

The Silver Lining



For from the top of the rocks I see Him, and from the hills I behold Him.

May 2004

Sermon by Bro. Thomas Troxel, LaCrosse, IN

I Chronicles 13 and The Acts 5:1-32

David, a man after God's own heart, the Word tells us (I Samuel 13:14). A man that sought after God and now in this chapter we read that he desired to have the symbol of the presence of God in the location that was back to Jerusalem (I Chronicles 13:3). I believe it would have been to Jerusalem. There was nothing in and of itself wrong with such a desire. We hope that each of us have a desire to have the presence of God in our lives.

This ark was with the children of Israel through the wilderness and had been captured by the Philistines in a battle that Saul had taken the ark out because he desired the presence of God. He was so far removed from the presence of God in heart and mind. In fact he had been rejected of God. He desired the physical presence of God in the form of the ark to help him to win this battle. And God did not honor that.

So the ark was captured and it was taken into the Philistines camp there, wherever it was. If I remember right, strange things happened. Very strange things happened. Their gods were broken down and the ark remained (I Samuel 5). It got to the point where they found a mother cow that had a calf and they put this ark on a cart and drove this cow away from her calf, which is against nature, because a mother would have always wanted to stay by her calf (I Samuel 6:7- f 2). But anyway, they drove this ark because the presence of God was not something they could stand. They did not want to submit to it.

So we read in this chapter that, "And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader." (I Chronicles 13:1). Dear ones, when we want the presence of God, we need to consult with His Word, consult with the right sources. Because he was given bad - he was not given the whole pic-

ture, the whole story. Because there was commandment in the law, that when the ark was moved the Levite tribe and the priests, they gathered it on sticks, I believe it was three on each side and they walked with the ark. It was not in a cart.

As this ark was in the cart and the oxen stumbled and Uzza tried to keep the ark from falling, we see that he put his hand up to the ark and he was smitten with death (I Chronicles 13:9-10). David went then and he did his homework, so to speak, and a couple chapters later they bring the ark back and they bring it back in the old-fashioned way, where the priests carried it by hand, the way that was instructed, instead of the easy way of having it on wheels and bring it in (I Chronicles 15).

In the life that we live, there are many, many things in life that we have found ways to make easier. Dear ones, the way to the Father's heart is never changed. To try to find an easier way, one that would be more convenient, one that would have wheels and be a faster way to get there may not be the right way. So we are thankful that God's Word is kept in store, that when we feel moved as David felt moved, and we trust it would be on a daily basis and a moment by moment basis, to have the presence of God in our lives, in our heart, we can come to Him in humility and experience the blessings of Him.

We read here then, something kind of sums this chapter up and it is a lesson for us. "And the ark of God remained with the family of Obbedom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obbedom, and all that he had." (I Chronicles 13:14).

There is no one, I believe, that has the presence of God in their life that cannot feel the blessings of Him. Cannot feel the blessings. Because

there may be times where there is a distance and there may be times where ultimately the presence of God is a blessing. We know that the psalmist David, he said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." (Psalm 23). Just what did he mean then? He meant that the presence of the Lord as a shepherd in our life is better than all the other stuff the world has to offer. I shall not

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

May 2004

Participation in Social Activism

There is little doubt that in America today there is a serious decline in traditional morality. Although we claim to be a nation "under God", there is a clear trend away from the Christian influence which in the past formed the foundation of our social-moral outlook.

The degree to which our nation's moral structure is weakening can often be distressing to believers in Christ. The very fact that 1.5 million babies are aborted each year causes anguish in a believer's heart. Likewise, the growing promotion of homosexuality, the high incidence of venereal disease, the availability of pornography, and the general anti-Christian bias and moral wantonness in the arts and media are dismaying to those seeking to uphold biblical truth.

The rapid rate of moral decline and family breakdown may tempt a believer to become involved in social action. Distraught hearts may be drawn into the fray of public discourse, attempting to better society through various means of confronting the forces of social decline, without considering the many implications of such activity.

It may be helpful to view the present social decay from a historical perspective. Many nations have never known the influence of biblical truth as part of their moral foundation. In addition to abortion, some have practiced infanticide and left their elderly to die unattended. Moreover, in some societies, acts of public sexuality were commonplace. History indicates that war, plunder and "ethnic cleansing" took place on the soil of many nations. Political depotism, injustice and religious persecution resulted in victims being tortured, beheaded, and burned at the stake. They had no civil rights. However, we live in a democracy which retains a sense of fairness and justice and still guarantees religious freedom.

