

# *The Silver Lining*



*Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD,  
that delighteth greatly in his commandments.*

January 2004

Sermon by Brother Kenneth Knapp, Taylor, MO

## II Chronicles 7:11-22 and St. Mark 4:1-23

It said there in that last verse, "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear." (St. Mark 4:23). I don't know if there is any amongst us today that don't have hearing. I have often thought about the different senses that we have and thought about, if I had to give up one or two of them, which one would I pick? We know that the eyesight is so important. The hearing is so important. The speaking, the taste and those things. We really would not want to give up any of them, would we?

But in this morning hour, we may not be gathered by the seaside. It may not be Jesus there sitting in the boat. It says here that there was a multitude of people. (St. Mark 4:1) But there is a resemblance here this morning. There is a multitude of people here. I don't know, it doesn't say exactly how many people were there, but there is a multitude of people here. There isn't a seaside and Jesus isn't in the boat, but Jesus is here in the Word. He has asked someone to stand and to read the Word so that those that were here could hear the Word. So in this morning hour this scripture has been fulfilled in our very ears, those of us that could hear. Where did it fall?

We live in a day and time in which we are fairly highly educated. Most of us have been taught to read and to write and the basics and those things. But today we are talking about spiritual things. We need to hear spiritually because there are those things that spiritually are going to be lasting, are going to be forever. That comes from this Word. This Word is true. As long as we read from this Word and as we hear it and as we understand it, not of our understanding, but the understanding that God and Jesus can reveal unto us.

We can read many accounts in the scripture where those walked to and fro and they didn't understand. Sometimes Jesus was even beside them. So we need to be careful today that we really understand the Word of God. Such a simple message that we have this morning hour.

If we would have been in the downtown Los Angeles or New York City and this Word would have been open and it would have been this type of a parable,

someone that has probably never set foot on dirt or never got anything out of the garden to eat except by going to the grocery store, maybe it could be just a little bit so they might not quite understand it. But there is no excuse for you and I today to be able to take a word like this and to be able to have it read to us, and even explained! Even explained. There is no excuse. For it tells us to whom much is given, much will be required. (St. Luke 12:48)

I have often thought, dear ones, if I could find any fault with our faith and with our church, it would be that statement. Much has been given. Now much is required. We can take that responsibility and we can do it. But not by our self. We are going to have to have a humble heart.

We were reminded in the past evening hour, when we heard the testimonies of these four souls, of a proud behavior and a humble behavior, God resists the proud but giveth grace to the humble.

What do we have to do to be proud? We don't have to do anything. It is automatic. It is nature to be proud. We don't have to do anything.

What do we have to do to be humble? We need God's help. We need to rely upon God and His help to be humble. And we need to be humble because the Word tells us. (James 4:6). Humbleness is not a weakness. Meekness is not a weakness. It is a strength that God gives unto us.

I have often said it is kind of like those that - I was in a place one time where I saw a picture on the wall of a sail boat. I asked the person about that sail boat. I said, what do you do if you want to go against the wind? Can you do it? He said yes, you can do it. But it takes a lot of work. To go with the wind, he said you just have to sit there and relax and that boat will go and it will follow the wind. But to go against the wind, you really have to work. I said, can you go completely in the opposite direction of the wind? He said yes, but it takes a lot of work.

It is kind of a parallel to me of going to heaven. It takes a lot of work. It takes a lot of humility. It doesn't take anything to be proud. It doesn't take any-

thing to go the other direction. Because if you just sit still, that is the way you are going to go. But by God's grace and by His help... We read here this morning hour about planting of the seed. Well, let us just go back for a few moments and get a few thoughts gathered together in the Old Testament reading

*Sermon continued on page 44*

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

## Light From The Word



Writings based  
on God's Word

January 2004

### Signs

A sign is an event that is intended as proof of something.

At various times in the scripture, God provided a sign for those who were to fulfill special assignments. Gideon asked for a sign that the Lord would save Israel by his hand. In the first request the Lord made a fleece of wool wet and the ground around it dry. Gideon recognized that he was risking the anger of God by asking another sign, but he humbly requested that God give him a second sign in which the fleece of wool would be dry and the ground wet. The Lord granted him his request (Ju. 6:36-40).

Hezekiah asked the Lord for a sign to assure him that he would recover from his illness. The Lord "...brought the shadow ten degrees backward..." (II Ki. 20:11) and Hezekiah lived an additional fifteen years.

Most of us have had times when we were uncertain about a decision we needed to make. Even after diligent prayer and seeking counsel from those who have faithfully served the Lord for many years, we may be uncertain of our decision. At times like these we may wish God would simply tell us what to do.

Since God normally doesn't speak to us in clearly spoken language, we may seek alternative ways to understand God's will. Many times people seek a sign from God to help them know what they should do. Requesting a sign from God may make us uncomfortable.

Is it okay for us to seek a sign? Are we wrong to ask for reassurance when we make important decisions? There are examples in the scripture that may reassure us that seeking signs is acceptable and there are examples that may cause us to question whether we should seek a sign.

In addition to the examples cited earlier, others have asked for and received signs. Moses received numerous signs as he tried to convince God that he was not able to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. On the way from Egypt to the Promised land, the children of Israel received many signs, even when they were not very faithful. At a later time when God was reassuring His people that He would

be with them, He promised to "...make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water" (Is. 41:18). When Lazarus died, Jesus used his death as an opportunity to help the people understand that He was sent from God. "And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn. 11:42).

In other situations, people were chastised for seeking a sign. When Zacharias asked how he would know the message of the birth of John the Baptist was true, he became "...dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed..." (Lk 1:20). The scribes and Pharisees asked for a sign and were told that "...An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign..." (Matt. 12:38-39). Paul wrote to the Corinthians that "...the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:" (I Cor. 1:22) because there appeared to be too much dependence on the wisdom of man.

If we look at the previous examples, we can see that our attitude plays a big role in the response God may have in our request for a sign. Those who were doubting God's power and, in effect, asking Him to prove Himself to them were often answered in a way that had some negative consequences.

On the other hand, those who believed God but just seemed to need a little reassurance were often rewarded with a favorable request. The example of Zacharias and Mary in Chapter 1 of the Gospel of Luke makes it clear that it isn't simply a difference of wicked and righteous people who are chastised or rewarded when they ask for reassurance. Zacharias asked for proof ("whereby shall I know this?"), but Mary simply asked how it would happen (How shall this be,...?). One appeared to be skeptical and one appeared to humbly accept it.

With the examples given in the scripture, we do have some guidelines concerning the asking of signs. We must sincerely want God's direction and humbly seek it. We must be sure we are seeking His direction in a situation where we need help and

not merely asking His permission for something where we have already made up our minds and we want Him to confirm our opinion. We must be careful what we ask for because we might receive it.

As we seek God's direction, we must be very careful that we do not consciously or unconsciously manipulate the situation to get the "sign" we want. It is often quite easy to set up a situation where the end result is determined by the circumstances we have created.

We would also be wise to realize that when we seek a sign, we need to be of a ready mind to accept God's answer. Asking God for direction and refusing to accept His will can be very serious. Jonah knew what he was supposed to do and he chose to run the other direction. Saul (Paul) thought he was doing God's will, but was shown very clearly that God was not pleased with him. When he received direction from God, he was willing to submit even when he only understood a step at a time.

God speaks to His people in many different ways. Sometimes the answers are clear and rather quick in coming. At other times the answer is not so clear and may be quite some time in coming to us. Whatever the situation we need to be patient and submissive. If we diligently search His Word and humbly seek Him in prayer, we can usually understand His message. There may be times even with diligence, when we may be a bit uncertain about the direction God would have us to go.

We can receive some additional guidance if we try to think about the likely outcome of a decision. Will it draw us closer to God or will the end result fulfill our carnal desires? Will we be tempting God with our request or will we be serving Him?

It is not wrong to ask God for direction and reassurance. It is not wrong to search His Word to clarify the direction we should go. It is not wrong to plead with God to show us clearly what He would have us do. However, we must remember that when we ask God to help us, we must be willing to receive His message and not interfere with His plan for us.



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
**World Relief**

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

## Eastern Europe

Following European Board practices of visiting brethren in former communist lands, a group of brethren traveled to Germany, Hungary, and Romania in November. Travelers were our brethren Elder Jon and Julie Schmidgall, Rod and LeAnn Stoller, and Gene and Verna Lehman. Schmidgalls and Lehman's flew to Frankfurt and were guests of the Ernst Pfister family. They attended midweek services in Breidenbach.

## Headquarters in Arad

They left Breidenbach to fly from the Frankfurt airport to Timisoara, Romania with a layover in Budapest. They drove to Arad where they were later met by the Stollers. For several years now, traveling brethren have made their headquarters in the Best Western Central Hotel in downtown Arad. The accommodations are reasonable and satisfactory, allowing for physical needs and a private place to meet and work.

## Baja, Hungary

On Saturday, November 8, those who flew to Timisoara drove about five hours into Hungary to visit a church where they need a new facility. After viewing the situation, and hearing the comments of local brethren, the European Board will receive a recommendation to help finance this new church.

## Meeting with Ukrainian brethren

On Tuesday, Filip Augustinov picked the brothers up about 10:00 AM to attend a meeting at the Arad church. They met our Ukrainian Elder Brethren Peter Karcea and Vasile Paladean and ministering

Brother Georghe Amaritza. Bro. Filip Augustinov helped Bro. Gene Lehman with the translation efforts as they met the entire day reviewing the current economic status and needs of our Ukrainian brethren. Items discussed included the drought of last summer, self-help loan projects, the ag-tiller/farm equipment projects, financial records, and current living conditions within the regional area of Bukovina where our churches are located. The following is a brief overview of conditions as they were reported to the group.

## Drought conditions

Brother Gene asked the Ukrainian brethren how Bukovina was affected by the drought conditions they experienced during 2003. Essentially after early May, no rain fell until the last half of July, and when it did, there was damaging hail to the crops still in the fields.

Further weather conditions contributed to what amounts to a nearly total crop failure. After much evaluation and long discussion it was decided to leave a substantial sum of charity funds and to send additional funds for winter fuel.

## Small livestock projects

When our brethren were in Eastern Europe in May, they instituted a program of furnishing baby animals and enough feed to grow them to market size. The program is very much appreciated, with 202 projects for 176 families from 29 churches participating. At the end, two-thirds of the animals would be theirs and one-third would be ours to use for future programs. This program is the bright spot in a dismal world and is working well. The hope is to continue it.

## Meeting with Romanian brethren

The group met with the Romanian elders and deacons and found the situation regarding drought, heat, and poor harvest exists there also. There was a lot of discussion concerning our new distribution center, which was visited, and how each country has equal use of goods sent there.

As the Ukrainians, the Romanians indicated that the harvest this year was almost nil. But with God's help and financial assistance and support from American brethren, they have gleaned enough for winter.

The Romanian brethren struggle with a currency that continues to devalue against other currencies to the point of devastating the purchasing power of anyone on a fixed income. In 1990 the currency exchange was 35 lei/\$1, whereas today it is over 35,000 lei/\$1. Wage earners and self-employed people are also at risk as their purchasing power for basic needs has been dramatically reduced.

## Winter heat

While food is available in the market, it is more expensive because of the drought. As one example, bread is two to three times more expensive. Because of the higher food prices, there is a definite need for assistance for winter heat and other needs this year.

In conclusion, there is a regular program of support in place, with food packages monthly from the Bluffton Distribution Center. Changes are coming, and World Relief is working very diligently to assist these suffering souls to the best of our brethren's ability and resources. It is the goal of World Relief that none of our Eastern European brethren will be hungry or cold this winter.



## 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

### Endowment Fund

In 1986 the Elder Body appointed seven brothers to determine the need and feasibility of establishing an Endowment Fund for the Apostolic Christian Church of America. Prayerful deliberations and investigative inquiries by these brothers revealed that there was a need for long-term faithful management of donated assets and resources of brethren and friends of the Church. To meet this need, the Elder Body established the Endowment Fund in 1989 to encourage, receive and administer such gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion expressed by the grantors and in accord with the policies of the Apostolic Christian Church of America.

Since inception, the Endowment Fund has provided opportunities for those who wish to make life-time or longer-term charitable gifts within the framework of the Church for the benefit of its charities and organizations. Its purpose has been to enhance the outreach of the Apostolic Christian Church of America by accommodating extended gift giving situations with a means for continuous stewardship of assets that are given to the Church for the Lord's work. The mission of the Endowment Fund is to:

1. Receive and manage assets given for the long-term benefit of Apostolic Christian charities and organizations.
2. Encourage larger life-time gifts and bequests under a will by providing an organization to manage such gifts.
3. Provide an alternative for those who wish to make a gift while continuing to receive income for

their lifetime.

4. Receive gifts when the donor has no specific church charity in mind, or has designated multiple church charities.

5. Provide professional assistance involving charitable gifting techniques for cash and non-cash donations.

The Endowment Fund is administered by a seven member committee appointed by the Elder Body. Their fiduciary responsibility is to oversee the management of the Fund's assets and its charitable activities in accordance with donor wishes and Church policy. Annually, financial reports are submitted to the Elder Body for their review and approval. Current members of this committee are brethren from our churches in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri and Ohio.

The Endowment Fund provides opportunity for brethren and friends to give to charities and organizations of the Church through bequests in a will, trusts, charitable remainder trusts, charitable gift annuities, assignments of life insurance, and outright transfers of property including cash, stocks, bonds and real estate. While allowing for more sophisticated gift-giving techniques of a long-term nature, the intent of the Endowment Fund is also to spend principal whenever it is needed as long as there are no specific donor designations and restrictions as to principal. Contributing to the Endowment Fund can benefit both the donor and the Church in the following ways:

1. It provides for better long-term stewardship of assets given to the Church for the Lord's work now and for many years to come.

2. Lifetime income from donated assets can be retained, while saving income and estate taxes for present and future years.

3. It provides easy administration of funds going to multiple church charities and life-time beneficiaries.

4. Income can be used to assist existing Church funds, provide a long-term source of funds for ongoing projects, or provide resources for unexpected Church needs in accordance with Church policy.

The Endowment Fund is not intended to supersede the short or long-term fund-raising efforts of the other charities and organizations of the Apostolic Christian Church of America. Where endowment funds are already established for Apostolic Christian charities or organizations, brethren and friends are encouraged to contribute directly to those charitable entities rather than to the Endowment Fund.

Listed earlier are many opportunities for charitable giving to the Endowment Fund. Income tax savings will depend upon the income tax bracket of the donor, the value and holding period of the donated property, and the age of the donor and/or beneficiaries where there is an annual income payout or lifetime use of the contributed property. Donors should consult with their tax consultant prior to making any substantial gifts to determine what is most appropriate for their situation. Donors may also contact Endowment Fund committee members as they are available to assist.

To contact or contribute:

Apostolic Christian Endowment Fund  
307 First Street, Congerville, IL 61729  
(309)263-9300 or FAX (309)263-8722  
gerald.banwart@raymondjames.com

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

"A land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."

*Deut. 11:12*

As the last chapter of 2003 has been written and the new pages of 2004 begin to unfold, it is so reassuring to know that the eyes of our Lord are always upon us, and that His will is being accomplished.

A staff Christmas dinner was recently held for all ACHH employees. In a setting less hurried than the typical work scene it was evident that God has directed many dedicated folks to this agency. He has provided a wide range of people, young and old, and everywhere in between. There are the energetic and the laid back. In the crowd were the dramatic and the reserved. In working together to care for all who live here the variety of talents can complement each other. We are thankful that His eyes remain upon us year in and year out.

The Peoria Apostolic Christian Sunday School hosted a wonderful Christmas party for a large number of our residents at their Fellowship Hall. This is a well-established holiday tradition where they provide a delicious meal, entertainment and a gift for each resident.

The Silver Lining reader may be interested in some other Christmas traditions that ACHH enjoys each year. Staff draws

names of residents and purchases a small gift that is presented at the resident Christmas party held in each facility in December. There is a program and a presentation of gifts. Of course the many carolers that come to sing the wonderful songs of the season are a highlight. Containers filled with some of the goodies that we only taste this time of the year appear on a regular basis. A winter wonderland that can be driven through and enjoyed from the comfort and warmth of our vehicles is located nearby as East Peoria sponsors a Festival of Lights. Christmas carols can be heard playing throughout the season at our Homes. The mail is eagerly awaited as Christmas cards arrive daily from many of you loved ones. And of course, many of our residents anticipate spending some time with their families during this happy, holy season. We hope all of these traditions help us to remember with gratitude the arrival of our dear Saviour Jesus to this old world.

As we begin the New Year of 2004, it would be good to express some of the appreciation and generosity so evident in December to those around us throughout the entire year.

February birthdays at Timber Ridge, 2125 Veterans Road, Morton, IL 61550: Matt Pumphrey (2/17), John Kamm (2/18), Lee Anne McKay (2/19), Ernest Perry (2/27), Joel Saltzman (2/27), Guy Masinelli (2/28).

At Oakwood Estate, 2213 Veterans Road, Morton, IL 61550: Sean Wiggers (2/10).

At Hazelwood, 338 E.

Hazelwood, Morton, IL 61550: Scott Hodel (2/14).

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

It has been said, "The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. Rather it has been found difficult and left untried." As we look forward to a New Year, let's remember all that Jesus asked us to do. He asked us to love our enemies, to do good to them that despitefully use us, to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to go ye out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Most of us have a hard time completing any of those tasks much less all of them. How many times have we gotten angry with our neighbor and wished evil on our enemies? How many times have we had the opportunity to preach the gospel to someone and turned away? It is convicting.

So how does God expect us to do so many things that are so opposed to our nature? How can God ask me to do something that I find so difficult? Ephesians says that, "We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." If we are created in Christ unto good works, why is it that we find it so difficult to live the life of service that God has called us to? Perhaps it is because we are trying to walk by our sight instead of by faith. Perhaps it is because we do not fully grasp hold of the grace that God extends to each of us.

In this New Year, let us be determined to try the things that God has asked us to do. They have been found difficult, as the writer says, but they are not impossible. What is impossible for man is possible with God. Let us ask God to help us to do what He wants us to do and may the grace of God be with each of you.

Gateway Woods would like to welcome Faith C. to our campus. We operated at or near full capacity throughout much of 2003, and we trust this trend will continue. This very positive trend is a result of a growing need for our services, the excellent work of our Residential Program Director, Bro. Ed Graf, and the Lord's blessing.

Gateway Woods is pleased to announce the hiring of two part-time workers in the Gateway Woods Family Services program, Bro. Kevin Sauder (Tremont) and Bro. Ron Heiniger (Bloomington). We would also like to announce the hiring of Sis. Jody Kaeb as a new teacher at Gateway Woods School. She will be taking the place of Sis. Heather Merritt (Bluffton), who is expecting her first child. Finally, we would like to announce the hiring of Sis. Christa Kaeb (Bloomington) as the new Assistant Houseparent. She will be replacing Sis. Marti Hinrichsen (Goodfield), who graciously served at Gateway Woods for more than a year. We certainly appreciate your prayers during this time of growth and transition.

We would like to thank everyone for their wonderful support of our Christmas Wish List. Almost every item has been filled – and we received many holiday donations. Thank you!

As the temperature continues to drop and the snow continues to fall, please pray for the safety and health of both the staff and residents of Gateway Woods. Sickness can really slow down our operations and be quite a discouragement. Also, please continue to pray for the recovery of Bro. Jeff Thames (Washington), who is making good progress from an accident that broke both of his ankles.

May we go forward in 2004 with the banner of Jesus held high, as we humbly seek to serve the countless hurting children and families in the United States and around the world!

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**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
PRESCHOOL  
Athens, Alabama  
Bethany Gerber**

Please pray for us! Our need for a teacher is very great. The current opening is for someone with a degree in education, either preschool or elementary, to teach and serve as the director, so some teaching experience is desirable. If you are at all interested, please contact Bro. Mike Moore by mail at 8653 Beechwood Rd., Athens, AL 36511. You can also e-mail him at [ALM38@aol.com](mailto:ALM38@aol.com) or contact Bro. Mike by phone at (256) 729-0620.

The month of December was a very busy one here at the preschool! We only had three weeks to get everything done so we were all running around. God does provide though because we were able to get everything done and still enjoy all of the Christmas festivities of the season.

We had our annual Christmas party on Friday, December 19, our last day of school. The children had fun eating candy and goodies and exchanging their gifts among themselves. It was a very fun day for them.

We just want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Have a blessed and safe holiday season and cherish the real meaning of Christmas.

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**ALABAMA, ATHENS  
Louise Hall**

Greetings of love from Alabama! We hope that everyone had a blessed and safe Christmas. We would like everyone to please pray for us. Our need for a teacher is very great. The current opening is for someone with a degree in education, either preschool or elementary, to teach and serve as the director, so some teaching experience is desirable. If you are at all interested, please contact Bro. Mike Moore by mail at 8653 Beechwood Rd., Athens, AL 36511. You can also e-mail him at [ALM38@aol.com](mailto:ALM38@aol.com) or contact Bro. Mike by phone at (256) 729-0620.

