dead in sin.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8,9. We might think a lot of this is written to those who are unbelievers. But re-

member what we read in verse two, "Wherein in time past ye walked..." Ephesians 2:2. He is speaking, partially at least, to believers here. Those who have been called out. Those who have been called out. So some reminders. I believe verses eight and nine He is reminding us. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves..." Ephesians 2:8. I believe as we correlate this, we can turn to Galatians Chapter 3. I think it is a very similar account as the Apostle Paul wrote. It was very important for the Apostle Paul as he reminded the Galatians. He said you were saved by grace through faith. And as you were saved that way, you can't be made perfected by the works of your self. I believe it is the same reminder here. It is a reminder that it is a gift, a gift from God. Just as we were saved by grace through faith, we need to walk in faith. We are not perfected by our own works. We are not perfected by our own works. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:9.

Verse ten is a key right behind that. "For we are his workmanship..." Ephesians 2:10. He is working the work in our lives. All that is required of us is to submit. Submit in obedience to Him and He will do the work in our heart. He will change our minds. He will give us the desires. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works..." Ephesians 2:10. So the question then comes to us, how submitted are we to His workmanship?

Grant was sharing with us - he likes to do woodworking - sharing that one summer or a break that was going to be a week long, he decided he was going to get some material together and make some furniture. His father was a little leery of that. He did not want it tying up his shop from then on to who knows when. But he put his mind to it and he worked on that furniture and he got it done in

that week. He was creating something that he was working on. It was his workmanship. Jesus Christ, we are in His workshop, dear ones. We are the clay as we can read in the Bible. We are in His workshop. He is working on us. But are we allowing that to happen or do we resist? When we feel the Holy Spirit prompting and trying to maybe make some correction - maybe it is some guilt we have or conviction - do we resist and do we run from it? Or do we submit and say, "Lord it is hard, it is painful, but I know it is for the best. Please give me the grace to change, to do Thy will."

"...we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works..." Ephesians 2:10. So we know if we are being constructed. How? The Bible says, "...for the tree is known by his fruit." St. Matthew 12:33. Just as we tell a tree by its fruit, we can tell if our lives are being conformed and in His likeness, because the fruit will be born.

"...which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;" Ephesians 2:10,11. Part of this chapter - we see a little bit of that now coming through the remaining part of it - is the struggle that the Gentiles had coming into what had been, up to Jesus Christ's appearance, basically a Jewish religion. Jehovah God was the God of Israel. Although there were others that were not necessarily from Israel - we can think of examples, Naaman and others who did come to believe in God - there was not a lot. It was pretty exclusive. So here we see the conflict then that ensued in the early church between the Gentiles and the Jews. Here it is referred to as the uncircumcision and the circumcision. There was the gap between them, let's say. But the Apostle Paul also

talked about the reconciliation that came through Jesus Christ. There should be one body. Not a Gentile church. Not a Jewish church. But the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So he shared that here, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, (that is what I was talking about, being aliens from Israel - Israel being followers of God) and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:" Ephesians 2:12. Again, the lost condition, the lost state. Specifically there, recounting to the Gentiles and that applies to all of us.

But now again, the transition, the tie in. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Ephesians 2:13. Dear ones, the blood of Jesus Christ is the equalizer. Every soul on the face of this earth is either covered by Jesus' blood or not. And as such, are united in Him or are not. It is that black and white. It is that black and white.

"...who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace..." Ephesians 2:13,14. He is our peace ...there will be no lasting peace outside of being reconciled to Jesus Christ. There will be no lasting peace.

"...who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;" Ephesians 2:14. It is talking here, dear ones, specifically about the Jews and the Gentiles, but I believe this principle goes beyond that. It goes beyond that. As we look at our own fellowship, sometimes there are things that try to come up, that try to bring division, separation. Dear ones, we are one in Christ Jesus! He has broken down that partition. He does not want us to be separated. He wants us to be united as a body as we serve Him.