Much more importantly we should view this subject from a biblical perspective. The Lord Jesus' short life span was during a time of harsh political oppression. There was no democracy. A rigid

class system favored the ruling elite. Slavery existed along with other grave social injustices. Individuals who did not conform to the rigid standards of oppressive rulers were unmercifully persecuted.

Yet, Jesus quietly endured these inequities. He did not offer an agenda of social and political reform. He said, "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight" (John 18:36). His vision pointed beyond this short life. His focus was on that long and endless eternity; and He promised a home in heaven for all who would humbly repent for their sins and follow Him.

The mission for followers of Christ remains the same today. The primary objectives of the church are first, saving souls and then, nurturing them spiritually in the warm bond of brotherhood, so they can overcome sin and remain faithful until life's end.

Entering into the fray of social activism presents many risks for the devout Christian. Almost invariably this results in strife and contention. The Apostle Paul taught Timothy that "...the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (II Tim. 2:24). He also said that the "good soldier of Jesus Christ" does not entangle himself with the "affairs of this life" (II Tim. 2:4). The arenas of social activism are not conducive to the virtues of restraint and gentleness. Instead there are outbursts of temper and strong, self-willed expressions which bring reproach to the name of Christ. The Word teaches, "Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go" (Prov. 22:24).

Loud, boisterous and partisan demonstrations are manifestations of the works of the flesh (reveling and variance) and are in no way reflective of Christ's gentleness and lowliness of mind. Even a calm show of force (as in an orderly march) is nonetheless a form of intimidation and can cause a contentious reaction.

Perhaps one of the most distressing

changes in our society is the loss of respect for biblically-based truths. There seems to be a growing hostility toward Christian values. Many consider organized efforts to promote Christian influence as an imposition by the "religious right" which is deeply resented.

What can be done? If sincere believers seek to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:13-14), the true and gentle spirit of Christ will enable them to offer constructive and meaningful influence. First and foremost should be sincere prayers for "all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim. 2:1-2). Believers can also convey thoughtful suggestions to public officials and teachers, write respectable letters of concern to elected legislators, and record their preferences at the ballot box. Creative ideas, void of extremes, can be forwarded to an array of decision-makers. These low-key actions can allow a separated believer to exert an effective influence in society while maintaining the respect of fellow citizens in a Christ-like manner.

All power is of God (Rom. 13:1). It is He who installs and replaces political power. The Bible teaches the believer that no matter what state he is in he should be content (Phil. 4:11). We can be very thankful that even in the midst of a time of deterioration, the true believer can find contentment. We can also be comforted by the assurance that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20).

The cautious, low-key approach advocated by our church does not imply submission to any earthly authority or ordinance which would require our disobedience to God's Word. If this conflict should arise someday, we must say as Peter, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29), no matter what the cost. We can be assured that we will be able to withstand every test and trial, if we put our trust in the power of God and walk in humble obedience to His Word.



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
World Relief

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

Pointing Them Toward Christ

Children in Mexico, Jamaica and Haiti are seeing the love of Christ here on earth through the donors in the World Relief Child Sponsorship program. Your monthly donation allows each child an opportunity to hear about Christ and receive a good education. The monthly donation covers a part of the teacher's salary, school supplies, uniforms, books, a Bible and sometimes food. In Haiti, some of the children can hardly make the long walk to school and back because of being malnourished. At one of the schools, they implemented a lunch program (rice and beans) to nourish the children so they are able to study and most of all, to survive.

In Haiti this past October, the Child Sponsorship board had an opportunity to visit some MEBSH and Living Word schools. The students, teachers and administration were an encouragement to us by showing a love for the Lord and a thankful attitude. On our way down the mountain from the Zabo school we stopped at one of the sponsored students and she sang a solo for us. A little further down the mountain we stopped at another student's home and we were invited in to the home and garden. We walked through trees and plants to their the two room home (approx. 12 ft x 16 ft) and looked around. We found two books- a children's Bible Storybook and a Bible. We could not speak Creole, but the language of Jesus is common to all who know Him. As we left, the family had us wait until they could give us a dozen grapefruits from their tree.