Sis. Corrine Thomas has a new great-granddaughter! Little Kelsey Bearden was born to Donnie and Jenny Bearden. The grandparents are Don and Gloria Bearden and Mr. and Mrs. Water. We wish God's blessings on the couple and their new baby.

We were glad to have Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) here on December 7 to share the Word with us. He was here for the weekend and we enjoyed having him.

We had our church caroling on

December 10 and December 17. We visited two couples from church on the first night and then we visited a family from Tennessee on the second night. It was an enjoyable time and we all felt blessed for going.

Our Christmas program was December 21. The children did a very good job. It is nice to be reminded again of the real meaning of Christmas.

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

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.”

*Philippians 4:4-5*

We are happy to welcome our wintering families and visitors.

Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev, Detroit) was our visiting minister this past month. We pray God's blessings upon the visiting ministers who labor on our pulpit.

Our World Relief workers were extra busy tying quilts this month. What joy it was to see some of the children learning how to quilt. Sisters, Brothers, and our children reaped many benefits while tying.

The Junior and Senior Bible classes had a pizza supper for the residents at the Mountain View Villas on December 6 and a singing and gift exchange followed.

The young group and many of the Bible class journeyed to Altadena for the testimony and baptism of our new Sis. Suzanne Klotzle.

Sis. Verene Sutton, Sis. Marie Kieser, and Bro. Ed Frautschi were surgical patients. Sis. Toni Bentley was hospitalized.

November 28 was the birthday of Kyle Walker. Parents are Bro. Brandon and Sis. Mindy Rinkenberger. His grandparents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Devon Rinkenberger and Sis. Judy Knapp.

Joshua Anthony was born December 7 to Bro. Mark and Sis. Stacy Steffen. His grandparents are Bro. Carl and Sis. Myrna Steffen (Alto) and Bro. Robert and Sis. Christine Baum.

Bob and Arlene Farney went to Kiowa, KS, to honor Arlene's father, Bro. Elmer Tanner, on his 100th birthday. Bro. Elmer went to his reward on December 17. Our sympathy goes to our dear friends, Bob and Arlene. We also extend our sympathy and prayers to Bro. Tim and Sis. Verene Sutton in the death of Verene's mother, Sis. Viola Von Tobel.

December 14 was our lovely Sunday School Christmas Program.

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

Most of us have very busy lives, so a good question for us in this New Year would be, “Is our Heavenly Father our highest priority?” Do we take the time to serve, honor and worship Him the way we should? If we focus on Him each day, everything else will fall into place. May everyone have a blessed New Year and be drawn ever closer in spirit and love to our Lord.

Our church enjoyed a couple hours of caroling on December 7 at a couple nursing homes and for Bro. Henry Volz, Sis. Elena Kornja and her son, George.

George Kornja spent several days hospitalized with an infection and even though he is home now, he has been unable to attend church. Sis. Rowena Furrer (Bro. Jim) is still in the hospital at the time of this writing. The doctors have been trying to diagnose the reason for her pain and are considering exploratory surgery. Pray for God's healing touch on both of their lives.

Bro. Wayne Leman (Sis. Julie, Roanoke, IL) was our visiting minister in December. We thank him for serving us and pray the Lord will richly bless him and his family. We were also blessed to meet some of his family that live in the Phoenix area when they came to worship with us.

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**ARIZONA, TUCSON**  
**Lisa Knapp**

We are thrilled to report that Bro. Paul Knoblock is recovering nicely from surgery and is once again assembling with us. God is so gracious.

Our Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix) and his wife, Sis. Nancy, joined us for Wednesday evening services recently. We are always glad to see them both. Special thanks to Bro. Jon for having the evening service. God bless you both.

We once again enjoyed singing Christmas carols at some local nursing homes and at the home of a friend of the church. As always,



we gathered together afterwards to enjoy some hot barbecue sandwiches and lots of other goodies. This year instead of meeting up at church we gathered at Bro. Steve and Sis. Maria Bauer's home. We thank them for opening their home to us so graciously. It is one of the most special nights we spend together as a church each year.

The following Sunday we enjoyed our annual Christmas program. Our tradition is to have the students sing the first verse of Silent Night when they finish their program and then the church joins in for the rest of the song. When this happens each year, it's one of those moments when I remember what Christmas is really about.

It looks like we will have a warm, sunny Christmas. The forecast calls for temperatures in the upper 60's or low 70's and lots of Tucson sunshine. We wish you all a happy, healthy, safe new year. May God dwell in your hearts and homes in 2004.

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**CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA**  
**Robin Moser**

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

*John 3:5*

We rejoice with our sister in Christ, Sis. Suzanne Klotzle (Elder Bro. Tom and Sis. Jody), as she was baptized on December 7. May we each be faithful encouragers to her as she continues to grow in the Lord. We were thankful for three

visiting ministers who shared the Word with us during the baptism weekend including: Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Doug Wagenbach (Sis. Lillian, San Diego, CA) and Bro. Galen Rokey (Sis. Nancy, Bern, KS).

We also appreciate Bro. James Emch (Sis. Gina, Phoenix, AZ) coming to assist in the ministry in Altadena this month.

The congregation enjoyed the annual Christmas program as the children explained the true meaning of Christmas with carols and verses.

Hospital patients this month included Sis. Lydia Gutierrez and Bro. Bill Witzig (Sis. Mary). We are thankful Bro. Bill has recuperated, and continue to pray for Sis. Lydia's recovery from a lung clot.

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

We are very excited and thankful to welcome a new family to our small congregation. They are Bro. Tibor Bozzay Jr. and his wife, Sis. Maggie, and their two daughters, Abigail and Zoe. They have relocated here from the Chicago congregation, whose loss is our gain. Bro. Tibor Jr. is the son of Bro. Tibor Sr. and Sis. Pearl Bozzay of our congregation.

Our hearts were warmed as we listened to our little Sunday School present its Christmas program on Sunday, December 14. They were assisted by our Single Group. Following the program we had a church dinner to welcome Bro. Tibor and Sis. Maggie's family to our congregation.

It is always so beneficial to look back on the by gone year and reflect on all the Lord has done for us. It gives us courage and zeal to look forward to 2004 and know most assuredly that whatever it may hold for us individually or as Christians, the Lord will be with us and provide for us His children.

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**CANADA**  
**KITCHENER, ONTARIO**  
**Ingrid Fortenbacher**

This past month we were blessed to have the Word of Life shared with us by Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH), Bro. Dwayne Reutter (Sis. Kay, Rockville, CT) and retired Elder Bro. Ben Maibach (Detroit, MI).

Our Sunday School presented their Christmas program on Sunday, December 14. It was so wonderful to see all the young faces lit up with joy as they sang about the birth of Jesus. That evening we were able to sing for the residents of a nursing home in our area. The residents shared what a blessing it was for them to see all the children there singing.

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

*Matt. 5:16*

May the Lord be with each one as we acknowledge the birth of Christ and remember to keep "Christ" as the center of our Christmas.

*Notice:*

Over the next 2 months we plan

to produce a Kitchener Church Building Cookbook. All of the money collected from the sale of the book will go to the Apostolic Christian Mission Committee to pay them back for our church building. We are asking anyone who is interested to send us favorite recipes, especially those who visit. Please send us your recipes before January 31, 2004. Recipes can be sent by mail, fax or email.

[melanie\\_tomic@yahoo.com](mailto:melanie_tomic@yahoo.com)

Melanie Tomic  
1206 Snyder's Rd East  
Baden ON N3A 3L3  
519-634-1185 phone and fax

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### **COLORADO, DENVER**

**Ann Gonglach**

What kind of faith do you have? Weak faith? Dead faith? Saving faith? Great faith? In Revelation, I find it interesting that Christ is beseeching the churches to be overcomers, not simply believers (...the devils also believe and tremble - James 2:19). It is to the overcomer that He has promised many different rewards. Recently, in our Wednesday night Bible study, we were discussing what it takes to be patient and "stablish your hearts" as we wait for the coming of the Lord (James 5:8). As we begin a new year, let us continue to strive to be overcomers as the Lord gives us days upon this earth.

We have been doing something different at our monthly hymn sings lately. Certain ones have been asked to share something of what God has done in their lives.

Bro. Louis Bikadi shared how Christians help each other in time of need, specifically how he was helped when he first emigrated to this country from Hungary. The next time, Bro. Tom Leman shared his conversion experience with us. And at the latest singing, we went Christmas caroling at some local retirement homes. In the future, we plan to have a lesson in music. The monthly hymn sings are the second Saturday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Don't miss out!

The Sunday School presented a Christmas program on December 14. We enjoy hearing the children sing praises to God and trust that He is glorified.

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### **CONNECTICUT**

**ROCKVILLE**

**Amber Reutter**

**Laura Virkler**

Greetings one and all! As the hymn writer wrote, "God bless ye faithful brethren, Let nothing you dismay, For Jesus Christ our Saviour, was born on Christmas Day, To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray. O tidings of comfort and joy..." This is certainly a time of much sentiment, gratitude, joy and for some, tradition, as the Christmas season approaches and unfolds. It is also a time when changes become very apparent, whether it would be the absence of a loved one, the death of a family member, or the distance of family and friends. We, as a congregation were kindly reminded on Thanksgiving Day to lovingly draw in each soul who may be marked with the loneliness, sadness, or difficult transitions that may surface throughout these

emotional times. It is often good to be reminded that these changes are a way of life, and out of our control. How thankful we are that we have a Saviour who is unchanging, knows our each and every need, and knows what is best for us. There is no other stable foundation to put our trust in.

Our congregation has experienced changes as well. Sis. Janet Goric was released from her weary load, and was laid to rest after many years of servitude to her Lord. She leaves behind two sons, Bro. Dan (Sis. Mary Lou) Goric, and Bro. Bob (Sis. Lynette) Goric, and a daughter, Sis. Patty Goric. Grandchildren and family will no doubt miss her presence this holiday season. May we keep each one who may grieve the loss of a loved one in our thoughts and prayers.

Throughout this past month, our congregation was privileged with the presence of several ministering brethren, including Bro. Mike Baumann (Sis. Florina, Mansfield, OH), Bro. Mike Ursu (Sis. Barb, Kitchener, Ontario) and Bro. Shawn Metzger (Sis. Sandy, Philadelphia, PA). We are so thankful for their willingness to share their time with us, and proclaim the Word of God for our spiritual benefit. May the Lord continue to bless them, their service to the Lord, and their families.

Our congregation looks forward to the blessings of Christmas caroling and the Sunday School Christmas program. May all be done to the praise and honor of our Lord and Saviour!

"The Lord is rock and my for-

truss, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”

Psalm 18:2

May we all find this to be true as we face another year of change, transition, joy, and maybe even sadness. However, with the old, unchanging story, we find hope, peace and comfort to press on, and by God's grace, remain on the strait and narrow way.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**Henrietta Meyer**

As we begin the new year, may the Lord be your guard and guide.

This month our visiting ministers were Elder Bro. Ervin Knecht (Sis. Sandy, Eureka, IL), Bro. Lenard Meyer (Sis. Charlotte, Chicago, IL), Bro. Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Tom Bolliger (Sis. Jane, Tremont, IL).

Other visitors this month were from Bluffton, IN; Baltimore, MD; and Tremont, IL.

This month we said farewell to Bro. Howard and Sis. Gloria Leman as they return back to Morton after her assignment out here was completed. At the same time we welcome Seth Fisher from Bluffton who is stationed at Ft. Myer (Arlington, VA).

Services are usually held the first, third, fourth and fifth 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; af-

ternoon 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**

**Renee Mangold**

We were thankful to have with us visiting ministers this month. Visiting were Bros. Ed Sauder (Sis. Bonnie, Roanoke, IL), Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL), and Virgil Metzger (Sis. Mary, Chicago, IL). We pray that God will bless His servants.

Bro. Harry Sutter is home from the hospital recovering from a heart attack. We pray that God will heal this brother and return him to good health and strength.

We went caroling this month to the shut-ins and to nursing homes. There were a few young sisters here on vacation and they lent their voices to our caroling. Following the caroling, we gathered for a church dinner. It was a blessed time. Our prayers are with those less fortunate, that they would feel God's comfort and know His peace.

We would appreciate any ministers planning a trip to Ft. Lauderdale to contact Bro. Roger Sauder (954) 584-0947. We are on

a visiting minister rotation and this would be helpful in our scheduling.

**FLORIDA  
NORTH FORT MYERS**

**Mary Masters**

This month we were blessed with an increase in our church attendance, as well as several visiting ministers. We want to thank Bro. Mike Baumann (Sis. Florina, Mansfield, OH) and Bro. Ron Koehl (Sis. Carol, Sarasota, FL) for coming and lending themselves on our behalf.

Christmas caroling was enjoyed by a group from our congregation, and was appreciated by Bro. Rolland Keller and the residents who reside at the same home as him; and also, Alice Myer, who is still recuperating from a lengthy illness.

As I was reflecting on the Christmas story, I had to wonder what it must have been like to be Mary, the mother of Jesus. There must have been many different emotions as she was aware of the significance of her beloved Son and yet all the human difficulties had to have been present also. After traveling a long distance only to give birth in an inconvenient and not so sanitary place, then to be visited by total strangers. Truly, God's ways are not our ways, and yet as we think about the many accounts in the Bible, we need to realize that God can be working out the very best for us even when it seems we are going through difficult times.

Bro. Marvin and Sis. Rhea Steffen would like to thank every-

one for their many expressions of sympathy at the passing of Sis. Rhea's mother, Uda Simmons.

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

Sarasota's annual Sunday School Christmas program was held Sunday, December 14, in the new Fellowship Hall. We appreciate all the effort put forth by our students, teachers and parents to make this a very blessed evening.

We want to thank retired Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL) and Bro. Mike Baumann (Mansfield, OH) for bringing us God's Word this past month.

Bros. Jon Krstec and Orval Rocke have been hospital patients, while Sis. Marie Reardon is in rehab. Please continue to pray for our widows and any loved ones with health concerns.

We are so happy to have our daughter, Sis. Mandy Koehl (Morton, IL), home for the holidays during college break. She's enjoying being with everyone, but especially her two little nieces!

We want to express a hearty welcome to all of our winter residents and visitors.

As the New Year begins, let's all resolve to be more Christlike - faithful, obedient and fruitful in His service.

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**GEORGIA, ATLANTA**  
**Carol Kaufman**

We are so thankful for ministering brothers who come and give of themselves. Bro. Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction, OH) and Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Fairbury, IL) were our visiting

ministers this past month. May the Lord richly reward them for their willingness to come and preach the truth.

On Saturday, December 13, Bro. Rick Plattner presented a topical Bible Study called "Command the Chariots to Stand Still". On Sunday, December 14, Bro. Rick and Sis. Mary joined us for our Sunday School Christmas Program and then on to two nursing homes for Christmas Caroling. After we were through, we met back at church for a pizza supper and more fellowship.

We so look forward to the fellowship of the brethren. If you have plans to go south this winter, remember to include us. Give us a call to help us plan for Sunday lunch and other activities. We encourage you to set aside time Saturday evening, Sunday evening or during the week for fellowship. We meet on the second and fourth Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. The church is located off I-85 south of the Atlanta airport at Exit 64 in Fairburn, GA. Once off the exit, go west four miles and the church will be on the left. For more information or to let us know of your plans, please call Bro. Linn Stoller 770-631-4554, Bro. Keith Kaufman 770-304-8335 or Bro. Tom Waldbeser 770-463-4788.

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

"Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."  
*John 16:24*

*Joy, to the world! The Lord is come.* The Sunday School classes joyously sang many carols at our Christmas program. This was followed by our congregation caroling at nursing homes and ended with a delicious chili dinner at church.

Our visiting ministers this month have been Bros. Matthew Rassi (Chicago, IL) and Dale Banwart (Wolcott, IN). It is with joy and thanksgiving in our hearts that we are able to worship so freely.

Yet we are *joyous* once again that our dear Melissa Waibel (Jeff) is home and recovering from recent hospitalizations from being a surgical and medical patient.

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**ILLINOIS**  
**BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL**  
**Rebekah Kaufmann**  
**Kara Martin**

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

*Romans 12:15*

As part of a church family, we have many opportunities to follow the exhortation in this verse. This past month there have been reasons to rejoice as well as to weep with those who were mourning.

On November 21, Sis. Marie Kaufmann, the mother of Bro. Dennis Kaufmann (Sis. Bonnie), passed away. How thankful we were that she was ready to meet her Savior and Creator! We pray that the Lord will continue to comfort her family in their loss. We also pray that we can each look for

our day to meet the Lord with anticipation.

December 14 was a day of rejoicing as we witnessed Bro. Duane Kieser and Sis. Alissa Schmidgall exchange wedding vows. Bro. Duane's parents are Bro. David and Sis. Wilma Kieser and Sis. Alissa's parents are Bro. Randy and Sis. Marj Schmidgall. We pray the Lord's blessings be upon Bro. Duane and Sis. Alissa as they begin their new life together.

Another little baby has become a part of our church family this month! Benjamin Samuel was born on December 12. Bro. Sam and Sis. Shelley Steffen are his parents. Benjamin also has two big brothers, William and Thaddeus. His thankful grandparents are Bro. Earl and Sis. Betty Steffen and Bro. Dave and Sis. Judy Knobloch. We thank God for Benjamin's safe delivery and pray that He will continue to give Bro. Sam and Sis. Shelley wisdom and strength in their role as parents.

We were very thankful to have several visiting ministers this past month. We appreciate Elder Bros. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL), Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO), and Bros. Nate Lehman (Denver, CO), and Mark Gerber (Bluffton, IN) coming and sharing the Word with us.

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### **ILLINOIS, BRADFORD** **Steve Endress**

We are thankful for the blessing of another child born in our congregation. Mariah Leigh Endress was born to Bro. Bill and Sis. Renee' Endress. Andrea, Ty-

ler, Brendan, Mikaela, and Austin are also thankful for their new sister. Grandparents are Sis. Lois Endress and Bro. Roy and Sis. Dona Grimm (Taylor, MO).

We are enjoying fellowship with our new family who moved here recently from Portland, OR. Bro. John and Sis. Wanda Kinsinger and their children, James, Jesse, and Joy, are residing at RR 2 Box 11, Wyoming IL 61491.

We are glad to report that three from our congregation are successfully recovering from surgery. They are Bro. Jack Knobloch (Sis. Nancy), Bro. Ray Klumpp, and Sis. Jane Leman (Elder Bro. Marvin). We continue to pray for Sis. Elizabeth Kimble as she has had a longer road of recovery.

We appreciated having three visiting ministers with us lately. They were Bros. Dean Steffen (Belvidere, IL), Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO), and Craig Martin (Princeville, IL). In Philippians 1, Paul reminded the believers that he did not care whether God was using him to spread the Word or another, so long as the work was being done and the Truth was being preached. Although Paul was bound up in prison at the time, he still could rejoice that the work was being done because he was not looking for any honor or esteem of men. We should be so thankful because we have the confidence that the brothers who stand before us also feel as Paul did. Our humble style of preaching is evidence that we place our focus on the word being spoken and not the lips that speak it, and may this always be

the case.

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### **ILLINOIS** **CHAMPAIGN-URBANA** **Karla Kieser**

Greetings from Champaign-Urbana! We began the month with the reading of the Memorandum and we thank Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) and his wife for helping Elder Bro. Wayne with that task. As this year comes to an end, we were reminded to report our earnings honestly and to give to the Kingdom with the intention of it being used for God's purpose and not simply as a tax deduction.

We grieve with ministering Bro. Darren Plattner and his family at the loss of his maternal grandparents. Bro. Robert Kaufmann passed away November 1 and then his wife, Sis. Marie Kaufmann, passed on two weeks later on November 21. They were from Cissna Park.

A housewarming singing was held for Bro. Nick and Sis. Sandra Waibel at their home at the end of November. We were surprised with a sudden downpour of rain at the start of the singing and poor Sis. Sandra had lots of muddy shoeprints to clean up! They have a very nice and welcoming home and we are once again glad that they have decided to worship with us.

On December 6 the students had their annual babysitting day so that the parents could do their Christmas shopping "unhindered." The parents were very appreciative and would like to thank the students for volunteering to

do this. We also had a wedding shower for Bro. Neil Banwart and his fiancée, Sis. Leann Leman, on that same day.

Our Sunday School children have been busy with their activities. Before Thanksgiving they all made food baskets for the needy and then helped to distribute them. They also had their Christmas program on December 14 and the congregation enjoyed watching their performance. We are grateful for our Sunday School teachers who work hard teaching and discipling these precious children! Directly after the Christmas program, the church went caroling at several nursing homes and then reconvened at the church for a delicious chili supper. During the Christmas season it is so easy to feel overwhelmed with all the gatherings and traveling that surround it that it is easy to forget the real reason for the season.