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of command-

*Sermon continued from page 45*  
ments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;" Ephesians 2:15. I believe this is speaking on probably two fronts. One, speaking of the new creation in Christ Jesus. We are no more split allegiance. We are no more following, but we are dedicated, we are a new man, a new person in Christ. But I believe it is also taking about the Jew and the Gentile as well. No more separate - two different groups but one person, one group in Christ Jesus.

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:" Ephesians 2:16. This was pretty difficult for the Jews. They had been taught. And I believe, if I err not, even some of the teachings in the law and others, they were not to associate with other groups, for many valid reasons; not to intermarry, not to be influenced by their idol worship. So on one hand, when you think about that and the teachings they had received, and now all of a sudden those from the Gentiles were being converted and coming. It was pretty different for them to even entertain the thought of fellowshiping with these other groups.

We have a pretty close knit group too. That can be very, very good. But I believe, at times it can also present its challenges for us. For those especially who maybe come in for the first time

into our fellowships. Dear ones, we need to reach out when there are those that come. And I know we all do that but sometimes we are so close and they sense that. That they are just not quite able to even see how they could become a part. It is just a challenge. I think we all do in our own way very well. But I think that is something that we need to be sensitive to. That we make sure we reach out to all. Regardless if they look like they fit in. Dear ones, we read Jesus Christ is the Lord of all.

"And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Ephesians 2:18. Through Him. Through our intercessor, our high priest we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;" Ephesians 2:19. Think of that! No more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens. Citizens of where? Remember our conversation is in heaven? We are citizens of God's kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. With the saints, and the household of God.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner

stone;" Ephesians 2:20. Is our foundation strong upon the Lord Jesus Christ? We know just as we were children singing the song. If our house is not built on the rock, it will not stand.

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:" Ephesians 2:21. Again, back to the workmanship-God's workmanship. He is doing the work, remember that dear ones. But we need to be willing. We need to be willing and pliable, submissive that that work can be done. Because we can resist. We can resist. He gives us that free choice. Even as we read, He is a God of rich mercy and love. But He is also a God that, as much as He desires our worship and praise, He wants it to come of a free will. He does not coerce us to worship and serve Him. But He is delighted with those that come with a willing and desirous heart to give Him the praise and the worship that He is worthy of.

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Ephesians 2:22. I am sure there are many other thoughts here that could be shared, dear ones. I trust that each one of you will ponder the words that we have read together here and the Holy Spirit would speak to your hearts. May God bless the words.



## CARIBBEAN BOARD PROJECTS - 2002, 2003

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

HAITI						
ORG.	DATE	AREA	COORDINATOR	PROJECT	CAPACITY	PERCENT FILLED
MEBSH	Jan. 30 - Feb. 7, '03	Les Cayes	Dean Pashak	Grade School	9	50%
Palm Grove	Jan. 31-Feb. 8, '03	Puit Sales	Tom Hitz	Grade School	11	70%
SEED	Feb. 6-14, '03	Les Cayes	Art Mueller	Agriculture Aid	9	100%
MEBSH	Feb. 13-21, '03	Les Cayes	Rich Bertschi	Grade School	9	100%
SEED	Mar. 13-21, '03	Les Cayes	Bob Beebe	Agriculture Aid	9	30%
Palm Grove	Mar. 28-Apr. 5, '03	Puit Sales	Mike Reinhard	Grade School	11	0%
AWA-FRW	May 8-16, '03	Les Cayes	Rick Wuethrich	Vocational School	4	100%
AWA-T	May 8-16, '03	Les Cayes	Derek Sauder	Water Aid	5	50%
AWA-B	May 8-16, '03	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Vocational School	2	100%
MEBSH	May 5-23, '03	Les Cayes	Phil Isabel	Grade School	9	0%
JAMAICA						
CCCD	Mar 7-15, '03	Kingston	Terry Miller	Deaf School	40	50%
CCCD	Mar 14-22, '03	Deaf Village	TBA	Work Place	40	30%
CCCD	May 23-31, '03	Deaf Village	Ted Hirstein / TBA	Work Place	40	100%
CCCD	Jun 28 - Jul 5, '03	Deaf Village	(1) Smithville, Akron, Rittman BC	Work Place	70	...