It must seem like a dream come true for the children to be sponsored

by people such as you! The children and their needy families pray and pray for someone to sponsor them. When they open their correspondence letter from you and sometimes even a picture of you, their hearts are truly touched.



When a child is not sponsored, it costs the parents of some of the children sixty cents for one month's education. Many of the parents can not even afford sixty cents a month for their child to go to school. They also, in many cases, can not even afford to purchase one pencil for their child; therefore the child can not remain in school. When we distributed pens, pencils and candy in the Haitian schools (donated to World Relief by generous brethren), you would have thought we were passing out hundred dollar bills. For some of them, it allowed them to attend school.

Isn't it amazing, the love of Jesus? How poor, needy students can be so happy, so content, and expressing the love of Christ so much. It is a lesson for us.

Individually, we may not be able to change the social structures and injustices that cause poverty. In fact, it is unlikely that we will. Jesus said that we would always have the poor among us (John 12:8). But what we do for those students is important to each child and to the Lord. We thank

each of you for sponsoring children through the Apostolic Christian Child Sponsorship program. You are truly making a difference to these children and give them a hope for their future and most of all, pointing them toward Christ.

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord." PROVERBS 19:17

The participation from the last Silver Lining article was excellent. Thank you for your interest. To apply for a student to sponsor at this time, please fill out the following and send to the address below. A student will be assigned to you and you will be sent further information.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Phone _____

Please check preference:

☐ Haiti (\$21.00 per month)

☐ Jamaica (\$25.00 per month)

☐ Mexico (\$25.00 per month)

If possible I would prefer:

☐ Boy Age _____

☐ Girl Age _____

☐ No Preference

Child Sponsorship Office contact information:

ACWR Child Sponsorship
PO Box 36
Morton, IL 61550
Phone: 309-266-6080
e-mail: acwr@mtco.com



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

Sowing and Reaping in India

The Rural Gospel and Medical Missions of India is headquartered in Nasik, India and was founded in 1938 by Dr. B.B. Bhagwat and his wife. The Bhagwats had a heart for the people of rural India and labored in this area for over 30 years. As their health declined, they sought an organization that would serve as a trustee of their facilities and assets. On a visit to Ohio, they became exposed to the Apostolic Christian Church and recognized many practices of our church similar to the one they had established in India. Most importantly, the message of salvation was proclaimed.

After numerous inquiries and visits to other churches, they made a formal request to our Elder Body that the Apostolic Christian Churches of America become the beneficiary of their estate upon their demise. After their deaths in the early 1980's, a seven member board of directors was appointed by the Elder Body to manage the assets of the Bhagwats and provide spiritual counseling and guidance for the work in India. Numerous trips have been made by Elder brothers to India to assist in this work.

Dr. Surrendra Parkhe is the current mission administrator and also serves as pastor of the Nasik church. The mission consists of three churches located in an area 75 miles northeast of Bombay, India. In addition to the three churches located in large cities, the mission also has a number of prayer halls in various small rural villages. These locations are served by three pastors and eight evangelists who conduct regular services each week

with a varying time schedule to meet the needs of all the believers located in the rural area.

The mission has a medical arm that is served by two physicians and several nurses. Medical facilities consist of three clinics and a small hospital. A mobile medical van makes weekly visits to the rural areas. The normal procedure is to have a Scripture reading by an evangelist to the line of patients waiting to be treated.



Another area the mission serves is operating boarding homes for orphans and children of mission workers. Children range in age from 6 to 20 and are provided room, board, and clothing. They attend a nearby school in the day and then have activities and are taught stories from the Bible in the evenings. The children also learn hymns and memorize Bible verses. The goal of the mission is that each of them will learn about God and His son, Jesus Christ. It is so encouraging when they repent of their sins, become converted and serve the Lord.

One young man who came to the boarding home was Kisan Radho Khardikar. He was born into a Hindu family in a small village about 100 miles from Bombay. Kisan was the youngest of four children and very early in his life his parents and his oldest sister died. His other sister brought him and his brother to the RGMMI boarding home at Khardi. He was taught about Jesus Christ

from the house father and pastor who were responsible for taking care of the children.

Kisan developed physically and spiritually in the good environment of the Mission Boarding Home. After finishing school, he enrolled in tailoring school at Sangli which was 500 miles away from the RGMMI boarding home. He studied hard and became an expert tailor. After completing his studies he returned to the Nasik area and attended the RGMMI church located on the compound. He soon repented and was baptized in the RGMMI church. He began stitching clothes for the mission's boarding boys and also started teaching the leprosy patients in a nearby asylum.