“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, Counselor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

*Isaiah 9:6*

Two more precious souls have felt the Lord's urging and have started repenting! We are so happy for Alan and Theresa Miller and they are in our prayers as they start this walk with Christ. They have a young daughter, Amelia, who is almost a year old.

Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL) visited twice this

month and we are grateful to him for his services. We are also grateful to Bro. Mark Streitmatter (Bloomington, IL) for ministering to us one Wednesday evening.

We had one hospital patient this month. Bro. Melvin Walder (Sis. Irma) had shoulder surgery and only had to stay overnight. They were thankful to learn that the surgery was not as extensive as initially anticipated. He is currently in therapy and improving well.

### ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

#### Rachel Meyer

During this time of year, we take time off from our regular schedules to focus on the things that mean the most to us – faith, family and friends. We decorate our homes in honor of Christmas and there is a special feeling in the air. Some people seem to have a special ability to string lights in a beautiful way, and we may purposely pass certain houses or neighborhoods just to see their lights. Those lights are a bonus to us! An extra reminder to remember the light of the world who entered our world on Christmas night.

Entering the world this month was Quartus John Rassi. Welcoming home Quartus are parents, Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget Rassi. Siblings, Carl, Manna and Emmaus, are also quite pleased with their early Christmas present.

As one enters the world, so another passes through. We extend our sympathy to Bro. Kent Rager (Sis. Jill) on the passing of his

grandmother, Sis. Louise Rager, of Latty, OH.

With grateful hearts we thank Bro. Erik Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL) for ministering to us this month.

We rejoice to have Sis. Penny Stahl back home with us here in Chicago. She spent nearly two years serving our mission church in Ixtlan, Mexico. It has been a blessing for us to have one of our own helping with this important work, and Sis. Penny considers this to have been a privilege and an opportunity to grow spiritually.

We were privileged to see and hear the Christmas program presented to us by the Sunday School children and teachers. The singing was heartfelt, the narration was aptly spoken and their enthusiasm was felt beyond measure. We all joined in singing the last two verses of “Joy to the World” and I thought that in Heaven the singing must be the same. From the youngest to the oldest, smallest to largest, it will be pure joy and worship for Christ the King.

As I write, it is only a few days before Christmas. Last night I made a list of my last few gift selections and I shopped for them today. Isn't it easier when someone makes a list for us? The Wise Men's shopping was made easier for them because their gifts for the Christ child had been prophesied by Isaiah of old. The first gift was gold – symbolizing that Jesus was going to be the King of all kings. Frankincense was the next gift. Frankincense was made from the sap of the frankincense tree and was a highly valued oil used in worship for anointing and burnt

offerings. It symbolized Jesus' role as a priest. Mary and Joseph probably understood somewhat the gifts of gold and anointing oil, but did they understand the third gift—embalming fluid? Myrrh was used to embalm bodies of the dead, and as strange or as frightening as it may have seemed, it was an apt offering to the baby who would become Priest, King, and our Saviour through death.

Merry Christmas to all, and may the New Year bring peace, prosperity of spirit, and an even greater understanding of Christ's deep and abiding love for you.

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### ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

**Susan Waldbeser  
Denise Walder**

We appreciate having visiting ministers to bring the Word of God. We want to thank Bro. Mark Gerber for ministering the Word to us. Also, we thank Bro. Glen Braker for bringing the message on Thanksgiving Day. May God bless these brothers for being willing to feed His flock.

Our Sis. Marie Kaufmann went to her heavenly reward and we extend our sympathy to her family. Sis. Marie had resided at the nursing home in Morton for several years, but we thought of her often. Also, we extend sympathy to Sis. Nettie Obergfel on the death of her brother. May God comfort each one at this time of loss.

We have had several from our congregation that were in the hospital this month. Grace Farney, Sis. Elsie Ehman, Sis. Clara Hofer and Sis. Mary Lou Kaeb have been in our thoughts and prayers. We

pray God will grant each one healing and that they may reassemble with us soon.

On December 7 we had our church Christmas caroling. What a blessing to be able to spend time with those that aren't able to get out. We pray that as we sang of the birth of Jesus, each heart was touched to focus on the real meaning of Christmas.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

Thank you to all who remembered us on our 60th wedding anniversary. May God bless each and every one of you.

Bill and Marj Rinckenberger

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### ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

**Arlene Banwart**

As we enter the New Year, may we be encouraged in "A Work of Faith, A Labor of Love".

We walk along this path of life  
Amidst this world, its toil and  
strife  
Ambassadors for God above  
With works of faith and labors of  
love!

The fatherless, a child in need,  
The elderly, a widow indeed;  
The poor, the sick, the pris'ner  
too;  
They call for me, they're calling  
for you!

Chorus:  
We're called by God His works to  
do;  
With faith and love we'll labor  
anew.

May our life be for God above  
A work of faith, a labor of love.

—by a brother in faith

God has blessed our congregation with two new ministers: Bro. Ben (Sis. Juanita) Walder and Bro. James (Sis. Lisa) Knapp. We pray God's Spirit will ever lead them in proclaiming His Word. Elder Bro. Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) and Bros. Ken Weerts (Cissna Park, IL), Dan Moser (Elgin, IL) and Tim Zimmerman (Lamont-Gridley, KS) also encouraged us in their preaching.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Charles and Sis. Martha Rinckenberger in the death of her brother, Bro. Bob Kauffman, and his wife, Sis. Marie. To Dorothy Baer whose sister-in-law, Betty Zimmerman, died, we extend sympathy. May God comfort them.

Several from our congregation, Bro. Willis (Sis. Bernice) Knapp, Sisters Millie (Bro. Carl) Schieber, and Lucille Blunier, spent time in the hospital, but are thankful to be back home.

In December our church enjoyed dividing into six groups and caroling in nearby communities.

"Holy is His Name" was the title of the Sunday School Christmas program which reminded us of the first Christmas and salvation brought to us by Jesus' death.

Born December 14 to Bro. Brad and Sis. Becky Langhofer (South Bend, IN) was a son, Charles Jesse. Thankful first-time grandparents from our church are Bro. Fred and Sis. Mary Ellen Zimmerman.

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**ILLINOIS, ELGIN**  
**Miriam Gasser**  
**for Amy Gasser**

Standing at the portal of the  
opening year,  
Words of comfort meet us, hush-  
ing every fear;  
Spoken through the silence by  
our Father's voice,  
Tender, strong and faithful, mak-  
ing us rejoice.

For the year before us, O what  
rich supplies!  
For the poor and needy, living  
streams shall rise;  
For the sad and sinful, shall His  
grace abound;  
For the faint and feeble, perfect  
strength be found.

He will never fail us, He will not  
forsake;  
His eternal cov'nant, He will  
never break.  
Resting on His promise, what  
have we to fear?  
God is all-sufficient for the com-  
ing year.

*Chorus:* Onward then, and fear  
not, children of the day;  
For His Word shall never, never  
pass away.  
*Worship and Service Hymnal*  
#522

At the opening of this new year,  
we reflect with thankfulness on  
some recent new beginnings. Bro.  
Dave and Sis. Paige Stieglitz an-  
nounced the birth of their daugh-  
ter, Taylor D'Ann, on November  
18. Reagan is now a big brother.  
Their grandparents are Sis. Joan  
Stieglitz (Leo, IN) and Bro. Allen  
and Sis. Rosemary Massner (Tay-  
lor, MO).

Our congregation rejoices in  
the spiritual rebirth of three  
friends who have begun their re-  
pentance: Amanda Martin (Bro.

Dave and Sis. Jean), Trisha  
Kellenberger (Bro. Keith and Sis.  
Ida), and Kirk Schambach (Bro.  
Les and Sis. Alison). May they find  
God's grace sufficient, as they  
strive to overcome and build on  
the firm foundation.

Another convert, Terry  
Goodpaster, has recently moved  
to Elk Grove Village from  
Bluffton. He is enrolled at Univer-  
sal Technical Institute to receive  
training in auto mechanics. We  
welcome him to our assembly and  
hope he will feel the support of our  
church family, while he is away  
from home.

On Thanksgiving Day, we were  
blessed to have three visiting min-  
isters come to join family gather-  
ings and share the Word with us.  
They were Elder Bro. Doug  
Schock (Pulaski, IA) and Bros.  
Dale Frank (Oakville, IA) and  
Brad Gudeman (Bradford, IL).

During the blessed season com-  
memorating Christ's birth, we  
were warmed by our Christmas  
traditions of caroling as families  
on December 7 and attending the  
Sunday School program on De-  
cember 14. This beautiful account  
of long ago never grows old.

Prayers for healing and com-  
fort go out to Sis. Amy Gasser who  
has undergone two major surger-  
ies within a few weeks of each  
other. We know her life is in the  
hands of the Great Physician who  
does all things well, even though  
we may not understand the pur-  
pose at present.

*Note of Thanks:*

Bro. Georg and Sis. Hilde  
Schumacher want to thank every-

one near and far for their contri-  
butions to a happy celebration of  
their 51st anniversary in Septem-  
ber. They were touched by the  
many inspiring cards, gifts and  
loving service and enjoy reminis-  
cing on that day. It was humbling  
for them to feel the joyful and  
graceful closeness of their dear  
church family. "May God grant  
you all many blessings and be your  
great Rewarder always."

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

"If any man speak, let him  
speak as the oracles of God; if any  
man minister, let him do it as of  
the ability which God giveth: that  
God in all things may be glorified  
through Jesus Christ, to whom be  
praise and dominion for ever and  
ever. Amen."

*I Peter 4:11*

Our congregation is very  
thankful to have recently had two  
brothers brought forward and  
made ministers of the gospel.

Bro. Mark Zimmerman (Sis.  
Cheryl), and Bro. Mark Schmid-  
gall (Sis. Lisa) have been called to  
serve in this important duty.

May God richly bless them and  
stand by their side as they en-  
deavor to impart the True Word  
unto the brethren and friends of  
the truth such that the brethren  
will be edified and encouraged,  
and the friends will feel conviction  
unto repentance.

December 14 we heard the en-  
gagement announcement of Bro.  
Erik Kupferschmid (Lester, IA)  
and Sis. Joy Meyer (Lester, IA).



Bro. Erik lived here in Eureka and moved to Lester a few years ago. Their parents are Bro. Richard and Sis. Maribeth Kupferschmid (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Raymond and Sis. Twyla Meyer (Lester, IA). We wish them God's blessings and guidance as they plan their future together.

December 14, Bro. Darrell Stoller (Eureka, IL) and Sis. Jennifer Wiegand (Goodfield, IL) were united in Holy Matrimony at Goodfield. Their parents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Edie Stoller (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Larry and Sis. Lori Wiegand (Goodfield, IL).

We are thankful for Lori Martin (Bro. Doug and Sis. Karen) as she has answered God's call unto repentance. Our prayers are with her that God will grant her grace as she takes this most important step in life.

Sunday evening, December 14, was our Sunday School Christmas program. It was a blessing to listen to each class recite verses and sing the Christmas hymns.

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Bro. Melvin Stoller as he bid farewell to his beloved wife, Sis. Marjorie, on December 9. She is survived also by one daughter, Frances (Tom) of Elkhart, IN, and one son, Richard (Kathy) of Eureka. May God be with them and fill the void that is left by the loss of their loved one.

Bro. Tom Leman (Denver, CO) was our visiting minister on December 14. We thank him for coming and may God's richest blessings be with him.

We remember Sis. Millie Prather (Bro. Jack) and Sis. Verna Wettstein as they both had sur-

gery recently.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

May God's grace and guidance  
be with each one in the New Year.

*Reminder:* Silver Lining collection for Eureka church is in the month of January.

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### ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

**Joann Zehr**

**Tammy Hinrichsen**

Greetings from the brothers and sisters here in Fairbury! Heaven and the children of God rejoice at the news of yet another soul coming to Christ: David Banwart (Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna). Our prayers go out to David as he now redirects his life towards that heavenly goal.

On the second day of December, Ty Walter Welborn was born to Bro. Chad and Sis. Lori Welborn. Happy grandparents are Bro. Donald and Sis. Phyllis Welborn and Bro. Walter and Sis. Rosetta Edelman.

Two of our members here at Fairbury were in the hospital this month. We would ask God to give Bro. Wayne Nussbaum and Sis. Marsha Fehr strength through these trying events.

Our church at Fairbury has been blessed with two visiting ministers whom we would like to thank. The visitors were Bro. Alan Schambach (Remington, IN) and Bro. Greg Stoller (Forrest, IL).

Lastly, we had the opportunity

once again to listen to the children tell the story of the birth of Christ at the Christmas program on December 14. The time-honored songs, coupled with the enthusiasm of youth, made us all reflect upon that holy night in the small town of Bethlehem.

*Note of Thanks:*

I wish to thank my family, my church family and friends for remembering me with cards, phone calls, flowers and food on my recent illness and my 95th birthday. God bless you all!

Sis. LaVina Moser

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### ILLINOIS, FORREST

**Linda Anliker**

**Lori Dotterer**

As we embark upon a New Year, it is common in the world to make New Year's resolutions, which seemingly do not last for any length of time. Many of us have in times past made a commitment to ourselves to live better lives, which fail until we surrender our lives to the Lord, are converted and look to Him for our guidance.

Our Sunday School children relayed to us the story of our Saviour's birth through the Sunday School program held December 17. May the seeds be planted in tender hearts during their years in Sunday School.

"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him."

*Genesis 2:18*

Exchanging vows of holy matrimony on November 23 were Bro. Clint Strahm (Bro. Curt and Sis. Ellen, Bern, KS) and Sis. Kristi Bachtold (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Mary). As they unite their hearts in love, may the covenant they make stand and endure where God shall ever abide.

Offering themselves in the service of our Lord we thank visiting ministers, Bros. Darrell Stoller and Ed Strahm (Bern, KS), Pat Zaugg (West Bend, IA), Bob Beebe (South Bend, IN) and Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL) for sharing God's Word with us.

Two families in our congregation were blessed with the birth of sons. Bro. Jay and Sis. Jolene, Bailee, Jessica and Kylee Mueller welcome Brandon Thomas into their hearts and home. His grandparents are John and Edna Haas (Fairbury, IL) and Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida Mueller.

Carson Scott was born to Bro. Kent and Sis. Paulette Zimmerman. His siblings, Jesse, Jordan, Amanda, Pete and Clay, are happy to have a baby brother. Bro. Elmer and Sis. Hazel Schmidt (Winthrop, MN) and Bro. Al and the late Sis. Carolyn Zimmerman are his grandparents.

May God grant healing to those who have spent time in the hospital, which include Josiah Gutwein (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Wendy), Sis. Pauline Wiegand, Bro. Mike Zimmerman (Sis. Jeanette), and Bro. Duane Schneider (Sis. Janny).

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## ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

### Heather Hohulin Rita Bauman

As another year closes and a new one begins, may we continue to walk by our precious Saviour's side. We pray God's will may be done in the coming year not knowing what lies ahead.

Our Sunday School children were eager to tell the story of Baby Jesus through song and verse. It is so precious to be able to hear the story through the innocent voices of our children. We thank each student who was a part of the Christmas program on December 7.

We rejoice with first time parents, Shane and Donna Rocke, as they have been blessed with a little boy. Gabriel Joseph was born December 14. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Steve and Audrey Rocke and Joe and Janet Weyer. May we continue to keep them in our prayers as Gabriel will be hospitalized for a few weeks. We are thankful that God is in control.

December 14 was the wedding day of our Sis. Jennifer Wiegand and Bro. Darrell Stoller. Their parents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Lori Wiegand, and Bro. Tom and Sis. Edie Stoller (Eureka, IL). We welcome Bro. Darrell as they are making Goodfield their church. We pray that God will bless their marriage and provide for them.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

*Romans 10:13*

We were so thankful to hear that four of our converts have repented and have found peace with God and man. Those awaiting to

give their testimony are Royce Schieler (Bro. Brian and Sis. Teresa), Dan Currier (Art and Sis. Mary), Dean Zimmerman (Sis. Inge) and Tiffany Eastman (Dave and Diane). We look forward to their special weekend.

Our visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bros. Ervin Knecht (Sis. Sandy, Eureka, IL), Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL), and Bro. Randy Mogler (Sis. Evie, Washington, IL). We were thankful for their willingness to be used by the Lord.

On December 21, we heard the engagement of Sis. Joy Wiegand and Bro. Derek Roth. Their parents are Bro. Wayne and Sis. Rosemary Wiegand and Roy and Sis. Corrine Roth. We wish them God's blessings as they prepare for their special day. May God be with each one in the coming year.

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.

*Hymns of Zion #150*

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## ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY Perry A. Klopfenstein

"A snowflake is one of God's most fragile creations, but look what they can do when they stick together."

—*Author unknown*

There is a correlation between

a snowflake and a believer. Both can be fragile, but when the believers become "members one of another" they gain in strength. As believers unite themselves as one, and pull in the same direction, they create a much stronger unit.

The Christmas season has come and gone, with much joy and happiness — and much giving. Although there is the shadow of a secularized "Christmas," the true meaning conjures up much joy and family togetherness, and this accrues to our betterment.

The hymns of Christmas are both beautiful and meaningful. Yet, there are verses in one of them that are hardly eclipsed by any other seasonal hymn — and they were written years ago by Bro. Henry Beer of Milford, Indiana:

Be not content this babe to know,  
nor stay at Bethlehem,  
But go with Christ to Calvary's  
brow, beyond Jerusalem.  
'Tis not the babe, but Christ the  
man, who walked in Galilee;  
'Tis not the manger, but the  
cross, That sets the spirit free.

Carter Bennet Schieler was born to Bro. Glenn and Sis. Charity Schieler. He is a brother to Ashton, 4, and Caleb, 3. Grandparents are Bro. Perry and Sis. Carol Klopfenstein. A special aunt is Sis. Marilyn Schieler, who is known to the boys as "Grandma". Great-grandparents are Bro. Robert and Sis. Pearl Miller (Portland, OR).

Several from our congregation have been ill. They are Sisters Marge Kuntz, Dorothy Ringger,

and Sue Stella. Sis. Martha Stoller has been taking treatments. Ron Kinder was ill too, but is doing better.

On Sunday, December 14, our Sunday School students presented a Christmas program to the church, and it was a blessing. We truly thank them for their recitations and musical numbers.

Elder Bro. Earl Ringger spoke on "The Role of the Elder" on Wednesday evening, December 10. This was instructive, and a good reminder of the authority parameters and teaching responsibilities of the local leader. As brethren, we need to hold up his arms that the way of godliness can be maintained for our spiritual safety, and God's glory.

A new year now looms ahead, and the believer in Christ Jesus has a high calling. His summons is not to be overly concerned with "earthly things," but to serve God that others may learn of this wonderful salvation through the dear Lord's death and resurrection. We have an enemy in this cause, so it is to our benefit — and that of others — if we are not asleep, but alert and zealous to do God's work.

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### ILLINOIS, MORTON

**Julie Bahr  
Christie Zeller**

We were grateful for the baptisms of four dear souls on November 23. They were Seth Webb (Bro. Brian and Sis. Jane), Dane Zeller (Bro. Will and Sis. Dannelle), Jeremiah Psinas (Bro. Gary and Sis. Heidi), and Leah Zimmerman (Bro. Doug and Sis. Jane). May God continue to lead

these dear lambs.

Bro. Jeff and Sis. Stacey Stoller are the thankful parents of a new baby girl, Mya Ruth, born November 23. Mya is welcomed home by big sisters, Madison and Hallie.

December is a busy month for all, but one in which we enjoy all the activities the season brings. Our annual Christmas caroling and chili supper was held December 7. It was a wonderful evening of food and fellowship. Our Christmas program was held December 14. Many witnessed the story of Christ's birth through verse and song by our Sunday school students. May we never forget the Reason for the Season.

Sis. Marie Kaufmann (Cissna Park, IL) passed away. She is the mother to our Sis. Joyce (Bro. Gene) Strunk. Verna Warner passed away. She is an aunt to our Sis. Lynn (Bro. Ralph) Garber. May God comfort these dear families.

Our Heavenly Father has provided us with willing servants to serve in various church offices. They are: Bro. Doug (Sis. Gerry) Kruse, and Bro. Dennis (Sis. Debbie) Wells for church trustees, Bro. Howard (Sis. Louise) Getz for Restmor trustee, Bro. Brian (Sis. Julie) Bahr for Fellowship Hall trustee, Bro. Henry (Sis. Bernice) Rapp for funeral usher, Bro. Eric (Bro. Ed and Sis. Barb) Kaiser, Bro. Tim (Sis. Jessie) Mueller, Bro. Adam (Sis. Amy) Spangler as Sunday ushers, and Bro. Jack (Sis. Dorothy) Krantz for our visiting brother. May God bless these loved ones for their service to our church.