COORDINATOR	PHONE	FAX	E-MAIL
Jay Maibach	330-939-5234		<a href="mailto:jmmaibach@valkyrie.net">jmmaibach@valkyrie.net</a>
Bob Beebe	574-291-2158	574-299-8173	<a href="mailto:rbeebe@surfpure.com">rbeebe@surfpure.com</a>
Tom Hitz	734-454-9229	734-454-9259	<a href="mailto:thitzhome@juno.com">thitzhome@juno.com</a>
Phil Isabel	219-261-3541	219-261-2885	
Greg (Beth) Herman	309-243-5610		<a href="mailto:gbherman@juno.com">gbherman@juno.com</a>
Craig Emch	330-939-4591	330-939-4591	
Terry Miller	941-485-4302	same as phone number	<a href="mailto:tbmiller@mymailstation.com">tbmiller@mymailstation.com</a>
Dean Pashak	517-662-7685	517-662-7099	
Bill Rager	419-263-2989		
Derek Sauder	309-925-7502		
Kevin Sauder	309-925-2409	309-925-2409	<a href="mailto:ksss@dpc.net">ksss@dpc.net</a>
Rich Bertschi	309-467-6110		<a href="mailto:lemangm@mtco.com">lemangm@mtco.com</a>
Ted Habegger	260-694-6765		<a href="mailto:th@parlorcity.com">th@parlorcity.com</a>
Mike Reinhard	248-477-2287	248-427-0396	<a href="mailto:mlreinhard@msn.com">mlreinhard@msn.com</a>
Rick Wuethrich	219-567-9488	219-567-2542	<a href="mailto:topnotch@home.ffi.com">topnotch@home.ffi.com</a>
Art Mueller	608-676-4365		

**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

**Attention: Sunday School Superintendents:** Now is the time to reserve your place for a 2003 Sunday School work project at the Caribbean Christian Center of the Deaf in Jamaica, which is already filling its 2003 project calendar. We do not want you to be disappointed by not getting the schedule date you want. All interested in scheduling a project should feel free to contact Bro. Kevin Sauder, PO Box 354, Tremont, IL 61568-0345. Phone/Fax (309) 925-2409 or e-mail: [ksss@dpc.net](mailto:ksss@dpc.net).

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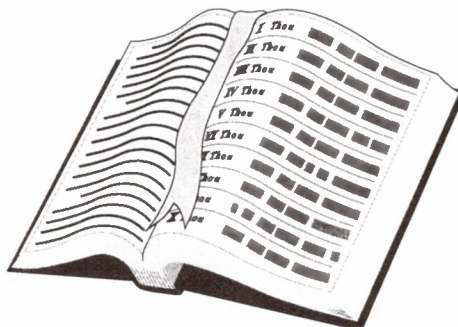
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Pontiac, IL 61764



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At the recent elder conference, the  
elder body approved a request for a na-  
tional World Relief Office. The staff at  
the office will perform the following  
duties:

- 1) Perform administrative duties for World Relief.
- 2) Answer questions concerning World Relief and work teams.
- 3) Warehouse and ship World Relief brochures, forms, and literature.
- 4) Provide information and vision of World Relief to visitors.

Everyone is welcome to contact this  
office if they have World Relief related  
questions or needs. The office is lo-  
cated in the lower floor of the  
Remington Fellowship Hall.

**Contact Information:**  
**Administrative Coordinator**  
Stan Virkler

Apostolic Christian World Relief  
16448 S US Highway 231  
Remington, IN 47977-8822  
219-261-3200 (phone)  
219-261-3280 (fax)  
information@acwr.org (e-mail)

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## Volunteer Needs For the Navajo Project

There is an immediate need for installers for floor tile, kitchen cabinetry, and bathroom components. Finish carpenters are also needed. Please contact: Bro. Arnold Gerst, 1107 Madonna Dr., Quincy, IL 62305-7149, phone 217-223-8424, or via e-mail: [agerst@rnet.com](mailto:agerst@rnet.com).