After several years, Kisan built a small kiosk adjacent to the Mission compound on Nasik road and started a business that soon flourished. He married a young nurse and they have been blessed with three children. Several years ago his wife repented and was baptized at the Nasik RGMMI church. The Khardikar family is such a rich source of love and inspiration to the other boarding children located at Nasik as well as others they interact with. Kisan states that our Lord has been extra kind and merciful to him and his family and they are always grateful to Him.

Accounts such as this illustrate the fruit that comes when the word of God can be planted in the hearts of young and tender souls. May we continue to pray for the work of RGMMI as the spiritual workers labor in a country where Christianity faces persecution.

"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." JOHN 4:36

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

The Easter season brings with it thoughts of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, dying on the cross and His resurrection. A group of residents, who attend Sunday School at the Apostolic Christian Church of Morton, participated in the Easter program. We would all do well to be as enthusiastic presenting the old, old story as they were. They, the Morton church Sunday School children and several adult choirs, sang to the church on Palm Sunday. On Thursday evening, April 8, a Sunday School group of Jr. High aged young people from the Princeville Apostolic Christian church came to Timber Ridge to help our Activities Department and residents with Easter egg coloring. Our residents look forward to this annual event.

Recently we had a staff meeting to give us direction in our attitude while at work. It was interesting to see that our residents, co-workers, supervisors, friends and family will all respond positively to the same attitudes. We were taught to treat people in a respectful, energetic, upbeat and engaging way. When a person gets up in the morning they are able to choose their outlook towards the day. "You've gotta choose where you're going to be as soon as you get out of bed. I do consciously make that choice everyday." "Any job can be boring if you make it boring ... but if you make it fun ... Just imagine ..." "If you love your job, it's going to show. And if it shows, it is obviously going to affect somebody." "Anybody can do this. You just have to have the energy, you have to have the commitment." Righteous living is a choice we make and the Holy Spirit gives those who make this choice the grace to be successful.

JUNE birthdays at Timber Ridge, 2125 Veterans Rd., Morton, IL 61550: Dale Plattner (6/5), Christopher Rogers (6/5), Sara Baker (6/6), Aldine Winger (6/15), Harold (Donnie) Parks (6/18), Karlene Prichard (6/18), Marianne McMenamin (6/19), Janet Wilt (6/21), Kimberly White (6/23), Rebecca Wright (6/24).

At Oakwood Estate, 2213 Veterans Rd., Morton, IL 61550: Quentin Craig (6/7), Rodney Blaum (6/15).

At Linden Estate, 1000 Linden St., Morton, IL 61550: Carl Johann (6/22).

At 1001 E. Idlewood, Morton, IL 61550: Brandon Graham (6/12).

At 241 S. Minnesota, Morton, IL 61550: Sharilyn Rowell (6/19).

GATEWAY WOODS APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

Erik and Carrie Wiegand

Greetings from Gateway Woods. We are very thankful to our Master Creator for bringing us through another winter. The flowers are blooming and the forest turns greener every day.

As nature renews itself, I am reminded of how often I need to do the same. Times of conflict and trial often cloak us in a wintry grasp of loneliness, sorrow, and frustration. And yet, like the unfailing change of seasons, God's mercies are new every day and He leads us through to warmth, light, and fresh growth in Him. This cycle seems to repeat itself often and my faith is increased each time God melts the grief and stress of trials. I often observe this pattern in the lives of our young residents here at Gateway Woods. It often brings us encouragement to see them learn to trust in God.

Whatever your trial or burden is today, take heart! Don't let the winter times of your life bring you down. The spring is coming for those who love and trust in God!

Administrative Update

The spring/summer months bring about a large flow of residents to and from our campus. Please pray for the staff during this time. We recently said farewell to resident Willy D. We pray that God will continue to work with him.

We would also like to welcome Shawn R. to our Foster Care program. We trust that Shawn's foster parents will be able to work with him and show him the love and compassion of our Heavenly Father.

Bro. Erik and Sis. Carrie Wiegand have felt called to move on from Gateway Woods after faithfully serving at Gateway Woods for nearly 3 years. We wish them and their children, Savannah and Jonas, God's richest blessings as they transition into their new lives. Please see our ad in this month's Silver Lining if you feel led to consider houseparenting.