Our visiting brothers for the

month were: Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam, Washington, IL), Bro. Ted Hirstein (Sis. Joyce, Atlanta, GA), Bro. Ted Luginbuhl (Sis. Stephanie, Smithville, OH), Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi, South Bend, IN), and Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla, Chicago, IL). Thanks to all these brothers for their willingness to serve in God's vineyard.

*Note of Thanks:*

We would like to thank everyone for the prayers, phone calls, cards, food, gifts, and expressions of sympathy extended to us during the loss of our parents.

*Family of Bob and Marie Kaufmann*

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**ILLINOIS, PEORIA  
Lou and Marjean Lonteen**

"I now send you, to open their eyes...that they may receive forgiveness of sins..."

*Acts 26:17-18*

Recent visiting ministers were: Bro. Jeff Grimm (Goodfield), Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor), and Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield). Bro. Glenn Dill (Tremont) brought us a topical Bible study on December 3, and his topic was: "Parenting". God bless each of you for your service to the Lord and to us our congregation.

"If we walk in the light...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

*I John 1:7*

Bro. Walter Meister was bap-

tized on December 13. Because of his illness the church body was not able to be with Bro. Walter to hear of his testimony-of-faith and witness his baptism. We rejoice with Bro. Walter and his family.

"I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'"

Then I said, Here am I! send me."

*Isaiah 6:8*

On November 23, Sis. Kary Hoerr and Bro. Trent Scholl we united in Holy Matrimony. Parents are: Bro. Carl II and Sis. Debby Hoerr and the late Wayne and Linda (Scholl) Robinson, of Princeville. "The love of Christ constraineth us..." (II Corinthians 5:14)

Sis. Amber Criss (Sis. Linda Criss) became engaged to Bro. Andy Zimmerman (Bro. Keith and Sis. Linda) of Gridley. May 16 is the planned wedding date. "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord." (Proverbs 18:22)

"...teach them diligently unto thy children..."

*Deuteronomy 6:7*

On November 20, little Cade Abram was born to Bro. Andy and Sis. Darcy (Hoerr) Biedscheid. Thankful grandparents are: Bro. David and Sis. Connie Hoerr. Little Cade has a wonderful circle of love with big brothers: Beau, Brady, and Breck.

Little Carissa Elaine Wagenbach was born on Novem-

ber 24 to: Bro. Tim and Sis. Tricia Wagenbach (Princeville). Alec and Brenna welcome their little sister into their hearts and home. Thankful grandparents are: Bro. Dean and Sis. Judy Martin and Bro. Lawrence and Sis. Elaine Wagenbach (Princeville).

"Be still, and know that I am God..."

*Psalms 46:10*

On December 2, Bro. David Meister Jr. was called to his eternal home. His funeral was held on December 5. We extend sincere sympathy to Sis. Diana in the loss of her husband. Brothers to Bro. David are: Bro. Ed (Sis. Bernie), Bro. Paul (Sis. Rhoda), Bro. Walter (Jean) Meister, all of Peoria. Sons include: Bro. Skip (Sis. Pat), Mark and Rebecca Meister (Wilmington, Del.) and Bro. Andrew Slotter of Peoria. May each heart be comforted with God's nearness, love, and care.

Sympathy is also extended to Sis. Imogene Tanner in the death of her mother, Helen Begner. Helen made her home at the Skyles. Her funeral was held on November 25. Our sympathy to the extended family and we pray you know God's nearness in your time of loss.

"...whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

*I Corinthians 10:31*

Our all church Christmas caroling was held on December 7. On December 14, the Christmas Sunday School Program was pre-

sented. Thank you students, teachers, and parents for making this season more special.

“Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters..., so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God...”

*Psalm 123:2*

Special prayer requests: Sis. Loretta Eisenmann (surgery), Sis. Aimee Moser (surgery), Bro. John Tanner, and Sis. Bonnie Waibel (back healing). May each receive complete healing as they lean on the Lord.

Welcome to our congregation: Bro. Ron and Sis. Lori Streitmatter and their children, Brock, Brendan and Tasha.

“For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.”

*Isaiah 52:12*

“Leave the broken, irreversible past in His hands, and step out into the future with Him.”

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

“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”

*Mark 10:14-15*

Bro. Tim and Sis. Tricia Wagenbach and their children, Alec and Brenna, welcomed Carissa Elaine into their hearts and home on November 24. Grandparents are Bro. Dean and Sis. Judy Martin (Peoria, IL) and Bro. Lawrence and Sis. Elaine Wagenbach. Bro. Allan and Sis. Rose Herrmann became grandparents when their daughter, Heide, gave birth to a precious baby girl, Alexis Rose, on December 8. We pray for God blessings upon these newborn souls and their families.

We were blessed with visits from Elder Bro. Don Braker (Kansas City, MO), Bro. Ed Sauder (Roanoke, IL) and Bro. John Grimm (Columbus, OH). We appreciate the Word of Life brought forth in Truth!

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

“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:”

*Ephesians 5:20*

With joy and thanksgiving we were able to gather on Thanksgiving Day to praise God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us. We are so blessed in this nation to enjoy the many freedoms we have and to live in a nation that sets aside a day to give thanks. We appreciate Bro. Max Reimschisel (Sis. Judy, Wichita, KS) for sharing God’s Word with us on Thanksgiving.

We also thank our other visiting ministers this month. They were Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam, Washington, IL), Bro. Kenny Dietz (Sis. Mardell, Bradford), Bro. Steve Baner (Sis. Donnalou) and Bro. Clark Stoller (Sis. Cindy), both of Gridley, IL. May God bless them for their efforts of love and service to us.

Our congregation enjoyed our annual Thanksgiving singing on November 23. It was an extra blessing to have our young group sing for us. We also enjoyed our annual All-Church Caroling and Supper on December 7. The fellowship was special as we were able to share the good news of Jesus’ birth with others.

We rejoice with Sis. Natalie Leman (Bro. Bill and Sis. Jeanne) and Bro. Luke Baker (Joe and Sis. Karen, Washington) as they were united as one in the Lord on December 14. May God bless this new Christian home as they now serve Him together.

We are thankful that God is still calling souls unto Him in repentance and that they are answering His call. We rejoice with Landon Isaia (Bro. Richard and Deanna), Pam Bryan and Zach Maher (Bro. Dan and Sis. Kim). May they experience God’s mercy and peace as they now strive to live their lives in accordance with His will.

Experiencing surgeries this month were Sis. Rachel Leman (Bro. Richard) and Sis. Jill Aeschleman (Bro. Steve). Also spending time in the hospital was Sis. Kasey Kaeb (Bro. Bill and Sis. Patsy). Our thoughts and prayers are with them now as they recuperate. May they feel God’s love

and strength during this time.

Our prayers also go with Bro. Rich and Sis. Julie Lindberg and their family as they have temporarily moved to Florida with his work and are attending church in Atlanta, GA. May they feel God's presence with them and the love of their home congregation. We look forward to their return.

On December 13, our dear Sis. Alice Fehr was laid to rest. We are thankful for the faithful example she was to us. May God comfort her sister, Sis. Mabel Bowald, and her many nieces and nephews.

We want to thank all of our Sunday School and Bible Class students, their teachers and song leaders for bringing us the Christmas story in song and scripture at our Christmas program on Wednesday, December 17. From the 3-year-olds to the Bible Class, it was wonderful to hear the words of the first Christmas and have this busy time of year brought into the right perspective. As we heard from the inspirational message – the innkeeper didn't have room for Jesus but may we each make room for Jesus in our hearts. We don't ever want to say to God that there is no room for Him in our life and heart!

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### ILLINOIS, TREMONT

**Heather Rassi**

**LaVonne Wagenbach**

It is such a blessing to hear our Sunday School children tell the Christmas story in verse and song at the annual Christmas program. Also many of us enjoyed a special blessing at our annual Christmas caroling. May we always remem-

ber the real reason we celebrate Christmas.

We were thankful to receive the messages from visiting ministers this month. Bro. Virgil Kaeb (Sarasota, FL) and Bro. John Steiner (Oakville, IA) were with us this month. May God bless them for their efforts.

Bro. John and Sis. Heather Rassi were blessed with a precious little girl, Elisabeth Eden. Big brother, Jacob, and sister, Grace, welcome her home. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Curt and Sis. Kathy Rassi and Bro. Todd and Sis. Beth Stuber.

Our sympathy and prayers are with Bro. Dale and Sis. Jane Kaufmann and their family on the passing of Dale's mother, Sis. Marie Kaufmann, formerly of Cissna Park, IL. We also remember Bro. Gary and Sis. Kathy Post on the passing of Kathy's mother, Sis. Elsie Sinn, from the Tremont congregation. Both Sis. Elsie and Sis. Marie resided at Apostolic Christian Restmor in Morton, IL. May God be with them and their families at this time. Both families were very faithful in visiting and caring for their mothers. May God be their rich rewarder.

*Note of Thanks:*

In appreciation and many thanks to our church family and friends for the cards, well wishes, food and prayers during my recovery and stay at Restmor and since I am at home. God bless you all for your love and kindness.

In Christian love,  
*Sis. Pauline Sauder*

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### ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

**Marcia Koch**

**Dianne Wyss**

Our Washington congregation has enjoyed the Christmas season by singing carols for many in our city and surrounding communities. Once again, it was a blessing to hear Christ's birth told through verse and song via our Sunday School children. Thank you for the efforts of their teachers.

December 14 was the wedding day for Bro. Luke Baker (Joe and Sis. Karen) and Sis. Natalie Leman (Bro. Bill and Sis. Jeanne) from Roanoke. May their marriage be richly blessed with God's goodness and leading.

Our hospital patient this past month was Sis. Sue Ruppert.

Thank you to our visiting ministers, Bro. Ken Weerts (Sis. Myrna) and Bro. Wayne Laubscher (Sis. Gloria), both from Cissna Park, Bro. Wayne Leman (Sis. Julie, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Sis. Karen, Kansas City, MO) and Bro. Jim Vierling (Sis. Linda, Eureka, IL).

We welcome two new families to our congregation, Bro. Bill and Sis. Shannon McClure and Bro. Darrin and Sis. Marie Yergler and their children.

May all have a blessed 2004!

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### INDIANA, BLUFFTON

**Tiffany Aschliman**

**Elizabeth Frauhiger**

"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world

cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

*St. John 14:15-17*

We rejoice with two new converts who have turned their backs to the world and started a relationship with Christ. Adam Stoller (Bro. Larry and Sis. Sharon) and Ben Gerber (Scott and late Sis. Melinda) have heard the still, small voice of our Saviour and begun repenting. Our prayers are with these dear souls as they embark on their journey.

We thank Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Sis. Leonda, Leo, IN) for his selfless service as he ministered to us this month.

November 23 was a life changing day for our Bro. Grayson Reinhard (Bro. Doyle and Sis. Jan) as he took Sis. Tara Steiner (Mark and Sis. Deb) to be his wedded wife in Rittman, OH. We entreat God's blessings upon them as they make their home in Toledo, OH.

We pray for those hospitalized this month: Bro. Kenny Gilliom (Sis. Marie), Marianna Topp (Bro. Chip and Sis. Angie) and Bro. Dan Lantz (Sis. Gladys). We pray that God's healing hand will work mercifully in their lives.

Tim and Kelly Tobias welcomed their first bundle of joy on November 26 in the form of little Jessica Renee. We, along with her grandparents, Bro. Steve and Sis. Carol Stucky, rejoice with them as they begin their family.

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**INDIANA  
BLUFFTON NORTH**

**Darren Drayer**

**Tiffani Schladenhauffen**

Greetings from your brothers and sisters at Bluffton North. The Lord blessed us this month by sharing some of His children with us. We enjoyed having Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Sis. Charlene, Goodfield, IL), Bro. Bill Waibel (Sis. Carol, Bay City) and Bro. Ken Wuethrich (Sis. Lyn, Indianapolis) share God's Word with us.

We praise the Lord that Klayton Kershner started repenting. He is the son of Bro. Dan and Sis. Jacki. We wish Klayton God's blessings as he walks with Jesus.

It was a joy to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of Sis. Delores Shady (Bill) on December 14. We thank Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton) and Sis. Jeni for their help during this weekend.

Spending time in the hospital this month were Bro. Howard Baumgartner (Sis. Joyce), Sis. Rochelle Gerber (Bro. Rod) and Bro. Dale Reinhard (Sis. Martha). Our prayers are with them and their families.

We also witnessed the passing of our dear Bro. Roy Haab on December 6. He was preceded in death by his wife, Sis. Lucy. They are survived by several nieces and nephews. Although Bro. Roy is no longer with us, we still have the poetry he wrote. I've included an excerpt from one of his poems.

*"Jesus is Pleading"*

Jesus is pleading and praying  
That His death might not be in  
vain

Turn now from your straying  
While yet on earth you remain.

Jesus is over you pleading  
Cease from your way of sin.  
You, to the cross He would be  
leading  
Heaven to enter in.

Jesus is calling and waiting  
Sinner, to me draw near  
The smallest sin I am hating  
But to me you are dear.

Jesus my heart I am bringing  
Help me to bring it to Thee  
Angels to me now are singing  
Of Heaven's sweet melody.

Jesus, lead me nearer still  
With Thy helping hand  
To obey Thy holy will  
And to enter Heaven's land.

—*Roy Haab*

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**INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE  
Jessica Murray**

"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord."

*Proverbs 18:22*

Austin Metzger (Bro. Dave and Sis. Arlene) has asked Stacy Johns (Danny and Kris, Rensselaer, IN) to be his wife and they are planning a June wedding. May the Lord be your guide as you not only plan your wedding, but as you plan your future together. God bless.

What a joy and privilege it was to listen as the Sunday School children shared with us the true meaning of Christmas. As their stories were told and their songs were sung you could just put yourself in Bethlehem and enjoy the amazing event of the birth of Je-

sus our Lord and Saviour. I was convicted to share more with my family and loved ones this year in word and praise to our Saviour. Sharing the meaning of Christmas will last years beyond any store bought gift. As we celebrate the season may we all uplift the true meaning of Christmas. A special thanks to the Sunday School teachers and parents who worked with the children in learning their parts. May God richly bless your efforts.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”

*John 5:25*

We mourn with our friends, family and loved ones as they have had loved ones pass from this earth unto death. Our Bro. Leon Wuethrich's wife, Sis. Mabel Wuethrich, went to meet her Maker. May the Lord carry and comfort these dear families as they can have eternal hope to meet again in heaven. Then the Lord took Home Sis. Viola VonTobel (Bro. Virgil) to join Him also. Our prayers are also with Sis. Christine Kaeb (Bro. Les) as she laid her grandmother, Sis. Marie Kaufmann, to rest just shortly following her grandfather's passing. May God comfort you and your families.

Our Bro. Walter Culp (Sis. Valera) spent time in the hospital again this month as did Sis. Nola Wuethrich (Bro. Richard) as she had gall bladder surgery. May the

Lord continue to give you healing strength.

We would like to extend a special thank you to our visiting ministers this past month. Bro. Neil Widmer (Sis. Kris, West Lafayette, IN) was here for the Thanksgiving Day service. Bro. Steve Ringger (Sis. Myra, Bluffton North, IN) was here to share the Word with us before the Christmas program. May the Lord bless you dear brothers and your families for your service.

*Note of Thanks:*

I wish to thank all my friends and family for all the cards, telephone calls, and flowers I received for my 84th birthday on November 6. Thank you for your love and thoughtfulness. May God richly bless each one of you.

Love in Him,  
*Sis. Helen Eshleman*

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**INDIANA  
INDIANAPOLIS  
Sandy Lichtle  
Gail Bradford**

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

Our Sis. Ginny Zeller fell, and after a brief hospital stay, is recuperating at home. Bro. Eric Zeller is continuing treatment for a recurring condition. Bro. Blake Wuethrich experienced a sudden infection, and also spent a few days in the hospital before returning home to recover. Some of us learned of relatives who have been diagnosed with serious illness. We

continue to pray for all those who suffer; that God will give them strength and hope to persevere.

We are grateful to Elder Bros. Wayne Banwart and Ed Schwartz for sharing the Memorandum with us. Christian letters of concern and counsel have their beginnings with the apostle Paul. It is good for the entire church to know what issues and opportunities the fellowship of believers should be addressing.

We also thank our visiting ministers who preached in Indianapolis recently: Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL) and Bro. Brian Huber (Francesville, IN).

Our high school class surprised our ministers and their families with a thank you dinner. It was greatly appreciated!

Children from 3 to 18 worshiped our Lord with songs and Bible verses at the December 14 Sunday School program. Afterward, small groups traveled to families in the area where they distributed gifts, sang and shared God's Word. We thank all who participated. Giving of time and resources is a very appropriate way to honor God and the gift of His Son.

As the New Year begins, we reflect on the past and think about the months ahead. Did we ask for God's help last year? To what degree will we include Him in our life this year? Will we seek His guidance above all others? Let the answer be yes!

“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not



known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”

*Isaiah 42:16*

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

God's plan fulfilled  
As He had willed.  
Then came the Christ on earth.

As Christmas approaches, may each of us take a moment to remember the true meaning, and again be grateful to God for the most important gift ever – His Son.

Our Sunday School children reminded us of that gift in poems and songs on December 10. Thank you to each student for taking the time to learn your pieces and songs. It always warms our hearts to hear the Christmas message from our youth.

We want to thank our visiting ministering brothers from the past month. Bro. Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandy, Alto, MI), Bro. John Lehman (Sis. RuthAnn, Wolcott, IN) and Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH) all labored on behalf of the Word for us in the past month.

Our prayers go out to Sis. Ruth Elcock as she undergoes treatment for health problems in the near future.

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**INDIANA, LEO**  
**Ethelyn Schlatter**

Elder Bro. James Plattner (Sis. Marlene, Princeville, IL) visited Thanksgiving Day. We are blessed

with their visits.

We again extend sympathy to Bro. Dana (Sis. Kim) Plattner in the passing of his grandmother, Sis. Marie Kaufmann of Cissna Park, IL (wife of the late Bro. Bob Kaufmann). We also include the Stieglitz family, cousins to Sis. Marie. The Lord is our refuge.

The Youth group went caroling to Byron Health Center on December 5. On December 12, a large group gathered at the Fellowship Center, divided into five groups to go out caroling for the elderly at a dozen different locations. We then returned to the Fellowship Center for chili and snacks. First our hearts were warmed, then our bodies.

Sunday, December 14, the Sunday School presented a Christmas program. Many parents of the children, residents at Gateway Woods attended. The program portrayed the futility and frustration of focusing on materialism compared to the blessedness in Jesus, His humble birth and sacrifice on the cross for our sin.

“O, come let us adore Him”  
I came a wanderer, and alone,  
My way was dark as night;  
I looked to Thee, O blessed One,  
And then I found the light.

I came with all my doubts and fears,  
No hope but in Thy Word;  
And while I gazed upon the blood,  
Thy pardoning voice I heard.

Oh, may the Spirit's power be felt

In this poor heart of mine,  
And make Thy Word my lamp  
and light,  
My shield and strength divine.

Oh, teach me, Lord, Thy voice to know,  
Amid the surging throng;  
Be Thou my hope, my life, my joy,  
My everlasting song.

O Jesus, Saviour, Lamb of God,  
How much I owe to Thee,  
For all the wonders of Thy grace,  
And all Thy love to me!

We covet your prayers and may the blessings of the Lord be with you in the New Year of 2004.

*For the New Year*  
*Words That Warm the Heart*

Seven most important words, “I admit I was wrong, forgive me.”

Six most important words, “I mentioned you in prayer today.”

Five most important words, “You did a good job.”

Four most important words, “I can trust you.”

Three most important words, “I love you.”

Two most important words, “Thank you.”

One most important word, “Others”

The least important word, “I”  
Let us be mindful of God's Word  
above all others  
During this coming New Year.

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**INDIANA, MILFORD**  
**Paula Haab**  
**Cap Beer**

By the time you read this,

Thanksgiving Day will be past. But it can and should always be Thanksgiving season. We had beautiful Thanksgiving services with many families getting together. We were reminded of the many things to be thankful for, especially that "unspeakable gift".

Our Sis. Sue Bowerman and her son, Jake, met with an automobile accident when another driver crossed the center line. They both sustained painful injuries but no broken bones. Although their van was a total loss, we are very grateful for God's protection over them.

We were blessed to have Bro. Jeff Neihouser minister to us this month. It is encouraging to see younger ministers bringing such sound and enthusiastic messages.

Also we had Bro. Doyle Frauhiger with us on one Wednesday evening. He warned us not to get discouraged and get the "Elijah syndrome". He encouraged us there are many people who still stand up for Christ.

Our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter spent one Sunday worshipping with us. In the evening, he and Bro. Bob Beebe reviewed the Elder Conference Memorandum with us. It was comforting and challenging to have them lovingly explain the Elder Bros. conclusions. We feel blessed to have Bro. Bill as our Elder.