### Mexico Work Teams 2002 - 2003

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Phone &amp; (e-mail)</u>
Juarez	Mar. 8 - 15, '03	Construction	Kurt Ifer <a href="mailto:kurt@stevesconstruction.com">kurt@stevesconstruction.com</a>	260-824-2829
Imuris	Mar. 8 - 15, '03	Construction	Jerry Tooley <a href="mailto:jtooley@mcdavisco.com">jtooley@mcdavisco.com</a>	480-460-4531
Agua Prieta	Mar. 8 - 15, '03	Construction	Wayne Lehman <a href="mailto:socks@bnin.net">socks@bnin.net</a>	574-773-4373
Juarez	Mar. 15 - 22, '03	Construction	Rick Yergler <a href="mailto:ryergler@yahoo.com">ryergler@yahoo.com</a>	260-824-4513
Agua Prieta	Mar. 15 - 22, '03	Construction	Wayne Lehman <a href="mailto:socks@bnin.net">socks@bnin.net</a>	574-773-4373
Rio Bravo	Mar. 15 - 22, '03	Construction	Ron Kellenberger <a href="mailto:kberger@mtco.com">kberger@mtco.com</a>	309-383-2325
Juarez	Mar. 20 - 27, '03	Medical	Cheryl Herrmann <a href="mailto:cherylh@mtco.com">cherylh@mtco.com</a>	309-385-1082
Imuris	Mar. 22 - 29, '03	Construction	Jerry Tooley <a href="mailto:jtooley@mcdavisco.com">jtooley@mcdavisco.com</a>	480-460-4531
Rio Bravo	Mar. 22 - 29, '03	Construction	Pete Aberle	309-925-5969
Rio Bravo	Jun. 14 - 21, '03	Construction	Chad Kaeb <a href="mailto:gal220@hughesnet.net">gal220@hughesnet.net</a>	815-962-0612
Rio Bravo	Jun. 28 - July 5, '03	Construction	Joe Maller <a href="mailto:jmaller@adamswells.com">jmaller@adamswells.com</a>	260-565-3211
Rio Bravo	July 5 - July 12, '03	Construction	Timothy Lehman <a href="mailto:timothy.lehman@ey.com">timothy.lehman@ey.com</a>	913-236-5721

*If anyone would desire to go to Mexico at a time not listed on the schedule, please contact Bro. Mike Fiechter at 260-597-7330 or e-mail: [mfiechter@parlorcity.com](mailto:mfiechter@parlorcity.com)*



*In America, we enjoy the benefits of religious freedom. It is guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution and remains one of our greatest national ideals. Our forefathers in faith did not always enjoy such a benefit in Europe. They faced many frustrations in this regard. The following is an appeal to Swiss Authorities by Bro. Samuel Froehlich (on August 24, 1851) to the Aargau government in Switzerland. These are excerpts taken from Apostolic Christian Church History, Volume I by Herman Ruegger (1949).*

#### **Petition to Authorities**

"A number of people in our Canton petition you to consider our interest in the legislation and constitution of our common fatherland.

The Apostle Paul has admonished us that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercession be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority that we might through the providence and heart-directing power of God have our wish fulfilled and it be granted to us to lead a quiet and peaceable life, under the protection of the established government, in all godliness and honesty (I Tim. 2:1-2). We have been of the opinion that we are doing something good and not evil when we follow the apostolic rules. But it is not so; for, although the government should not be a terror to good works but to evil (Romans 13:3), we have been persecuted unceasingly for twenty years, and oppressed, for trying, according to this precept, to lead a quiet life in all godliness and honesty. No one can bring any other charge against us, for we cannot be accused of evil

works which the government, as God's minister, must punish.

Might it not please the established government to make arrangements so that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty?

For we have not always had the power of godliness and to lead an honorable life, but first received it when we heard the good, powerful, and living Word of God, which has become in us a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, in order to turn us to the living God and to give Him our hearts' obedience. This Word of God is become our spiritual mother (Hebrews 4:12-13), whom we duly honor, and in this we would, unhindered, mutually edify ourselves.