Sis. Lauretta Schafer's husband, Bro. Bruce, recently had successful neck surgery. Thank you for your prayers on his behalf. Sis. Lauretta is a counselor at Gateway Woods.

We would like to offer a special thanks to those churches that have opened their doors for us to come and make a presentation about our programs. God is using these presentations to inform and inspire our brethren about His work through Gateway Woods! We would also like to thank those churches that have invited our Gateway Woods Family Services program to come and present one of their seminars.

Our annual benefit Auction is August 21, 2004. Be looking for more information. May God richly bless you

this spring season!

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

**Athens, Alabama
Bethany Gerber**

Greetings from Athens! The weather has been very warm, the trees have leaves and the flowers look gorgeous. God's beauty surrounds us and we feel His love and support.

The spring Preschool board meeting was held here on April 17. We would like to thank each board member for the time and effort that they put into this preschool to make it what it is today. We would also like to thank the family members and friends that came with the board members. It was a nice weekend.

This month we have been talking about Easter, the color green and plants. We let the children each plant some flowers in their own pots and it is fun watching them grow. The children are so excited to see the tiniest change in the flowers from one day to the next!

We have finished working on the alphabet that we have been working on the whole school year. Now we are reviewing the alphabet and practicing for our graduation. We just started working on the graduation, so there is plenty of room for improvement, but the children are willing and eager to learn their parts.

It is hard to believe that the school year is almost at an end. Most of the older children are moving on to "big school" and are anxious to start that new adventure. I'm sure that we will cherish these last few weeks as we practice for graduation and get ready for new changes.

ALABAMA, ATHENS

Louise Hall

On March 28, Alfred Perry died.

He is the beloved husband of Elaine and brother of Sis. Corrine Thomas and Sis. Hazel Vibbert. He had a stroke and suffered for almost a month before he was called to be with God. Please remember the family in your prayers.

We have been fortunate to have had many visitors this past month. Elder Bro. Ted Witzig (Sis. Cindy, Morton, IL) had the service on Wednesday, March 24. Sunday, March 28, we had Bro. Paul Zimmerman (Sis. Loretta, Forrest, IL) and some of their family to share the Word with us. Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Sis. Frances, Wolcott, IN) was here as well on that Sunday and he had the morning service. Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH) had our service on Wednesday, March 31, and the Sunday School service on April 18. On Sunday, April 11, Bro. Jerry Bauman (Sis. Martha, Rittman, OH) had the morning service. Elder Bros. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) and Bob Walder (Sis. Gloria, Congerville, IL) held a Communion service for us on April 18. Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) was here on Saturday, April 17, for our Preschool board meeting. Other visitors include Fairbury, IL; Nashville, TN; and Akron, OH.

Our Easter program was on Palm Sunday. The children did a really nice job. It is good to be reminded of how Christ died for our sins and then rose to be with God in Heaven. What a wonderful Saviour we have!

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Ron and Ev Hoerr

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Psalm 27:1

Oh, the joy of believing! What comfort! As I write, we are giving thanks to our Lord for Bro. Ron's recovery from surgery.

We are grateful that our Junior and Senior Bible classes made the trip to Mexico to visit the orphanages March 20. What a fine way to learn first hand to help others.

March 21 was a beautiful day for the wedding of Bro. Todd Hinrichsen and Sis. Heather Labudde. Bro. James Emch and Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich conducted the service. Bro. Michael Baumann had the morning service. Their parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Sue Hinrichsen (Roanoke), and Bro. Larry and Sis. Kathie Labudde. May the Lord bless our loved ones as the Lord blends their lives.

Communion service was held on March 28. Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton) came to assist Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich in serving the Lord's Supper.

Sis. Julie Hoerr went to Ixtlan on a work team with Bro. Loren and Sis. Betsy Schrenk (St. Louis).

Our visiting ministers were Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton), Bro. Michael Baumann (Mansfield), Bro. Steve Ringger (Bluffton North), and Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City). We are so grateful for God's rich blessings.

Our hospital patients were Matt Ringger, Bro. Clarence Beyer, Bro. Ron Hoerr and Sis. Marie Beery. Bro. Ed Frauschi needs our continued prayers.

Our Sunday School Easter program was held on April 4.