Our church family went Christmas caroling to bring love and cheer to some of our shut-ins and also visited several of the local nursing homes. It was a great time to have our young and older fellowship together.

Bro. Dan and Sis. Deb Beer

have a new grandson, Abraham William, born to Jason and Jenny Furrer.

It is our hope and prayer that all of you have had a blessed Christmas season.

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### INDIANA, REMINGTON

**Beth Virkler**

**Rochelle Ward**

We are always thankful for those who visit us. We were blessed to have the following ministering brothers share the Word with us this past month: Bros. Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL), Roger Sauder (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), Jerry Bauman (Rittman, OH), and Ken Weerts (Cissna Park, IL). Thank you for your duty for the Lord!

On December 14, we enjoyed our annual Christmas program. Out of the mouths of babes came the true meaning of Christmas, the story of the birth of our Lord. We must remember though that it is more than just a story, it is a real life event. May we always remember the holy Child that was given out of love so that we the sinners could be saved!

Our dear Sis. Velma Wilson, who resides at Parkview Haven Nursing Home, is suffering from a broken hip due to a fall. Please keep Sis. Velma in your prayers.

We rejoice as Amanda Price has been announced for having found peace with God and man. Our prayers are with her as she awaits baptism.

Bro. Aaron Kilgus (Sis. Kayla) has graduated from Purdue University. Our congratulations as well as our prayers for God's direc-

tion are extended to Bro. Aaron.

As we ring in the New Year, may we be thankful for all that we have been given. We are a blessed people. It is at this time many make New Year's resolutions. Instead of resolutions, may we each make a commitment for a better service, dedication and joy in the Lord.

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### INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

**Samantha Gramm**

**Kara Beebe**

"Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

*Psalm 51:7*

It was a blessing to have our church filled for the testimony and baptism of Ben Lehman (Bro. Don and Sis. Jill). May our Heavenly Father continue to guide Bro. Ben as he seeks to do His will.

We thank visiting ministers, Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Ruth Ann, Wolcott, IN) and our Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN) for sharing the Word with us that weekend.

Bro. Brad and Sis. Becky Langhofer welcomed little Charles Jesse into their home. His happy grandparents are Bro. Marty and Sis. Lavilla Langhofer and Bro. Fred and Sis. Maryellen Zimmerman (Congerville, IL).

We marvel at the goodness and faithfulness of our Lord through this past year and look with hope to the new year that is upon us.

Since I started for the kingdom,  
Since my life He controls,  
Since I gave my heart to Jesus,

The longer I serve Him  
The sweeter He grows.

Every need He is supplying,  
Plenteous grace He bestows;  
Every day my way gets brighter,  
The longer I serve Him  
The sweeter He grows.

The longer I serve Him  
The sweeter He grows,  
The more that I love Him,  
More love He bestows;

Each day is like heaven,  
My heart overflows,  
The longer I serve Him  
The sweeter He grows.  
*Country and Western #5*

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### **INDIANA, VALPARAISO** **Edward Lester**

Greetings to all the children of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ. It seems that the time is really going by quickly, for we are already at the Christmas season again.

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

*Luke 2:14*

Our church once again enjoyed the annual Christmas program. Wonderful singing and select parts really put the perspective on this time of year. We want to give a whole hearted thanks to all the Sunday School teachers who made this possible and for their hard work and dedication. A big thank you.

Bro. Joshua Martinez was an unexpected visitor who shared his life experience and testimony with us. It is awful that we get so

wrapped up in our own lives that we don't really know how good God has been to us. Thanks, Bro. Joshua, for sharing your story with us.

We are calling for more prayers of love and support for Bro. Ken Bucher (Sis. Carol). He will be having a serious surgery this month and we look forward to God's love and grace shining down on him during his time of need.

Also, Bro. Brady Moser (Bro. Andy and Sis Diane Moser) is looking toward the end of his treatments. God willing, he will be through this dark time by the time of printing. Thanks for the love.

Don't forget all the troops that are responsible for the freedom that this monthly article enjoys.

Valparaiso would like to thank the following ministers for sharing the Word with us: Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Sis. Judy, Chicago, IL), Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN), and Bro. Arnold Gerst (Sis. Marjorie, Taylor, MO).

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### **INDIANA** **WEST LAFAYETTE** **Diana Houston** **Nettie Haab**

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

*I Corinthians 1:18*

Once again our congregation has been supremely blessed as we prayerfully sought help in the ministry. Bro. Rustin Meister (Sis. Amanda) has willingly and

humbly accepted God's call as this was revealed through our church. Bro. Rustin's parents are Bro. Dick and Sis. Sharon and Sis. Amanda's are Bro. Roger and Sis. Sandi Ward of Francesville. May we always do our part and keep praying for all of our ministers.

Visiting ministers who kindly gave of their time to us were Bros. Greg Lehman (Sis. Mary Beth, Wolcott, IN), Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN), Vernon Wettstein (Sis. Judy, Congerville, IL), Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, LaCrosse, IN) and Elder Bros. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN), Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN) and John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS).

Today is the day of grace and God is still calling souls to repentance. Heather Furrer and Stefanie Schwab, both freshmen at Purdue, have heard this call and responded by turning their lives over to God's leading. Heather is the daughter of Bro. Brian and Sis. Lorene, and Stefanie is the daughter of Bro. Mark and Sis. Shari of Wolcott.

Our Sunday School children enthusiastically and joyfully told us the story of "God's Gift" at our Christmas program as only they can do. Watching them it is easy to understand why we should strive to have faith as a child.

On December 11, the Purdue church group also presented the Christmas story. Again we rejoice to see the faith of these young adults who are now going out into the world and taking a stand for God.

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**INDIANA, WOLCOTT****Luann Gerber  
Heidi Bahler**

As the year unfolds day by day,  
may we just like the shepherds of  
old, open our hearts to the beautiful  
message of God's Son given,  
and ponder the significance...

How shall I, Lord receive Thee  
And how Thy grace extol?  
My spirit's crown and glory,  
O bridegroom of my soul!  
Give me the understanding  
How full of light and grace  
My soul may e'er esteem Thee,  
In rev'rence sing Thy praise!

*Hymns of Zion #300*

Our Christmas program was on  
Wednesday evening, December  
17. Sunday School students from  
age three on up recited their special  
verses. It was touching to hear  
one young boy muster up enough  
courage to just whisper his piece!  
The entire congregation blended  
their voices in "Silent Night" to  
conclude the evening.

We also have the privilege to  
carol around our town of Wolcott,  
and also traveled to neighboring  
Monon, Monticello, Francesville,  
and Lafayette to include loved  
ones there. Hopefully the message  
of love, peace and hope was spread  
once again to listeners and singers  
alike!

What a wonderful time of year  
to cuddle a newborn indoors. That  
is what Bro. Jason and Sis. Jenny  
Furrer's family is experiencing, as  
Abraham William was born December  
9. The wait is over for Andrew,  
Naomi and Debra, who will  
continue to be big helpers! Grand-  
parents are Bro. Dan and Sis. Deb  
Beer (Milford, IN) and Alvin and

Phyllis Furrer (Reynolds, IN).

**IOWA, BURLINGTON****Brenda Schulz**

Greetings! We were blessed  
this month with two visiting min-  
isters, Bro. Gary Anliker (Elgin,  
IL) and Elder Bro. Leroy Messner  
(Winthrop, MN). We surely en-  
joyed their visits, and wish them  
God's continued blessings.

Our dear Bro. Clarence  
Massner has passed away from  
this life. We extend our sympathy  
to his wife, Betty; and siblings, Sis.  
Rosie Obermann, Sis. Dorothy  
Taeger, Bro. Lloyd, Bro. Dale, Bro.  
Earl, Kenny, and Harold (all of  
Burlington), Bro. Doss, Bro. Virgil  
and Bro. Eric (all of Oakville), and  
Bro. Allen (Taylor, MO). May God  
provide for each one. Many of us  
remember him by his winning  
smile and kind heart. We are very  
thankful that he was able to re-  
pent, be converted and be baptized  
in the later years of his life. Also,  
we're thankful he can be relieved  
of his earthly suffering in his  
Heavenly Home.

**IOWA, ELGIN****Gloria Frieden  
Heidi Butikofer**

We have come to the close of an-  
other year of joys and sorrows,  
blessings and cares. Surely God  
has been with us each step of the  
way, for we have felt His grace and  
nearness. May we now take cour-  
age to press on, in faith, into the  
new year of 2004.

"We are going down the valley,  
one by one..."

May God grant comfort and  
grace to those who have recently

lost loved ones in the family circle.  
Sis. Beulah Butikofer (Bro. Bert)  
at the death of her sister, Micky  
Funk; and Julie Torkelson (Scott)  
at the death of her brother, Kurt  
Brehme.

"One generation passeth away,  
and another generation com-  
eth..."

*Eccles. 1:4*

On December 2, Kyella Joy  
Frieden (Bob and Julie) began her  
earthly pilgrimage. Thankful  
grandparents are Gary and Carol  
Berns and Bro. Floyd and Sis. Jan  
Frieden.

On December 18, Dane An-  
thony Frieden (Bruce and Tracy)  
arrived and will be a playmate for  
his big sister, Mara. Dane's grand-  
parents are Kim and Julie Grant  
and Bro. Floyd and Sis. Jan  
Frieden. Bro. Eli and Sis. Helen  
Fisher (Eureka, IL) are the great-  
grandparents to Kyella and Dane.

Recently spending time in the  
hospital are Tracy Butikofer and  
Bro. Elmer Butikofer. May God  
continue to grant healing as they  
recuperate.

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

Our visiting ministers in De-  
cember have been Bro. Darren  
Fehr (West Bend, IA) and our El-  
der Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski,  
IA). We are thankful to them for  
their service. As with each minis-  
tering brother who stands before  
us, the Word comes forth true and  
plain to all who wish to hear.

Also blessing us with their visit  
were several young brothers and

sisters from Pulaski and Kansas churches, joining as we went Christmas caroling on Saturday evening.

2003 is past, with its joys, blessings and for some, sorrows. The new year stretches before us as a road not yet traveled, but we know we will have safe passage if we simply reach up to our Heavenly Father and put our hand trustingly in His, just as a toddler reaches for the comfort of his daddy's strong hand.

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### IOWA, IOWA CITY

#### Diana Butikofer

On December 14 we heard again "the blessed story of the Christ, the Babe of Bethlehem" who "is worthy of our song and praise". The Sunday School students reminded us of not only the birth of our Lord, but also His death, and the importance of each.

Bro. Jim, Sis. Diana and Kyla Butikofer are happy to welcome Garrett Isaac into their family. His grandparents are Bro. Al and Sis. LaVerne Butikofer (Elgin, IA) and Bro. Gene and Sis. Evie Heinold.

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### IOWA, LESTER

#### Dawn Knobloch

#### Dawn Metzger

It was with gladness that we were able to come into the house of the Lord on Thanksgiving Day. A time to see family and friends that were home for the holiday and most important, to hear the Word proclaimed. Our visiting ministers were Bros. Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT), Todd Zollinger (Silverton, OR), Kent Mogler (Minneapolis, MN) and Roy Koehl

(Morris, MN). Ministering Bro. Pat Zaugg (West Bend, IA) was with us the following Sunday. Let us lift up the arms of those who preach the gospel and be thankful for them always.

Adrienne Laree was born December 1 to Bro. Thadd and Sis. Wendy Knobloch. She is now a little sister to Adam. We wish them much joy with their new baby for we all realize how quickly they grow. Grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Janet Knobloch, Bro. Howard and Sis. Lollie Mogler, and Sis. Zelma Knobloch is her great – grandmother.

Hospitalized this past month were Bro. Dennis Kellenberger (Sis. Shirley), Bro. Howard Mogler (Sis. Lollie) and Bro. Bill Metzger (Sis. Charlotte). Our prayer is that all will have a complete recovery.

Our sympathy goes to Sis. Martha (E.A.) Feucht in the passing of her brother from Morris, MN, Bro. Joseph Moser.

Despite it being a cold evening, many were able to go Christmas caroling on December 12. We appreciate our song leaders and their wives who help to make the evening complete.

On Sunday, December 14, the betrothal of Sis. Joy Meyer to Bro. Eric Kupferschmid was made known. We wish them much peace and happiness as they plan for a wedding on February 15. Sis. Joy's parents are Bro. Raymond and Sis. Twyla and Bro. Eric's parents are Bro. Rich and Sis. Maribeth (Eureka, IL).

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds

with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of heaven."

*Mark 13:26-27*

As we embark on a new year, let us daily be looking and prepared for the Lord's return.

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### IOWA, OAKVILLE

#### Sharla Wiegand

#### Rosalie Wiegand

Jesus, my Saviour, to Bethlehem came,

Born in a manger to sorrow and shame;

Oh, it was wonderful – blest be His name!

Seeking for me, for me.

Jesus, my Saviour, on Calvary's tree,

Paid the great debt, and my soul He set free;

Oh, it was wonderful – how could it be?

Dying for me, for me.

Jesus, my Saviour, shall come from on high –

Sweet is the promise as weary years fly;

Oh, I shall see Him descending the sky,

Coming for me, for me.

*Gospel Hymns #280, vs. 1,2,4*

Our Sunday School Christmas program was held last Sunday, December 14. It is always a blessing to see the simple faith of the young children as they speak of Jesus and His lowly birth. Among the usual Christmas hymns and recitations, the above song "Seeking for Me" was sung by the Bible Class. It had such a call to the unconverted as it spoke of why

Jesus came. Would we be ready if today He was "coming for me"?

We thank Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA) for bringing us the Word on Thanksgiving day. A thankful heart is surely pleasing to our Heavenly Father, and He has blessed us with so much.

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

A special thank you to our visiting ministers this past month. Bro. Brad Funk (Sis. Laura, Garden Grove) was here for our Thanksgiving service and Bro. Chuck Kellenberger (Elgin, IL) spent a Sunday with us. May God continue to bless them as they bring forth His word.

We also want to thank the Tremont, IL, Single Group for once again coming and sharing an evening of caroling with our Single Group. We all receive a blessing on Sunday as we fellowship and worship our Lord together.

"Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

*Psalm 40:5*

Psalm 40 seems to declare an appreciation for the Lord's assistance. We also have been moved with a great appreciation for His assistance throughout this past year; for safety and protection; for sending skilled and willing brethren and friends to labor; for the en-

durance of our sisters in providing for our many needs; and for His patience with us, and helping us learn some patience also.

As we write this mid-December, we are in the final stages of laying carpet, trimming out, installing cabinets, and getting the lights to come on and water to run when they are supposed to!

Lord willing, in the next year we will be able to assemble in our new building, get used to our new surroundings and get settled in. We then will set a date to dedicate our new church building to our heavenly Father. We invite all to visit us and worship with us whenever occasion may allow.

Our new building and new location will mark a beginning of a new milestone for the Pulaski congregation. We have assembled in or around the town of Pulaski for 135 years (which in 1864-65 was when the Civil War ended!) Now we are located in Bloomfield, 9 miles to the northwest. Our new building is on the edge of town on West St/Lilac, which is 4 blocks west of the square. As a congregation we have chose to be listed in the Silver Lining as Bloomfield. For the next year we will be listed as Bloomfield/Pulaski to help all of us get accustomed to the transition.

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

Bro. Leland Plattner (Sis. Mary, Zapata, TX) was here visiting family and we appreciated his willingness to share God's Word with us. On a recent Sunday, Bro.

Dewayne Dill (Sis. LaRae, Minneapolis, MN) encouraged us to have greater faith in our God, who has power to remove obstacles. May God bless those brothers who feed us spiritually each week.

Spending time in hospitals were Sis. Joyce Banwart for medical care, Sis. Ella Schneider for surgical care and John Zaugg for overnight care following surgery. Little Aaron Massner (infant son of Bro. Darin and Sis. Twila) was released from the hospital and is doing well at home. Bro. Darin and Sis. Twila have expressed their appreciation for all the love and support they have felt during this time.

*The Key to Serenity*

When you know and believe  
without question or doubt  
That in all you do, God is there to  
help out,  
You hold in your hand the golden  
key  
To peace and joy and serenity.

—Helen Steiner Rice

Bro. Bill and Connie Zaugg were happy to welcome twin granddaughters on December 9. Chad and Katie Stroman of Ayrshire, IA, are first-time parents of Emma Ann and Erin Grace.

We extend sympathy to Sis. Emma Gerber (Bro. Noah) and family in the loss of her sibling, Bro. Joseph Moser (Sis. Hazel) of Morris, MN, who passed away on December 7.

Lord willing, we look forward to hearing our whole Sunday School bring forth the story of Jesus' birth on December 21. May God bless all the brothers and sisters

who spend every Sunday morning teaching our youth.

Recipe for a Happy New Year  
Take a cup of kindness, mix it  
well with love,  
Add a lot of patience and faith in  
God above,  
Sprinkle very generously with joy  
and thanks and cheer,  
And you'll have lots of "angel  
food" to feast on all the year.  
—*Helen Steiner Rice*

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**KANSAS, BERN**  
**Lori Baumgartner**  
**Sally Strahm**

As another year opens up, may we continue to look to our Lord and Saviour to guide us.

"For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

*Psalms 100:5*

Our hearts rejoice and are thankful when a soul heeds the call of God. Brandon Edelman (Bro. Earl and Sis. Donna) and Judd and Carol Meyer have answered the call of God. We pray that they can all begin to build the solid foundation in Jesus Christ.

Bro. Clinton and Sis. Kristi Strahm were united in marriage on November 23. We pray God will stay by their side as they walk this pilgrim life together. We welcome Sis. Kristi with open arms to our congregation. Parents of this couple are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Mary Bachtold (Forrest, IL) and Bro. Curt and Sis. Ellen Strahm. A reception was held for Bro. Clinton and Sis. Kristi at the Fellowship Center on December 6.

We are thankful for those willing to stand up as the Lord's servants to speak the Word of Truth from Sunday to Sunday. Bro. Rodney Bajema (Sis. Twyla, Lester, IA) was with us on November 30.

Our prayers go to ones who have spent time in the hospital. May we be prayerful for Sis. Lillian Esslinger and Sis. Gerty Esslinger (Bro. Dennis).

Matthew Hundley graduated from Washburn University in December. We wish him God's guidance and blessings.

Our yearly all-church Christmas caroling was held on December 5. An evening of caroling and then soup supper at the Fellowship Center was enjoyed. We pray all received a blessing.

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**KANSAS, FORT SCOTT**  
**Ruth Bahr**

Our visiting ministers faithfully brought teachings from God's Word through their preaching. They were Bro. Darrell Stoller (Sis. Gloria, Bern, KS) and Bro. Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton, IL).

Send out the sunlight, the sunlight of cheer,  
Shine on earth's sadness till it disappear –  
Souls are in waiting this message to hear,  
Send out the sunlight of love.

Send out the sunlight in letter and word;  
Speak it and think it till hearts are all stirred –  
Hearts that are hungry for prayers still unheard,

Send out the sunlight of love.

Send out the sunlight each hour and each day,  
Crown all the years with its luminous ray,  
Nourish the seeds that are sown on the way,  
Send out the sunlight of love.

Send out the sunlight as free as the air!  
Blessings will follow with none to compare,  
Blessings of peace, that will rise from despair!  
Send out the sunlight of love.  
*Songs of the Century #182*

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**KANSAS, KIOWA**  
**Jennifer Stewart**  
**Laura Wagenbach**

What a joy it is to share the special story of baby Jesus with loved ones! The Sunday School presented their program on December 7 to friends and family of the Christ child's birth.

On December 14 the Sunday School and parents caroled to those in rest homes and to other members of our congregation. Everyone had a wonderful time sharing their voices for others.

Bro. Kelly and Sis. Jenny Stewart received a bundle of joy on December 12. Kayli Grace was welcomed home by her sisters and brothers, Staci, Joshua, Carter, Alysson and Gabe. Grandparents are Bro. Kent and Sis. Darcy Kisling and Larry Stewart (Ponca City, OK). She weighed 7 pounds, 7 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Our hospital patient this month was Marvin Diel (Sis. Tillie). He is doing well and is at

the Kiowa Manor.

Dear Bro. Elmer Tanner (Sis. Alice) departed this life to be with Jesus. Our prayers of comfort are with Sis. Alice and the rest of their family.

May everyone have a happy and a blessed new year. Please keep Jesus at the center of your lives.

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**KANSAS  
LAMONT-GRIDLEY**

**Eileen Bahr**

We appreciate ministering Bro. Kevin, Sis. Sandy Banwart and family (West Bend, IA) coming to be with us. He read about when Isaac asked "Where is the sacrifice?" Would we have the faith of Abraham?

A group of young brothers and friend from Morris, Lester, Bern, Sabetha, and Rockville visited the weekend of December 14 and enlivened our church Christmas caroling groups and fellowship soup supper.

Several members joined the Apostolic Christian World Relief work day to box canned meat at the Newton World Relief center.

Sis. Dorene Metzger had a heart cauterization test December 15 and was dismissed the same day.