If you would reply that there are no hindrances in the way, then we would say: Yes, we are hindered just in this respect, for when we together would edify ourselves in our holiest faith in Jesus Christ our Lord, then we are attacked by the police, persecuted, accused and punished, as if we had done something evil, while at the same time what we ask for is permitted in other Swiss cantons.

Nowhere more than in Canton Aargau is, since 1831, appeal made to an old prohibition, in order to persecute and punish the participants in a Christian meeting. In the abovementioned years a new constitution was adopted which gave freedom of faith and conscience. If the constitutional council had wanted to apply this article only to the Roman and Protestant parties, it would, without a doubt, not have been added to the new constitution, for

such freedom was enjoyed previously without such an article. But the constitution meant it otherwise, namely, that no one should be forced in matters of faith and conscience, but that everyone would, in this, enjoy the protection of the laws of the land so long as he was a good citizen. If one would apply this freedom only to the Roman and Protestant parties, then the apostolic rule would have no validity any more, in all godliness and honesty. For those who enjoy undisturbed freedom truly do not live in godliness and honesty, but rather in ungodliness and dishonesty.

If one would ask and enter into a contest about it, as to which faith is the right and true one, we would answer as the Prophet Elias: 'The god that answereth by fire, let him be god.' That is, over which faith God in heaven answers with His Holy Spirit and with fire, that is the only true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 3:11; Acts 11:16), but the fruit of the Holy Ghost is evident in all godliness and honesty. So we have the true faith, in which the government, without danger, may and should protect and shield us for God's sake. We shall never abuse the freedom of the Spirit as a cloak of maliciousness and for the caprice of the flesh.

With all due respect, we wait for the granting of our petition for freedom of faith and conscience and the mutual edification."

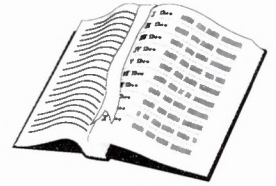
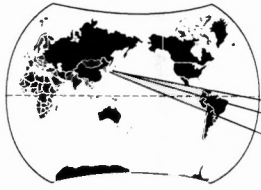
*By: Perry A. Klopfenstein*

Next issue:  
**More Froehlich petitions**

# The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

## 希望の光



### “Dreams and Visions for 2003”

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

Dreams and visions are quite often mentioned in the Bible. In Matthew 1:20 we read, “The angel of the Lord appeared unto him (Joseph) in a dream.” Recently, upon reading that statement, I began to think about the importance of dreams.

In Genesis 37:5 we read, “And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren.” Ordinarily, this dream should have been kept a secret because it had Joseph’s older brothers bowing to him, something altogether unacceptable in Asia where the older brothers have the preeminence. However, it did get Joseph to Egypt where he could be used to save the lives of many people.

In I Kings 3:5 we read, “In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.” In this case, God Himself, conversed with Solomon in a dream.

In Daniel 2:3 we read, “And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream.” King

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream about a great image, and only Daniel could give him the interpretation which concerned four kingdoms.