Easter sunrise services were held at the home of Bro. Robert and Sis. Christine Baum. Breakfast was enjoyed by many, and there was an abundance of God's love.

Dear visiting Brethren and Friends, we enjoyed your coming and

look forward to your return.

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT

Jane Hodges

After a fellowship dinner on March 27, our members were served Holy Communion by Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton, IN) and our Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix). We thank them for their service to us and to the Lord and pray that the Lord will richly bless them and their families.

We are happy to announce the safe and healthy arrival of Ayra Rowena born on April 15 to Sis. Bethany and Bro. Dan Dubach and big sister, Adelaye. Grandparents also welcoming Ayra include Bro. Jim and Sis. Rowena Furrer, Bro. Ken Dubach (Bluffton, IN) and Jodi Holloway.

Note of Thanks:

Ed and Leslie Greenbank and Sis. Jane Hodges wish to thank those that gave their love and support to them and the rest of their family through cards, gifts and prayers after the loss of their father, Bro. Gordon (Sis. Emily) Greenbank, on April 2. Bro. Gordon had been residing at the Rittman Apostolic Christian Home for the last year. His funeral service and burial were held in Rittman, OH.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp

We wish to thank Bro. Lynn Fiechter (Bluffton, IN) for ministering to us on a recent Sunday. Bro. Lynn was traveling through Tucson with a work team headed for Mexico. We enjoyed our day of fellowship. It was wonderful to see so many young, happy faces so willing to give a week of their time in service to the Lord. May God add His richest blessing.

We will say "farewell for awhile" to Bro. Loren and Sis. Joan Knapp as they will be traveling and visiting family through the summer months (in Tucson that means until October!). We wish them safe travels and many wonderful times with family and friends across the country. Lord willing, we will greet them in the fall.

We are happy to announce the safe arrival of Bruce Allen Dienst, born to Catie and Bill Dienst. Bill and Catie are stationed in Florida so Grandpa and Grandma Kaufman (Bro. Curt and Sis. Caroline) had a long drive to the hospital! As God is ever gracious, Grandpa and Grandma made it just in time to see Bruce make his grand entrance. We are so thankful Bruce is healthy and Mommy, Daddy and baby are doing fine.

We are still enjoying wonderful temperatures in the 80's and beautiful, cool evenings and mornings. Easter weekend was actually very cool with a high in the 60's and quite a breezy day.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Robin Moser

"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

Luke 24:5-6

What hope we can have through Christ's triumph over the grave! Easter morning was a time for rejoicing as some in our congregation gathered in the foothills to have an early morning service. May we each celebrate His victory every day of our lives and remember the high price paid on our behalf.

We are thankful for visiting brothers who were willing to assist in the ministry this month including Bro. Fred Witzig (Sis. Nancy, Indiana,

Indianapolis, IN) and Bro. Ken Wuethrich (Sis. Lyn, Indianapolis, IN). In addition, Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marian, San Diego, CA) lent himself to help lead Communion service. What a blessing to share in this annual service as a congregation. It strengthens our relationship with the Saviour and each other.

Retired Elder Bro. Carl Kinsinger (Sis. Margaret) was again hospitalized this month and we are thankful to report he has returned home.

As we begin the 'summer' season early in Southern California, we welcome any who are led to visit our congregation.

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Peggy Jevremov

We are thankful for the many dear ones who have visited us this past month. Spring break seems to bring us many each year.

We had a taste of heaven on Easter weekend. For three consecutive days we found ourselves in the sanctuary of the Lord's house. First was Good Friday evening services as we were reminded of the Lord's suffering which began in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Then on Saturday evening we gathered once more to hear the testimonies of our new sister and brothers in faith, Bro. Andras Molnar, Sis. Linda Fulop (Bro. Denes and Sis. Joy) and Bro. Mika (Mira) Milovancev.

On Sunday morning we were reminded of what Christ's resurrection means for each of us. Following the afternoon service we witnessed the baptisms. Whenever souls are brought into the fold there is rejoicing. Our little congregation rejoices when we have one baptism. You can imagine the overflowing joy we experienced as we had three at one time.

Then following the church dinner, we were privileged to partake of Holy Communion. What a blessed way to end such an uplifting spiritual weekend. We want to express our heartfelt thanks to Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) and his dear wife, Sis. Judy, for coming to share this precious weekend with us. May the Lord richly bless you for the many duties you shared with Bro. Peter during those three days.