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**KANSAS, SABETHA**

**Jeanette Plattner**

**Mary Kay Wenger**

A special thanks to our Sunday School students that raked leaves this fall for several people in the community. These labors of love are appreciated more than you will ever know!

We rejoice with Maggi

Eisenbise (Bro. David and Sis. Shari) and her family as she has answered God's loving call and seeks Him in repentance. We also share much joy with Bro. Doug and Sis. Jeryl Grimm as their daughter and son-in-law (Gwen and Troy Metzger) have started repenting. May we be prayerful for these young souls as they look forward to the wonderful gift of peace.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Walter Strahm (Sis. Mildred) as he struggles with illness. May he feel God's nearness always.

On December 14, we enjoyed our Sunday School Christmas program. It's always such a blessing to hear the story of Jesus told and sung by our youth. We pray that the one day this precious Babe born in a manger will become their Savior.

Our church Christmas caroling was held on December 12, followed by a soup supper at the Fellowship Center. This is always a special time when we can get together and sing about Christ's birth and His love to many that can't go in and out anymore. May this message remain in all hearts for the whole year.

Our visiting ministers this month included: Bro. Edwin Strahm (Bern, KS), Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Morris, MN), and Bro. Rod Bajema (Lester, IA). We were blessed to have them share God's Word with us.

We have resumed our Wednesday evening services for the season. We look forward to gathering with the Bern congregation as we assemble for a few short minutes

around God's Word in the middle of the week.

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**KANSAS, WICHITA**

**Emma Miller**

Thanksgiving services were held on Thanksgiving morning. While many from our own congregation were gone to visit relatives in other areas, our attendance was bolstered that day as well as the following Sunday by the presence of Sis. Marie Sauder's family who came from Iowa, Illinois, and Ohio. It was a joy to see the pleasure that family had during their reunion.

In lieu of Wednesday night services in December, those who could used that time to sing Christmas carols in the homes of those of us who do not get out at night. They came to my house in El Dorado in spite of the wintry blast that had passed through our area. What love the Father has bestowed on me that I would be a part of such a caring congregation!

The Sunday School Christmas program took place on December 14. Again, we are indebted to the teachers, parents, and students for their efforts.

We have much need for prayers for those in our congregation who are undergoing hospitalization and treatment for various medical problems. We have special concern for Bro. Milton Bowers, and Sis. Ann Farney. Praise God, Sis. Ann Warner is making a good recovery after a surgical procedure.

We are looking forward to two weddings in December. Laurie Gallatin and Mark McDonald will marry on December 20 and



Candace Long and Scott Sandahl will marry on December 26. May God bless these unions and may He be a part of that "threefold cord, not lightly rent apart." (Zion's Harp, #79)

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**MICHIGAN, ALTO**  
**Rose Watson**  
**Terri Huber**

The end of an era ... the beginning of a heritage. That is how we would describe our congregation's recent loss ... and heaven's gain. On November 20 and December 1 the last two children of Anna and Ferdinand Wingeier passed away. What a blessing it was for Sis. Margaret, age 91, and Sis. Christine, age 88, to meet up together on the other shore so quickly! They lived all of their lives together in the farmhouse on Wingeier Avenue just a mile down the road from our current church building.

Margaret and Christine, though never married, were truly among the founding mothers of our local congregation. In the early nineteen hundreds, their parents were busy farming and raising 12 children. Their parents expressed a desire to serve the Lord, and Apostolic preachers traveled to Michigan to minister to them. By the time of their mother's passing in June of 1937, both Margaret and Christine had repented along with several siblings, ensuring that the heritage of Anna's faith would be passed on. Margaret and Christine were baptized in October of that same year.

Affectionately known as "The Girls" by relatives and friends,

they operated the 160 acre farm with dairy and beef cattle, chickens, maple syrup and crops along with their sister Anna for many years. Both held jobs outside the home at different times. We will remember them most for the strong heritage and example they provided as church members. Many of our sisters say they learned how to cook from the girls. Whether having an elegant tea party, a Secret Pals luncheon, or heading up the kitchen committee for church suppers, they were busy cooking and serving others.

For over 30 years, Margaret and Christine faithfully cleaned the church every Thursday. Their thoroughness and organization kept the building in such pristine condition that we may be the only Apostolic congregation that doesn't have annual church cleaning! Christine is fondly remembered for making a special trip over to the church early on Sunday mornings to turn on the coffee maker and set out the trays in readiness for the family serving lunch.

We are truly grateful for the heritage provided by Sis. Margaret and Sis. Christine. The Lord has taken them Home, and we look forward to seeing them there!

On behalf of the nieces and nephews who participated in their care and arranged the funeral, thanks are extended to those who came, sent flowers and cards and cooked the funeral meal.

At this time, Bro. Bill and Sis. Judy Gerst have accompanied their daughter, Ramona, and her two boys to Texas for Ramona's bone marrow transplant. They anticipate being there for three

months, and will appreciate being lifted up in prayer during this time.

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**MICHIGAN, BAY CITY**  
**Sarah Knochel**  
**Janelle Ramseyer**

We want to thank Bro. Dave Steffen (Sis. Linda, Elgin, IL) and their family for being with us over the Thanksgiving weekend. May God richly provide for them as they make the efforts to travel to our congregation.

Bro. Dean and Sis. Connie Pashak are again rejoicing in the birth of a grandson. Tracy and Curtis Mowry along with big sister, Grace, welcomed Mason Dean into their hearts and home this past month.

Several from our congregation have spent some time in the hospital this past month. We continue to remember each of them in our prayers. They are: Sis. Alice Eisenman, Bro. Victor (Sis. Eleanor) Knochel, Clyde Wackerle, and Sis. Laura Wieland. Gerald Meier (Sis. Edie) spent time in a nursing home but was able to return home. We pray that the Lord will continue to heal each one's infirmities.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Sis. Esther Meister with the passing of her son, Hans. May the Lord continue to walk with her and be her Comforter during this time of sorrow.

Faithful until death remain!  
 For the crown of life be striving.  
 Break through bonds of woe and pain,  
 In His promise e'er confiding,  
 Which through grace is kept in

store  
For thee when thy journey's o'er.  
*Zion's Harp #105*

Bro. Gerald Wieland left this earthly home for a higher reward in Heaven after a long battle with cancer on December 7. His support and godly example will be greatly missed by our congregation. Our prayers go out to his family, especially his wife, Sis. Lois, and his children, Mark (Joy) Wieland, Marilyn (Charles) Westphal, Susan (Timothy) Wenglikowski and Sharon (Charles) Schwarz. We also want to remember his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and his sister, Sis. Hermine (Bro. Alf) Kaeb. We pray that the Lord will continue to stand by them and support them.

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

*Luke 15:10*

Our congregation is rejoicing with the angels that Kim Wackerle (Bro. Tom) has begun her repentance. We pray that the Lord will be with her and guide her as she begins her walk toward Heaven.

As the New Year is upon us, may we take a renewed effort in serving our Lord that we may be true ambassadors of His.

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#### **MICHIGAN, DETROIT**

**Jamie Bahr**

**Krista Wieland**

December 6 was our annual

church Christmas caroling, and December 16 was an opportunity for the church to come together and pack baskets to give to various people in our church and community. Last weekend we enjoyed the annual Christmas program provided by the Sunday School. The evening was a joyous celebration of the birth of our Lord and Saviour. Thank you also to the Apostolic Christian Church Nazarene's men's choir for singing Christmas carols to the Woodhaven retirement community this month.

We want to thank our visiting ministers this month: Bros. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo, IN), Greg Stieglitz (Sis. Lisa, Indianapolis, IN), Don Gudeman (Sis. Mary, La-Crosse, IN), and Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Sis. Marlene, Bay City, MI) for lending himself at the Woodhaven service.

Our prayers are with Mark and Joy Wieland in the loss of Mark's father, Bro. Jerry Wieland (Sis. Lois, Bay City, MI).

May God be with our Sis. Stephanie Kellenberger as she will be moving back to Washington, IL soon. We will miss having you here, Stephanie, and hope you come back and visit often!

We wish to welcome Don Yergler who has been assembling with us. We are glad to have you!

We want to remember those who have been ill lately. Please pray for Bro. Guy and Sis. Rose Wieland, and also Sis. Linda Shaw.

We congratulate Bro. Steve Wieland as he has completed his master's degree in engineering.

We have some very special

news to report: A new baby girl, Macy Lynn, was born to first time parents, Bro. Scott and Sis. Jamie Bahr on December 17. She is welcomed with much excitement! Her grandparents are Bro. Phil and Sis. Dawn Bahr (Detroit, MI), and Bro. James and Sis. Louise Menold (Bern, KS). May God bless this family unit!

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

Visiting ministers this past month have been our Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Sis. JoAnn, Winthrop, MN) and Bros. Jeff Bahr (Sis. Janice, Kiowa, KS), Ted Schock (Sis. Heidi, Belvidere, IL), Dan Stoller (Sis. Diane, Rockville, CT) and Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN). We are thankful for ministers who so freely proclaim God's goodness and plan of salvation.

Welcome to Bro. Mark and Sis. Sandy Stork and Braden as they have moved into our congregation from Elgin, IA.

The Christmas story was told to us again beautifully by the Sunday School in verse and song. What a privilege to hear of Christ's birth from these young people, coached by their teachers.

We wish each of you a blessed and productive New Year ahead!

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#### **MINNESOTA, MORRIS Katie Koehl Cheryl Messner**

Our congregation looks forward to assembling again in our church in January. Many have labored on our addition with willing

hands and hearts. We pray for God's continued blessings as we gather to worship Him. We have been assembling in our fellowship center.

Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) ministered God's Word to us on Thanksgiving Day. May God bless him for his efforts.

Those who have spent time in the hospital are Sis. Pearl Moser and Sis. Norene Moser (Bro. Carl). Our elderly Sis. Emma Feuchtenberger's health is failing. May each feel God's nearness and strength.

A special baby boy was born on December 9 to Sis. Kristi Nohl. She named him Jerry Dean Nohl, Jr. after his father, Bro. Jerry, who died in an accident on March 28, 2003. We rejoice with Sis. Kristi and pray for her and her other children, Ted and Staci. May the Lord bless and keep them in His arms of love and hope.

Grandparents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Shirley Kellenberger and Bro. Larry and Sis. Bonnie Nohl.

"...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

*I Cor. 2:9*

Bro. Joe Moser died on December 7 at the age of 83. He was a soldier of the cross for 55 years and now has the promise of eternal life in those Heavenly realms. His wife, Sis. Hazel, survives along with sons, Paul (Renaë) and Larry. There are two grandchildren, Lindsey and Jordan Moser.

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

With Thanksgiving just past and so much to be thankful for, we especially thank God for His healing touch. Our medical patients were Bro. Harold Messner (Sis. Geraldine), Bro. Marvin Messner (Sis. Geri), Sis. Julia Messner and Sis. Delores Messerli. May God's blessings continue to sustain them as they recover.

Let us remember to offer our special prayers for our elderly members as they struggle with health issues. May God continue to bless them.

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Clarence Messner. He grew up in the Winthrop area.

### **MISSOURI, LAMAR** **Becky Marti** **Wendy Braker**

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

*Luke 2:11*

During the busy holiday season, may we take the time to be thankful for what God has done for us, and for sending His only Son, whose blood was shed for our sins.

We were thankful to have many visitors with us this past month. We especially thank Bros. Tim Zimmerman (Lamont-Gridley, KS) and Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN) for ministering God's Word to us.

Bro. Leonard Braker (Sis. Bonnie) and Megan Braker (Bro.

Jay and Sis. Sharon) have spent time in the hospital this past month. We pray they will feel God's nearness during these times.

### **MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS** **Krista Banwart**

This past month the following ministers joined us for services in St. Louis: On November 24, Bro. Kim Sutter (Sis. Vonette, Taylor, MO) and Bro. Rex Frieden (Sis. Vera, Lamar, MO); on December 7, Bro. Don Gudeman (Sis. Mary, LaCrosse, IN); and on December 14, Elder Bro. Gerry Hertzell (Sis. Ellen, Sabetha, KS). We appreciate their willingness to travel and the encouragement each minister and visitor brings.

We share the joy of Bro. Kenny and Sis. Devon Rinkenberger with the birth of their first grandson, Kyle Walker (Bro. Brandon and Sis. Mindy Rinkenberger of Phoenix).

We were also able to share Christmas joy by visiting a local retirement center and a needy family after church services mid-December.

As a new year begins, some chapters in life close, others are just beginning. We look forward to the new year and the many opportunities it will surely bring. We do not know what lies ahead this year, but we do know that God is already there.

"...I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown! And he replied: Go out into the darkness and put your

hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light and safer than a known way."

—*Minnie Louis Haskins*

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

Congratulations to first-time parents, John and Jaime Hoerr. Jack Landon was born on December 8. Paternal grandparents are Bro. Don and Sis. Elaine Hoerr and great-grandmother, Sis. Loida Hodel, all of Taylor. Maternal grandparents are Dale and Marsha Elston.

Among those receiving medical attention in the last month are Sis. Elaine Hoerr (Bro. Don) and Bro. Jim Sutter (Sis. Kris).

We wish to express a special thanks to Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS) for being with us for the Thanksgiving holiday. Thank you for using the gift of ministry that God has given you to bless us.

We also express our deep sympathy to the family of Bro. Allen and Sis. Rosie Massner at the death of Allen's brother, Bro. Clarence Massner, of Burlington, IA. May God comfort you and bless you as you remember him.

*Note of Thanks:*

We express our heartfelt thanks to the many who sent cards to us for our 50th anniversary!

In Christian love,  
*Roy and Dona Grimm*

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**NEW YORK**  
**CROGHAN-NAUMBURG**  
**Hope Graves**

We were thankful to have min-

istering Bro. Everett Gerber and his wife, Sis. Nancy (Rockville, CT) with us on the weekend of December 13-14. May the Lord bless him for bringing forth the Word to us.

As this Christmas season has once more come upon us, we have enjoyed blending our voices together in song. It is always such a special time of year to celebrate Jesus' birth and singing carols is one of the many ways we can share this glorious news with others. On December 5 we caroled at the Hallmark Nursing Home in Carthage and December 12 at Lewis County General Hospital.

On Monday afternoon, December 15, we put together several fruit baskets for those that can't get in and out over the holidays. We pray that these individuals may realize the love the Lord has for them and may that love be reflected in our readiness to share with others what the Lord has shared with us.

Our Sunday School Christmas program was held Sunday afternoon, December 21. It always brings a smile to our lips and joy to our hearts to see the young children bring forth the messages that they have been taught about the true meaning of the season. We gathered in the church basement afterwards for cookies and chocolate milk, a favorite of the children's! That evening we spent caroling at East Road Adult Home, Polly Peebles' and Steepleview Courts.

Glory to God in the Highest!  
In remoteness and near by us,  
Ruleth He with might and grace.

Let us bring our thanks and praise!

Peace and good will to all nations!

Ye, the heirs of His salvation,  
Far and near, O sons of men,  
Praise the Lord with glad refrain!  
Joyously sound ye His praises!

Men, whom to His choice He raises,

Triumph to a high estate!

We are bought by love so great!  
Hallelujah!

*Zion's Harp #9*

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

Two new babies were born and were welcomed at church. They are:

Bro. Bryon and Sis. Lisa Palitto have a new baby boy, Jent Ronald, born November 21. Grandparents are Bro. Ronald and Sis. Lynell Palitto and Boyd and Barbara Acker. Welcoming Jent home are sisters, Brianna and Katie, and brother, Justin.

Bro. Emery and Sis. Erika Gal became parents with their first baby born November 26, a girl they named Tiffany Michelle. Grandparents are Sis. Sherri Schlatter (Forrest, IL) and Eugene and Helen Gal of Florida.

Bro. Zoltan Bako was hospitalized with having surgery and we hope for him relief from his distress. Sis. Barbara Graf was also in the hospital, and we are thankful for the improvement she has had.

Our Sunday School children presented an inspiring program telling the Christmas story. We appreciated our teachers and parents' efforts in helping to make it possible.

Sis. Susie Katanic, daughter of Maria Katanic, has moved to Aurora, CO, which is in the Denver area. She has some brothers in Colorado. We miss her and trust the Lord to be with her and direct her steps all in His plan.

For a work project at Haiti, those from our congregation that went were: Bro. Ron Palitto, Bro. Greg Henico, Zarko Reljin, and Sis. Michelle Steidl.

The past year we have had six babies born, three baptisms, two marriages, and three deaths.

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### **OHIO, COLUMBUS**

#### **Nancy Banks**

We were pleased to welcome many visiting ministers to our congregation this month. A special thank you to Elder Bros. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) and Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH) for spending a weekend with us reading the Memorandum. We also welcomed Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle and Bro. Bill Brake (Sardis, OH) and Bro. Sam Schlatter (Junction, OH).

A small farewell reception was held for our friend, Will Sauder (Bro. Bill and Sis. Becky), as he prepared to leave for active duty with the Army Guard. His first stop will be in Wisconsin but will be busy making preparations with his unit to go overseas. May he and his parents feel the love and prayers of his church family during this time of separation.

Casey Banks (Bro. Larry and Sis. Nancy) has recently graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in Agricultural Engineering. May he continue to look

to God for direction in his life.

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### **OHIO, JUNCTION**

#### **Cindy Schlatter**

Our Sis. Madeline Manz had surgery this past month. We are grateful for God's continued nearness in our lives and thankful He has been with Sis. Madeline and that she is able to gather with us again.

Love, of all gifts, is the greatest  
Which the Spirit does bestow.  
Though I have the voice like angels,  
Lacking love, I truly know  
That I'd be a tinkling cymbal  
Or a wretched sounding brass;  
For although the sound were present,  
Lifeless through this world I'd pass.

*Zion's Harp #37*

On December 14 the engagement of Bro. Rex Boroff (Rex and Pauline) and Sis. Vicki Klopfenstein (Wilbur and Diane of Salem, OR) was made known. We wish them much grace and direction from our Heavenly Father as they plan for their future together.

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### **OHIO, LATTY**

#### **Bonny Wenninger**

#### **Amanda Steffen**

On November 23, three more souls were baptized into the death of our Lord and Saviour. We welcome Sis. Cassie Greutman (Bro. Greg and Sis. Kristy), Sis. Carla (Jason) Laukhuf (Bro. Rod and Sis. Edie) and Sis. Marti Schlatter (Bro. Tim and Sis. Becky) into the fold.

We appreciated all of our visitors this past month, especially the following ministering brethren: Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH), Bro. Bill Waibel (Sis. Carol, Bay City, MI), Bro. Ron Kipfer (Sis. Linda, Bluffton, IN), Bro. Mike Rinkenberger (Sis. Pat, Congerville, IL) and Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Deb, Remington, IN).

Laura Gerber (Bro. Dave and Sis. Patty) and Danielle Stoller (Bro. Kirk and Sis. Eileen) have opened their hearts to the Lord and have received peace through Him. We wish them God's blessings as they continue to grow in Him.

On November 18, Bro. Corbin and Sis. Katie Stoller welcomed little Cameron Leigh into their lives. Grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Barb Stoller and Bro. Art and Sis. Carol Anliker (Eureka, IL).

Sam and Jessica Bear are enjoying a new baby in their home as well. Aubrey Jane arrived safely on December 5. Grandparents are Becky Bear (Paulding, OH) and Bro. Stan and Sis. JaNahn Sinn.

Bro. Tim and Sis. Marlene Sinn were blessed with another daughter on December 6. Welcoming little Claudia Renee home are siblings, Zachary, Daniel, Sadie and Miriam.

Bethany Laukhuf and Mark Wiegold were united in marriage on December 6. Parents are Bro. Dwain and Sis. Wanita Laukhuf, Dave Wiegold and Dave and Barb Munk. We wish Mark and Bethany God's blessings in their new life together.

Our dear Sis. Louise Rager has

gone Home to be with her Lord. Her funeral service was on December 10. She leaves behind her husband, Carl, and children, Bro. Walter (Sis. Sharon), Sis. Eileen (Bro. Dick) Whitman, and Sharon (Robert) Parady. Our prayer is that Louise's entire family will feel God's comforting arms of love.

Our prayers are with Sis. Ann Plumber and Sis. Marilyn Kipfer (Bro. Ephraim) as they have spent time in the hospital this past month.

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

Farewell, mortality; Jesus is mine.

Welcome, eternity; Jesus is mine.

Welcome, O loved and blest,

Welcome, sweet scenes of rest,

Welcome, my Saviour's breast;

Jesus is mine.

*Hymns of Zion #281*

Sis. Alice "Peg" Graszl was laid to rest on November 20. Our love and sympathy is extended to her husband, Bro. Frank; and children, Shirley Roberts, Frank Jr. (Ruth), Richard (Barb), and Tom (Martha); brothers, Elmer "Bud" Sauder, Bro. Ken Sauder (Sis. Sue) and Bro. Don Sauder (Sis. Faye); a sister, Sis. Evelyn Manz (Bro. Eli); and a sister-in-law, Sis. Caroline Sauder. Bro. Doyle Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN) comforted us with God's Word at the funeral service.