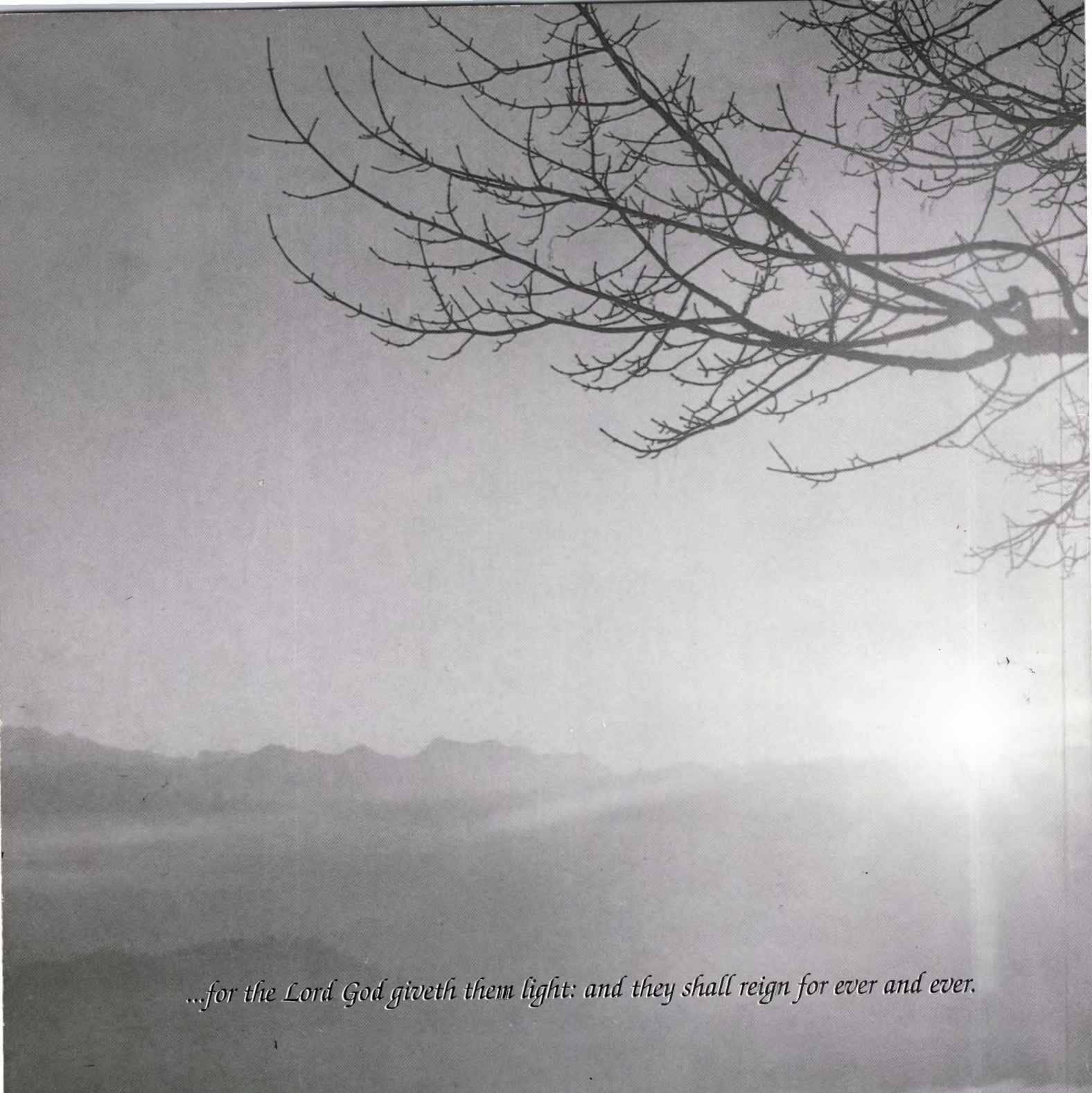
Visions are similar to dreams but in the Bible they occurred in the daytime without the participant being asleep. Paul had a vision on the road to Damascus, Acts 9, and Peter had a vision when he fell into a trance while praying on the house top, Acts 10. John had a vision when he wrote the book of Revelation. The word “vision” is used in 9:17, “And thus I saw the horses in the vision.”

We ask God to give us good dreams and good visions. We are taught in Proverbs 29:18, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” This may mean that we must have the faith and the determination to help others the best we know how, spiritually and physically. If we simply say, “There is nothing I can do,” then no one is helped and the people perish. If we lose our enthusiasm and vigor, if we become stag-

nant and complacent, if we lose our vision for holiness and spirituality, the people perish, and we, too do not fare very well.

For the year 2003, we need to have a dream and a vision of our church being selfless, spiritual, holy and faithful. It is not sufficient to say that we want to stay away from all things which are sinful or which are apt to lead to sin, but we want to stay away from everything that acts as a weight which hinders our speed and endurance in running this race of faith. Hebrews 12:1 tells us to “Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.” We are instructed not only to lay aside sin, but also to lay aside weights, anything that is a hindrance to the life of holiness and spiritual accomplishments. Don’t misunderstand me; I haven’t arrived yet, but I have a dream and a vision for myself and our church. By God’s grace it can be done.

## 希望の光



*...for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

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