Bro. John Grimm (Columbus, OH), Bro. Gary Maibach (Smithville, OH), Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI) and Bro. Ted Steffen (Alto, MI) visited us

this past month. We thank them for their service in the Lord.

Bro. Ken Sauder (Sis. Sue) was in need of hospital care. We are glad for his recovery.

Two dear souls have surrendered their lives to the Lord and now found peace with God and man. Kristi Hill (Bro. Mick and Sis. Delores) and Connie Boliantz (Bro. Doug) are waiting for their special weekend to give their testimony and to be baptized.

Our annual Member Meeting was held on December 7. Bro. Tim Beer's (Sis. Traci) term as Trustee expired. Bro. Chad Griffey (Sis. Tamara) is our next Trustee. Sis. Kay Rufener (Bro. Ron) has completed her duties on the Kitchen Committee. The new help in the kitchen will be Sis. Tamara Griffey (Bro. Chad). Sis. Dawn Ramsey (Bro. John) and Sis. Lucy Baumann (Bro. Dave) were selected for the World Relief Committee. We thank Sis. Betty Dotterer (Bro. Gaylord) for her past efforts on this committee. Bro. Nathaniel Ramsey (Bro. Ed and Sis. Laura) will serve as usher. Bro. Henry Pfeiffer (Sis. Diane) was the past usher. Bro. Steve Domka (Sis. Brenda) was chosen to be the head song leader. Bro. Mick Hill (Sis. Delores) finished his term. Bro. John Ramsey (Sis. Dawn) was appointed to replace Bro. Mike Baumann Jr. (Sis. Lilly) as the Rittman Nursing Home Representative. Bro. Jared Keever (Clair and Sis. Bev) will be our new World Relief Treasurer/Representative. He will replace Bro. John Pfeiffer Jr. (Sis. Marci). Sis. Esther Baumann (Bro. Mike and Sis. Florina) is our

next Silver Lining correspondent. We thank all who have served our church in the past year including those that were not chosen for a particular position. We also continue to remember in our prayers Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Sis. Jeannine), Bro. Wally Ramsier, Bro. Fred Domka (Sis. Connie), Bro. Mike Baumann (Sis. Florina), Bro. Tim Gerber (Sis. Wendy) and retired Elder Bro. Ken Sauder (Sis. Sue).

Sis. Elisabeth Betsch moved to Briarwood Place Nursing Home this past month. We will keep her in our prayers as she adjusts to her new home.

It was a blessing to hear the children sing of our Saviour Jesus Christ on December 14 during the Christmas Program. We wish all a blessed New Year!

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### **OHIO, RITTMAN** **Laurel Indermuhle** **Anna Schar**

With thankful hearts we share that Troy Stoller (Bro. Robin and Sis. Joanne) has begun his repentance.

November 23 was a special day for Bro. Grayson Reinhard (Bro. Doyle and Sis. Jan, Bluffton, IN) and Sis. Tara Steiner (Mark and Sis. Deb) as they were joined together in marriage. We wish them God's blessings as they congregate with the brethren in Toledo.

Boyd and Barb Acker gained another grandson with the birth of Jent Ronald on November 21. Jent's parents are Bro. Bryon and Sis. Lisa Palitto (Akron, OH).

Bro. Amos and Sis. Sarah Maibach are first-time parents

with the arrival of Andrea Joy on November 23. Bro. Alpha, Jr. and Sis. Denise Maibach and Eugene and Sis. Dianna Bako (Akron, OH) are Andrea's grandparents.

On November 24, Bro. Doug and Sis. Joanna Ingold welcomed a son, Tagen Lee, to their family. Tagen joins big sister, Tori, and grandparents, Bro. Art and Sis. Bonnie Ingold and Bro. John and Sis. Joyce Schamback (Akron, OH).

December 10, Noelle Makayla was born to Bro. Rick and Sis. Dawn Steiner. Noelle's older siblings are Claire, Elijah and Jordan. Grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Ruth Steiner and Bro. Ray and Sis. Carol Stoller (Latty, OH).

The weekend of December 13-14 many gathered for the testimonies and baptisms of our new brother and three new sisters: Bro. Sam Gardner (Gary and Bonnie), Sis. Kyann Rufener (Bro. Jim and Sis. Pat), Sis. Mollie Beery (Bro. Earl and Sis. Suzanne), and Sis. Julie Call (Randy). We are thankful Elder Bros. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) and John Laukhuf (Latty, OH) could be with us to support our Elder Bro. Merle Hartzler.

Other visiting ministers serving us were: Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH), Bros. Robert Meyer (Bluffton North, IN), Jim Rinkenberger (Bluffton, IN), Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), Galen Rokey (Bern, KS), Paul Gasser (Akron, OH) and Todd Stoller (Latty, OH).

We extend sympathy to the Pelfrey family at the passing of Bro. Dale (Sis. Beth) Pelfrey's

brother, Michael Pelfrey, on November 20.

December 14 was the day Howard Beery was called from this life. It's a comfort to report that Howard acknowledged the need for repentance before his death. He leaves behind children: Bro. Everett (Sis. Carol), Art (Eileen), Laurette (Bill) Clark (Millersburg, OH) and Norma (George) Spence. He also had a brother, Bro. Melvin (Sis. Elizabeth), and a sister, Sis. Ruth Beery, from our congregation.

Bro. Dale (Sis. Carolyn) Hartzler, Sis. Martha (Bro. Henry) Dotterer, and Sis. Lorene Riggerbach were hospitalized.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

We would like to express our thanks to all who have remembered Sis. Martha and our family in this time since her surgery and stroke. We so appreciate the cards of encouragement, gifts, so many acts of love and most of all for the many prayers. She is now a resident of our Nursing Home. May God be your Rich Rewarder.

*Bro. Henry and Sis. Martha Dotterer and family*

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#### **OHIO, SARDIS Terry Zollinger**

In sorrow and pain,  
Thy trust do retain  
In Jesus the merciful Saviour.  
When burdened with care,  
When thou wouldst despair,  
Then call on thy loving Redeemer.

In patience then bear  
All trial and care;  
Above streams of bliss will re-

fresh thee.

*Zion's Harp #46*

Many prayers and much sympathy have been for Sis. Alice Ramsier (Bro. Mark) and family on the loss of her precious mother, Sis. Collette Harmon (Bro. Howard, Toledo, OH), as she passed away after a long illness on November 20.

"...I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song..."

*Isaiah 12:2*

Sis. Hazel Riggerbach spent time in the hospital recently. Thoughts and prayers are sent hoping she is feeling better. Also, Sis. Almeda Brake (John) is home from the nursing home where she spent some time recovering from a recent surgery. May the Lord continue to grant healing as He wills.

Those who unto Christ the Lord  
Do surrender  
All their mind and thought and  
word  
In love tender  
Shall, by faith and love impelled,  
Boldly journey  
On the narrow pathway.

*Zion's Harp #70*

The Sardis congregation would like to welcome Bro. Ed and Sis. Dee Beard with open arms and hearts as they have felt led by the Lord to move from Toledo. May the Beards be richly blessed as they abide in their new home.

"And she shall bring forth a

son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save the people from their sins.”

*Matthew 1:21*

The first weekend in December was spent caroling, proclaiming Christ's birth to those in our community and local nursing homes. Also, on Sunday evening was the annual spaghetti supper. May the Lord bless the willing hands that helped with the preparation of the delicious meal.

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

*Luke 2:11*

The Sunday School Christmas program was on Sunday, December 14. What a special blessing it is to hear the miraculous birth and story of Jesus Christ, our Saviour! May the Lord bless the teachers and students for their willingness and efforts.

“A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembered no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.”

*John 16:21*

We rejoice over the safe arrival of Quartus John Rassi to Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget (Chicago, IL) on December 11, 2003. Quartus is lovingly welcomed home by Carl, Manna and Emmaus.

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## OHIO, SMITHVILLE

### Ruth Gasser Alyssa Miller

As the angels sang, “Peace on earth”, we are thankful that our friends, Joel Landis (Bro. Harvey and Stephanie) and Kyle Indermuhle (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Shari) have found this precious pearl of God's peace. May they always guard and treasure it in their hearts. We are looking forward to baptisms in January, Lord willing.

Bro. Bob Stoller (Sis. Eileen) was hospitalized for testing recently. Our prayers are with him, and we trust that Bro. Bob will feel the comfort of God's upholding, healing hand in the future, according to His will.

Earthly partings are always painful. Our sympathy goes to Art and Eileen Beery and their family in the loss of Art's father, Howard Beery. We are thankful for those who recognize their need of a Saviour even in the very last moments of their life.

It is always a blessing to hear the enthusiasm of young children as they retell the Christmas story through their eager singing. We enjoyed our annual Sunday School Christmas program on Sunday evening, December 14. We hope and pray that these students will not remain content to know the Babe of Bethlehem, but will someday rejoice in knowing Him as their Saviour, also.

The New Year unfolds before us. May we have grace to use wisely the time that God has given to us. “But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things, have fervent charity

among yourselves.” (I Peter 4:7-8a)

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## OHIO, TOLEDO Rebecca Beard

Many changes have occurred in our little congregation in the last several months. Both of our ministering brothers lost their mothers within a short period of time. On November 20, after several years of declining health, our dear Sis. Colette Harmon (Bro. Howard) passed away. Though health problems often kept her home or hospital bound, anytime she could sit under the sound of God's Word at church she was there and smiling. She will be missed by Bro. Howard and their children, Beth Cabiad (Roland), Bro. Doug Harmon (Sis. Lanna), Sis. Alice Ramsier (Bro. Mark), Gail Herbert (Nathan), grandchildren, and great grandchild.

We thank Bro. Ben Maibach (Detroit, MI) for his comforting message from the words of our Lord at her funeral.

On December 6, we received word that Bro. Walt (Sis. Sharon) Rager's mother, Sis. Louise Rager (Bro. Carl, Latty, OH), had also gone to be with the Lord. Our prayers go out to both families and yet we can rejoice knowing that two long suffering sisters after serving the Lord many years have a place prepared for them in heaven.

Bro. Seth and Sis. Faith Beard departed the Toledo congregation in November and are safely settled in at Sardis. On December 7, many moist eyes were noted as we said farewell to Bro. Ed and Sis.



Dee Beard at the end of their last Sunday here as residents of Toledo. Bro. Ed and Sis. Dee Beard also have arrived safely at Sardis, where they were welcomed by daughter, Sis. Joy Indermuhle (Bro. Dana), and Bro. Seth Beard (Sis. Faith) and grandchildren.

We want to welcome newlyweds, Bro. Grayson and Sis. Tara (Steiner) Reinhard, into our Toledo congregation and pray the Lord will bless their union. Sis. Tara was one of our college students who chose to stay on in Toledo after graduating last year.

Bro. Matt Manz (Bro. Dave and Sis. Kathy) graduated from UT in Mechanical Engineering this semester.

Also, Bro. Ted Gherian (Bro. Paul and Sis. Sharon) received his Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering.

We feel we are blessed by their decision to reside in Toledo at this time.

It has truly been a blessing over the years to have so many of our church families send their children to school at the local universities and medical college in our area. Many have come as friends and left as Brothers and Sisters in the Lord by the end of their school years.

Our prayers go out to Kelly Chamberlain (Dave and Sis. Connie Sancraint) as she recovers from surgery. May she feel God's healing touch upon her.

Bro. Vic Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH) ministered to us from God's Word on November 28. May God bless him and his family for their labors of love.

### **OREGON, PORTLAND** **Louisa Gallup**

Recently, we were able to see, through a World Relief slide presentation, how our brethren in Eastern Europe live and worship. Their everyday life and trials seem a stark contrast to ours here in this country. It is a humbling experience to see the slides and hear these people's stories. We appreciate all the work of those involved in World Relief efforts and are thankful that help is getting through to those who need it. May we not forget to do our part. We thank Bro. Terry Kuenzi (Sis. Ann) from Silverton for taking the time to come to us in Portland and present us with the above mentioned World Relief update.

We thank the following ministering brethren from Silverton who faithfully supported our small congregation this past month: Elder Bro. Art Metz (Sis. Betty), Bros. Todd Zollinger (Sis. Michele), Ed Knecht (Sis. Judie) and Don Sinn (Sis. Linda). May the Lord bless you all for your service.

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### **OREGON, SILVERTON** **Kelsey Walder**

Our saving hope is all in vain,  
If here our love should cease,  
For in the man of Galilee,  
We find the gift of peace.  
'Tis not the babe, but Christ, the  
man  
Who walked in Galilee;  
'Tis not the manger, but the  
cross,  
That sets the spirit free.  
*Hymn's of Zion #36*

This was one of the final hymns sung by our Sunday school children and young adults at our Christmas program on December 14. Our thanks and appreciation goes to each student for their efforts in singing and memorizing verses. Thanks also to the teachers and parents for their love and support.

The weekend of January 24, 2004, we look forward to hearing the testimonies of three souls. We will remember our friends Tresa Dettwyler (Bro. Loren and Sis. Marlene), Tim Hansen (Carol), and Bethany Kuenzi (Bro. Terry and Sis. Ann), in our thoughts and prayers as they make preparation for this weekend.

We rejoice with Lee Jones (Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz) and Monte and Kellie Kuenzi, as each of these converts confess they have found that precious gift of peace. Our prayers are with them as they look forward to baptism.

Bro. Clarence Dietrich (Sis. Bess) had surgery again this month. We are thankful to have him back in attendance with us and pray that he is on the road to recovery. We continue to remember Bro. Bill and Sis. Kris Luthi and family in our prayers as they wait for the time that they can bring their premature daughter, Cheyanne, home from the hospital.

Over Thanksgiving, we were thankful to have several visitors with us including ministering Bro. Darren Fehr (Sis. Nora) and his family from West Bend, IA. May God bless him for his labors to bring us the Word.

**PENNSYLVANIA  
PHILADELPHIA**

**Nathan and  
MaryElizabeth Gasser**

Once again this year we were treated to a wonderful Sunday School Christmas program. The songs and readings performed by the children told the story of Jesus' birth with simplicity and sincerity. Their enthusiasm is an encouragement to us all. Following the program we enjoyed singing Christmas songs at a nearby nursing home.

Elder Bro. Duane Farney (Croghan, NY) was with us this month to read the Memorandum letter, and we are grateful for his help and encouragement. May we all grow from the reminders and instruction given, and may we continue to pray for our Elders who lead with love and humility.

We are grateful to the Lord for providing protection for all those traveling over the Christmas season, and for bringing many loved ones to our area. We also thank Bro. Everett Gerber (Rockville, CT) for sharing the Word with us.

As we begin a new year, many people joke about resolutions, and some caution against making them at all. One source defines a resolution as a firm dedication, and what better way with which to view our attitude toward serving the Lord in the coming year than firm dedication.

**TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE  
Mike and Monica Fritz**

Our small congregation enjoyed the opportunity to share the joy of Christmas as we caroled at a

local hospital early in December. What a blessing to know that Christ came to this earth and died on the cross for the sins of all mankind.

We are so thankful and appreciative for the efforts of our visiting brothers who come to share the Word with us. This month we were encouraged by God's Word brought to us by Bro. Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Sue, Atlanta, GA), Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Sis. Charlene, Goodfield, IL), and Bro. Todd Stoller (Sis. Pam, Latty, OH). We have also enjoyed the fellowship with brethren and friends visiting from Atlanta, GA; Bluffton, Bluffton North, Indianapolis, and West Lafayette, IN; Goodfield, IL; Junction and Latty, OH; and Zapata, TX.

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: Rockville, CT (1/25); Wolcott, IN (2/1); Bay City, MI (2/8); Bloomington-Normal, IL (2/15); Sabetha, KS (2/22); and Washington, IL (2/22). If you are planning to worship with us, please call ahead to confirm our schedule. We also usually meet on Wednesday evenings for a song service. 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  
DALLAS/FORT WORTH  
Carrie Beyer**

"For the preaching of the cross

is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

*I Corinthians 1:18*

Beginning in January, our congregation anticipates the new rotation of ministers who will preach in 2004. We plan to host one visiting minister on the second Sunday of every month. Sabetha is scheduled for January; Rittman is scheduled for February.

We enjoyed our visitor from Athens this past month and look forward to meeting all those who may choose to fellowship with us in the coming year. Our congregation extends a warm invitation to anyone living near or traveling through the area to visit. For worship times or driving directions, please contact Bro. Ken and Sis. Sharon Lawson (817.431.0832) or Bro. Kyle and Sis. Carrie Beyer (817.989.0868). We currently meet at the Holiday Inn Express immediately northwest of the D/FW airport. The hotel is located in Grapevine, TX, near the intersection of Highways 121 and 114.

**TEXAS, SAN MARCOS  
Amy Ringger**

Lately we have heard a couple of interpretations of the oil in Jesus' parable of the ten virgins. Some have explained that the oil represents the power of the Holy Spirit. One explanation was that the oil represents "joy"; the other was that the oil is "our first love". I suppose that joy and our first love are synonymous. How can we make sure we don't lose the oil, as the foolish ones did? Among oth-

ers, some warning signs could be that our joy in communion with God lessens, our desire to be with the brethren wanes, our thoughts dwell more on our earthly cares instead of concern for others' welfare, or obedience to the Word falls short. This year of 2004 may we all be watchful and prayerful that our first love remains true, built upon, or be brought back into focus.

We're looking forward to more visiting ministers this year as we've had this last month. Many thanks to Bros. Loren Schrenk (Sis. Betsy, St. Louis), Elder Bro. Merle Hartzler (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman), Lenny Meyer, (Sis. Charlotte, Chicago), and Craig Martin (Sis. Terri, Princeville). Thanks also to our many visitors from Belvidere, Valparaiso, Princeville, Smithville, Rittman, Lexington, and Junction.

We look forward to hosting visiting ministers from the following churches in February: Junction (1), Smithville (8), San Diego (15), Cissna Park (22), and Alto (29).

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 Saturday evening, Sunday evening, or during the week, we'd be happy to plan something then as well. See the ministers' book for contact information.

Our congregation continues 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 southbound frontage road.

### VERMONT, NORWICH Doug Mangers

Church services for the month were held on December 14. We were also able to have a potluck supper and Christmas Carol singing on the preceding Saturday evening. Both the Sunday service and the Saturday evening activities were well attended with many visitors from Rockville able to come up for the weekend to fellowship with us.

We are thankful for each one, especially Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan and Bro. Dan Stoller for their service to us from the pulpit.

We are thankful that everyone who stayed for the weather-shortened service on Sunday was afforded God's protection on their journey home as we received another foot of snow on Sunday night. We have already received over 40" of snow in December as of this writing on the 18th and some of our congregation living in northern Vermont and New Hampshire has received much more. These snowstorms and the cold weather make us appreciate

warm homes, hot meals, and many other blessings from God that we too often take for granted.

Although this winter weather can make our lives difficult, may we always strive to appreciate the beauty and pureness of the fresh snow and may it remind us of the state of our soul only after the cleansing power of Jesus Christ.

As we are dependent mostly upon visitors to fill up our small building, we are thankful for all who come to be with us and invite any who have travel plans in the northeast to come worship with us on the second Sunday of each month.

We begin our services with Sunday School singing shortly after 10:00 am. For information or directions, please contact Bro. Doug Mangers at (720) 979-7912 or Morey Weiss at (802) 295-5981.



*Sermon continued from page 2*

that we had.

In this pulpit Bible, it said, "the Lord's promise to Solomon". The Lord did not only promise this to Solomon, He promised that to you and I today. Solomon found himself in a position where he was asked to build the house of the Lord. It wasn't permitted to his father David, but Solomon had built this house and he had finished this house. The Lord told him that this is the Lord's house. "And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice." (II Chronicles 7:12). The Lord's house.

Do we today, dear ones, cherish the Lord's house? The Lord's, as He has built? It is not the building. It is the assembly of these people that are gathered here together. The brothers and the sisters and the friends.

I oftentimes think about Solomon's life. One time the Lord said to Solomon, He said, if you will ask some request unto me, I will grant it to you. And Solomon, he asked the request to be able to discern right from wrong. (I Kings 3:5-9)

If the Lord would ask you today, if you could have any request that you wanted, if you would ask for it and He would grant it to you, what would you ask for? I probably wouldn't have asked for that - right or wrong. But we analyze it, we look at it and we see how important that it was. Because we struggle with that today. We struggle with what is right and what is wrong. We really shouldn't, but a lot of times we do. We struggle with that. God was pleased that Solomon asked for that, to be able to discern right from wrong. (I Kings 3:10)

Then the Lord blessed Solomon with riches. That is something that Solomon didn't ask for. And the riches were Solomon's downfall. I oftentimes think, as I go back and think of our forefathers that came into this land and had somewhat of a struggle to establish a home, to establish a living, to establish a church, to establish a heritage. It was somewhat of a struggle for them. They probably didn't ask for riches either. But God saw their faithfulness. Because of that, He

blessed them.

He blessed you and I with riches. Those of us that came on behind, He blessed us with riches. May it be that it is not our downfall, these riches that He has blessed us with. But may we use them for an advantage to draw closer to God. To use them for an advantage.

He said unto them that, "Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attend unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house ... if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments; Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father..." (II Chronicles 7:15-18). How are we walking today? Are we walking according to His commandments and according to His statutes?

Remember, dear ones, there is a difference between walking with the commandments and the statutes of the world and with the commandments and the statutes of God. We don't want to say anything bad about the world. Because God has given you and I a wonderful place to live and to work out our salvation. We need to be thankful for that. But we need to have our priorities, that we are walking upon the spiritual walk of life.

Someone said, even the scripture says we should walk in moderation. (Philippians 4:5). But there is a tremendous difference between the moderation of the world and the moderation of the scripture. We are to be walking in the moderation of the scripture, the Holy Word of God, because we have been called. We have been called unto this way, to this marvelous life. Not of anything that we have done. Remember, dear ones, God has chosen you. God has chosen me.

I have often thought, dear ones, when we get to heaven and we stand there before our Maker and our Creator, did you ever think what might be the first question that He asks you? I thought about that a lot. I've thought that the question that He might ask me goes clear back into the Book of Genesis. He might say, where is your brother? (Genesis 4:9). Because that is what He asked the one that had mur-

dered his brother. And the Lord knew, but He said, where is your brother? I have often thought, dear ones, that that would be the question that He might ask me.

So we are our brother's keeper. I didn't choose you. You didn't choose me. But God chose us both. We are to walk in humility. We are to walk in love. We are to walk hand in hand. So that when we get there to heaven and the Lord asks us that question, where is your brother, say he is right here with me. We came together. May it be that He would give us the grace to be able to do this.

May we keep His statutes. May we keep His commandments. We oftentimes think that they are becoming harder. But if they are, dear ones, it is because of us. Not because of anything that God has done. When He asked us to keep His commandments and His statutes, we look at that and we say, well, this might be difficult. But it's really not. It's really not, to keep those statutes and those commandments, if we are willing to humble ourselves. If we are willing to take up our cross. If we are willing to follow Jesus. They only become a burden if we are not willing. They only become a hard task if we want to please our self. But if we want to please God, they are really not hard to do. Because they are something that we want to do.

So may it be, as we learn from the Old Testament readings and their walk of life, it wasn't always easy. It wasn't always a bed of roses that they would have. There was a lot of joy. There was a lot of happiness. There was a lot of sadness and a lot of heartache.

I have thought, dear ones, we are here in church today. This is a happy day. I have spent a lot of wonderful days in the church. I have spent the most happy day of my life in the church in the front bench. And I have spent the saddest day in my life in the front bench. But we are here today to worship God. And to thank God, because we can have the hope of life eternal. Remember, the scripture tells us, all things work together for the good of those that love the Lord. (Romans 8:28)

So as we were reminded of Solomon, of building the house and what the Lord had told him, He tells us the same today. I believe it is probably somewhat of a struggle for those who have the over-

sight, the shepherds of the flock today, to keep that commitment, to keep that walk of life.

Remember, I believe it is in Matthew's gospel the seventh chapter, it says, strait and narrow is the way. (St. Matthew 7:14) When I read that, it really never bothers me too much about walking a strait way and a narrow way, because many of us were brought up and taught by our parents to walk that way. But there is a real troubling verse that just follows that, to me. It says, few there be that find it and go there at. (St. Matthew 7:14) The strait and narrow doesn't bother me. But the other verse does. That is going to take grace. That is going to take humility. That is going to take help. But we have all of the help that we need. Because it comes here from this Word.

We have read here in the reading, about the parable of the sower of the seed. I like to think, dear ones, when I read this, that that seed fell on different types of soil. I would like to talk about the soil that it fell on, the good ground. Because that is the type of ground that we need to have. If we have that type of ground, and that seed falls there, it is going to do what? It is going to produce. "...some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred." St. Mark 4:8.

What does it take to have good ground? What kind of soil is that? I have often thought about, I'm really not much of an expert on soil. We can do a lot today with soil, with fertilizers. We can do a lot today with chemicals and things to make land that is hardly bearing to be able to produce something good. But I like to think of good soil as something that has quite a bit of humus in it. You know where humus comes from? It comes from those things that are dead. Those things that have been cut off and have died and they are plowed under. It becomes humus and it becomes so the soil is workable.

I have to think, there is a parallel there, between that and the life of one that walks in sin. If we take all of those sins, and if we bury them, if we cut them off and if we bury them and put them in, it is kind of like a compost. They will deteriorate and they will decay and they'll be gone. But then we will have good soil. That soil is as this Word as we heard it in this morning hour. It comes forth.

We could hear it. We could feed upon it. We can ask God that we could use it and apply it. Then we could be that light.

We oftentimes are reminded today, that we live in a dark world. If it is, dear ones, if this world is getting darker, it is because our light is not shining brighter. There is no doubt about that to me. So it is not the world that might be getting darker; it is our light that is being covered up a little bit and being hid. Sometimes we would just like to have the best of both worlds.

Someone said one time, it is amazing as how we always preach to be separated from the world. To walk not with the world. But isn't it amazing, how close that we do walk to the world? Isn't it amazing? May it be that He will give us grace that our light could shine bright and the world could see that light.

What brings a soul to repentance? What brings a soul to this, we always say, conviction? We say, sin. All types of sin. Those of us who grew up, had all of these things. I don't know what brought you, but I could tell you what brought me. Because when I went to church and sat in that back row, they had something I didn't have and I needed it. Because they had something I didn't have, I could see it. And I needed it.

I know the Word is supposed to show you. I know the preacher is supposed to preach it. Your Sunday School teacher is supposed to teach it. But sometimes those of us that are a little bit slow in learning, we have to see it. When we could see it, it brought a conviction because we needed it. So may it be that we could continue upon this pathway. We can sojourn down this pathway and we could keep that.

It says in Revelation about those seven churches. All of those churches had a problem. But all of those churches had something in common. Jesus said, to him that overcometh shall inherit eternal life. (Revelation 2:7). To him that overcometh. We want to be amongst the overcomers. He also said to that one church to strengthen those things that remain. (Revelation 3:2). May it be that we can all take courage today. Not be discouraged but we could take courage and battle onward and forward to that promised land.

The hymn writer says, "...A few more days and I must go to meet the deeds that I have done..." (A Beautiful Life, #139, Hymns of Zion). I never would believe that life would go by so quickly. The Word tells us this. The Word explains this to us. But when I was nineteen, I thought it would be forever before I got to be sixty seven. But it was just a few days. Just a few days. And we don't know.

When I saw those four souls there last night to give their testimony, those young souls, there's some that don't even make that age. There's some that their life is required before that age. Some that age and some afterward. So we really don't know. But at best, if we are able to live out our span of life, it is quick and it is gone.

They told us last night, I had to think of those four souls about making a commitment for as long as they shall live. I thought about Daniel. Daniel was about that age of those young souls when he was taken out of his homeland and into that land and had to stand for his faith. (Daniel 1:3,4). I believe he was in his teens when that happened. And when he got thrown into the lions' den, he was in his eighties. (Daniel 6). So it wasn't always easy. The battle was always there. But Daniel was always victorious because that he knew where his help and his strength came from.

I would like to encourage the young converts today, when they talk about a long life and to be faithful. Sometimes we look at it at their age and think it is a long time. But I'd like for them to look at it, we only have to be faithful for today. Just today. We don't even know if tomorrow is going to come. If tomorrow comes, then we want to be faithful for tomorrow. But we want to take it just one day at a time. Because you know what happens, dear ones, with one day at a time? Pretty soon it is a week. Pretty soon it is a month. Pretty soon it is a year. And then pretty soon it is a lifetime. So it is not a commitment that is a real long time. It is just one day to be faithful. May He grant us grace today to be faithful and to walk with Him down the pathway of life that leads to that eternal home.

### **Tennessee Fellowship Singing (and Auction)**

Memorial Day Weekend 2004  
May 29-30, 2004

Singing and Auction located at the  
Apostolic Christian Tennessee  
Fellowship Area in Southern Tennessee

Sunday Worship Services in Athens, AL

Look for more details in subsequent  
issues of The Silver Lining  
and in your local congregation.

*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold  
the traditions which ye have been taught,  
whether by word, or our epistle.*

*Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and  
God, even our Father, which hath loved us,  
and hath given us everlasting consolation  
and good hope through grace,*

*Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in  
every good word and work.*

2 Thes 2:15-17

### **U.S.A. BOARD WORK PROJECTS**

For area work projects, please contact the following Disaster Work Project Committee Representative:

**Kansas:** Paul Kaeb  
Phone: 785-284-3261  
Cell: 785-547-5269  
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**Indiana:** Gerry Waibel  
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**Ohio:** Ken Zollinger  
Phone: 330-925-6370  
Fax: 330-927-6370

## **NOTICE:**

### **NEW HOURS FOR APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS STORE**

Starting on Saturday, February 7, 2004, Apostolic Christian Publications will be open 9 A.M. To 12 P.M. on the first Saturday of each month in addition to the regular store hours of Monday-Friday from 8:30 A.M. To 11:30 A.M. Store address is 805 West Cruger in Eureka, IL and the phone number is 309- 467-3611.

## CARIBBEAN BOARD PROJECTS - 2004

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
AWA-T	Jan. 22-30, '04	Les Cayes	Derek Sauder	Water Aid	5
AWA-FRW	Jan. 22-30, '04	Les Cayes	Rick Wuethrich	Vocational School	4
AWA-B	Jan. 22-30, '04	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Vocational School	2
MEBSH	Feb. 5-13, '04	Les Cayes	Dean Pashak	Grade School	9
Palm Grove	Feb. 20-28, '04	Puit Sales	Tom Hitz	Grade School	11
MEBSH	Mar. 4-12, '04	Les Cayes	Rich Bertschi	Grade School	9
MEBSH	Mar. 11-19, '04	Les Cayes	Phil Isabel	Grade School	9
SEED	Mar. 18-26, '04	Les Cayes	Bob Beebe	Agriculture Aid	9
Palm Grove	Mar. 19-27, '04	Puit Sales	Mike Reinhard	Grade School	11
AWA-FRW	May 6-14, '04	Les Cayes	Rick Wuethrich	Vocational School	4
AWA-T	May 6-14, '04	Les Cayes	Derek Sauder	Water Aid	5
AWA-B	May 6-14, '04	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Vocational School	2
JAMAICA					
CCCD	March 13-20, '04	Kingston	Terry Miller	Deaf School	40
CCCD	April 8 - April 16, '04	Kingston	Roanoke BC - Kevin Fischer	Deaf School	50
CCCD	May 21-29, '04	Deaf Village	TBA	Work Place	40
CCCD	June 4 - June 12, '04	Deaf Village	Taylor/Princeville	Work Place	50
CCCD	June 26 - July 3, '04	Knockpatrick	Mansfield - Pete Webel	Deaf School	40

COORDINATOR	PHONE	FAX	E-MAIL
Jon Zeller	309-266-9009		<a href="mailto:jzeller@mtco.com">jzeller@mtco.com</a>
Derek Sauder	309-925-7502		<a href="mailto:Sauder_Derek_A@cat.com">Sauder Derek A@cat.com</a>
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:gberman@juno.com">gberman@juno.com</a>
Craig Emch	330-939-4591	330-939-4591	
Terry Miller	IL Phone: 309-696-7804	FL Phone & Fax: 941-485-4302	none
Dean Pashak	517-662-7685	517-662-7099	
Bill Rager	419-263-2989		
Pete (Linda) Webel	419-756-2587		
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>

**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

**- NOTICE -**

**Repair and Distribution of  
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Bible Story Books,  
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Gospel Hymn Books**

*We have so many requests for Sunday School material. Please send us your children's used VBS workbooks except grades 1 & 2 as they do not have Bible stories included.*

Please get your books to us or the Goodfield World Relief Center.

Books are mainly distributed to India, Philippines, and Africa.

Jerry and Arlene Banwart  
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Congerville, IL 61729  
(309) 448-2416

### **Apostolic Christian Counseling Services**

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

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

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APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
**World Relief**

### **Haiti Coordinator Position**

The Caribbean Board of the National World Relief Committee is taking applications for a couple/s to serve as full time coordinators in Haiti.

The job would consist of helping work teams in construction, well drilling, trade schools and assisting the MEBSH construction department with sea containers and lumber shipments. This position would also require some oversight of fund allocation and accounting of funds.

### **BIBLE DISTRIBUTION**

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

All books, including Bibles, in English and other languages, plus Bible Story Books which have been approved by the Apostolic Christian Mission Committee, are available for those who wish to distribute them in the name of Jesus Christ.

The book inventory is computerized, and the personnel at Bluffton can drop ship to nearly any address.

*To order, contact,*

Apostolic Christian Church  
**Bible Distribution**  
PO Box 30  
1254 S. Main Street  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
Phone and Fax 260/824-5587  
E-mail: biblelist@parlorcity.com



## Mexico Work Teams 2004

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Phone &amp; (e-mail)</u>
Juarez	March 6-13, 2004	Construction	Kurt Ifer	206-824-2829 <a href="mailto:k.ifer@mchsi.com">k.ifer@mchsi.com</a>
Agua Prieta	March 6-13, 2004	Construction	Wayne Lehman	574-773-4373 <a href="mailto:socks@bnin.net">socks@bnin.net</a>
Agua Prieta	March 13-20, 2004	Construction	Wayne Lehman	574-773-4373 <a href="mailto:socks@bnin.net">socks@bnin.net</a>
Rio Bravo	March 13-20, 2004	Construction	Jim Barth	309-367-2098 <a href="mailto:Barthlings6@juno.com">Barthlings6@juno.com</a>
Juarez	March 20-27, 2004	Construction	Bruce Aschliman	260-824-5160 <a href="mailto:aschlimanb@yahoo.com">aschlimanb@yahoo.com</a>
Agua Prieta	March 20-27, 2004	Construction	Denis Fry	260-824-3055 <a href="mailto:fry.d@mchsi.com">fry.d@mchsi.com</a>
Rio Bravo	March 20-27, 2004	Construction	Brent Young	217-367-1427 <a href="mailto:bdyoung1@uiuc.edu">bdyoung1@uiuc.edu</a>
Rio Bravo	April 10-17, 2004	Construction	Jim Rieker	309-693-1721 <a href="mailto:JRieker@SBCGlobal.net">JRieker@SBCGlobal.net</a>
Juarez	April 14-21, 2004	Medical/Dental	Cheryl Herrman	309-385-1082 <a href="mailto:cherylh@mtco.com">cherylh@mtco.com</a>
Rio Bravo	June 19-26, 2004	Construction	Joe Zimmerman	309-263-0254
Rio Bravo	July 3-10, 2004	Construction	Dean Fiechter	260-565-3439 <a href="mailto:dafiechter@parlorcity.com">dafiechter@parlorcity.com</a>
Rio Bravo	July 10-17, 2004	Construction	Dean Fiechter	260-565-3439 <a href="mailto:dafiechter@parlorcity.com">dafiechter@parlorcity.com</a>
Juarez	September 1-8, 2004	Medical/Dental	Cheryl Herrman	309-385-1082 <a href="mailto:cherylh@mtco.com">cherylh@mtco.com</a>

*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)*



*This month's Remembering column has no special, singular focus, but consists of a variety of historical topics.*

### Miscellaneous

During the past Christmas season, I am sure the Hymns of Zion song, "The Babe of Bethlehem", was sung many times across the churches. It is a special delight to sing this hymn because it was written by a man many of us knew, Bro. Henry Beer of Milford, Indiana. God gave him a wonderful poetic gift. He used it. And we benefit yet today.

\*\*\*\*\*

Concerning a son born to Bro. Samuel Froehlich, the history book, *Apostolic Christian Church History, Volume I* reads, "When on April 14, 1842, another son was born to them, Froehlich, who had come for a passing visit to Haputwil, was jailed and his wife had to pay 150 francs. From then on, he was forcibly separated from his family."

\*\*\*\*\*

A year later the brethren petitioned the government for recog-

nition of their church. "They resolved that the congregation should hold fast to its principles according to the Word of God, and to carry them out *whatever the cost might be.*"

\*\*\*\*\*

The early brethren endured much persecution. In 1846, in Aargau (Switzerland), they could only meet on remote farms, or in forests, often at night. Once, after meeting deep in a forest, Bro. Froehlich wrote, "What a meeting in the middle of a forest. It was a day of joy and blessing close to the Lord. We celebrated the Lord's Supper also, and then quietly returned home."

\*\*\*\*\*

Author Herman Reugger writes, "Repeatedly the meetings were disturbed by police who led away the teaching brothers (ministers), handcuffed like common criminals."

\*\*\*\*\*

Standing up for one's faith (by the grace of God) was not confined to Switzerland. As the faith spread eastward into the Balkan countries, souls were

jailed for refusing to bear arms. In Yugoslavia, state attitudes toward the Nazarenes (our church's name in that area), were especially harsh.

Some young men were drafted into the army, and on refusal to bear arms, were sentenced to 3-5 years in prison. On release, some went back home only to be conscripted again and sentenced to another term. Some brothers even spent a third term in prison. One can hardly imagine the burden of being sent back to prison, repeatedly.

These zealous brethren, however, did not relent (in their beliefs) and endured hardships. Their faith sustained them, and they cherished the time when they were allowed to worship together quietly. What a tremendous lesson this is for us today.

One of these brothers is prepping an account of his prison years and will include the difficulties (and spiritual blessings) of being separated from loved ones back home. He came to America and enjoyed the blessings of religious liberty.

\*\*\*\*\*

It is difficult in America today

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## REMEMBERING

...continued from page 50

— in light of our constitutionally-guaranteed freedoms — to grasp the governmental harshness toward believing people. Indeed, our young men have had it very nice today in not having to serve in the military. When they did — during the past century's wars — their belief in nonresistance was respected, and they loyally served without bearing weapons.

\*\*\*\*\*

Concerning our heritage the matter of standing for truth has not been confined to men only. When Elder Isaac Gehring first preached the gospel to a small group of people near Rittman, Ohio, in 1855, the first convert was Anna Steiner. She was the wife of the Mennonite bishop in that area. She held true to her faith. The resolve of that one soul grew into a multitude of believers at Rittman and Smithville that totaled nearly 700 in 2002.

*By: Perry A. Klopfenstein*

### **Next Issue:**

The next issue will begin a series of articles on church practices from a historical perspective. They will show that many of our patterns reach back to early Christianity. Excerpts will be taken from an eight-unit "Church Practices Set," the materials given to each new Sunday School teacher as distributed from the Apostolic Christian Publishing outlet in Eureka, Illinois.

# The Light Of Hope

## From Across The Ocean

### 希望の光

#### "The Relaxed Life"

*Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan*

Please join with me in trying to live a relaxed life in 2004. It is said that people are too busy these days, that they should slow down and not try to do so much. This is probably true, but I venture to say that the big problem is that people are not sufficiently relaxed. To be busy with many wonderful and interesting things to do is healthful, physically and spiritually. We must learn to relax. Let's do what's right and relax in the Lord.

We tend to worry about a lot of things, but as far as I know, it doesn't help much. To be concerned about something, and to do what you can to correct it, is a good thing, but to simply worry about it when it is beyond our control, doesn't help. The Apostle Peter wrote, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (I Peter 5:7)

Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (Matthew 6:34). This means we should take one day at a time.

To be sincerely cheerful helps a person to relax. It must not be a put on cheerfulness. We must cultivate

"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Proverbs 17:22 reads, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bones." If you have a broken spirit from some tragedy in your life, it is my prayer that God will heal your

broken spirit and help you to smile again.

It may be difficult to relax if we feel we are failures, that we have made too many mistakes, that we don't measure up to God's standards. The Bible teaches that all of us are failures of ourselves, that we need God's help in order to do anything good. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23). We are all in the same boat, simply trusting God to make something of us in spite of our own failures.

If others blame you when you are doing your best, it is impossible to be relaxed. This should teach us not to blame others when they are doing their best, although loving correction without blaming, is useful and needful. It is difficult for us to see our own mistakes. We should make it a habit to look for all the good points in others, and to praise them for those good points. Most of us can use a little encouragement. It helps us to relax and to thank God for all His goodness to us, and to thank God for the atonement Christ made for us so that we can be redeemed. The Apostle Paul was also concerned about being blamed. He wrote in II Corinthians 8:20, "That no man should blame us."

Keep smiling and looking up! Just be yourself; you don't have to be someone else. Do your best in every endeavor and leave it with God. Let's try to relax in 2004.



*Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it:  
if a man would give all the substance of his house for love,  
it would utterly be contemned.*

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