As Mother's Day approaches, may we each one remember to thank the Lord for our dear mothers, whether they are present with us or with the Lord. A godly mother is a priceless blessing from the Lord.

**CANADA
KITCHENER, ONTARIO
Ingrid Fortenbacher**

This past month we were able to spend an evening sorting clothes at Christian Aid Ministries. It was such a nice evening of fellowship that we feel like we were blessed as those receiving of our labor.

Our visiting ministers this past month were Bro. Ron Palitto (Sis. Lynell, Akron, OH) and assistant Elder Bro. Janko Papuga (Anka, Padia Yugoslavia). We were thankful to have this service translated by Bro. Costa Tomic of the Nazarene congregation.

Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) with the help of Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr (Sis. Kathy, West Bend, IA) were here to serve us Holy Communion on March 27. What a blessing for all who are able to partake of the Lord's supper.

Note of Thanks:

I sincerely appreciate the many cards and prayers sent on my behalf during my recent hospital stay. I try to keep those who pray for me in my own prayers. God bless you all.

Sis. Johanna Fortenbacher

**COLORADO, DENVER
Ann Gonglach**

At this time of year, when we celebrate Mother's Day and Father's Day, we especially remember all that our parents have sacrificed and done for us.

Those of us who were blessed to have been raised in a Christian home should be thankful for a godly heritage. Those of us who are parents ourselves are also reminded of the huge responsibility we have in training up children "in the way they should go". Doing this is not easy, "even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matt. 18:14). We must remember to teach the Words of God diligently to our children and talk of them when we sit in our house, when we walk by the way, when we lie down, and when we rise up (Deut. 6:7). We can be encouraged that it is God who has given us charge over these precious souls and that He will never leave us or forsake us; the Lord is our helper.

We were blessed with visiting ministers on the weekend of March 21: Bro. Ted Schock (Sis. Heidi, Belvidere, IL) and Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue, Francesville, IN). On the weekend of April 3-4, we were happy to witness the baptism of Autumn Hohulin (Bro. Doug and Sis. Sharolyn) followed by Holy Communion.

Elder Bro. David Graf (Sis. Barbara, Akron, OH) and Bro. Dean Messner (Sis. Wanda, Winthrop, MN) were here to serve and share this wonderful weekend with us.

The Sunday school presented us with an Easter program on Easter Sunday. Sharing God's Word with

us that day was Bro. Duane Metzger (Sis. Ruth, West Bend, IA).

Our prayers are with Kathleen Bikadi (daughter of Bro. Louis and Sis. Kathy) who was recently hospitalized and is now at home with her parents.

**CONNECTICUT
ROCKVILLE**

**Laura Virkler
Amber Reutter**

Greetings dear brethren! It has been a rather quiet month out here on the East Coast. The spring rains have descended upon us, washing away the signs of winter and replenishing life once again. This miraculous change in seasons is quite timely to the commemoration of the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior. How this time of reflection and remembrance is fuel for our souls, and a strengthening to our spirits, and a rejuvenation of hope. Our thoughts and prayers are with Sis. Martha (Bro. Clarence) Mangold, Sis. Millie (Bro. Melvin) Gerber, Sis. Frieda (Dick) Lanz, Flora (Elmer) Batz, Hilda (Ed) Kayan, Walter (Ethel) Schneider, and Sis. Gladys (late Bro. Al) Schneider, as they mourn the loss of a loved one, Ernest Schneider. May the Lord's presence be felt to each soul when in need of comfort and strength.

Our congregation was blessed with many visitors this month as loved ones have traveled many miles to spend time with their families here over Easter weekend. Our hearts filled with joy as we were able to commune one with another and speak of the blessings the Lord has bestowed upon us. The love of the brotherhood is always a strength and encouragement to us each one! We are also grateful for all our loved ones returning home from their win-

ter migrations. It is such a blessing to see their smiling faces once again amongst us! We surely missed their presence.

Jesus lives! No pow'r of night
From the Lord my soul shall sever
Sorrows may come o'er the way
Yet I'll cling to Him forever.
Light and faith I find in Thee:
This my confidence shall be.
Zion's Harp #120

May we keep this close to our hearts as we strive onward and forward toward our eternal home!

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Henrietta Meyer

We have celebrated Easter where we remember our Lord's suffering for us, His death and resurrection. We will soon be celebrating the day our country has set aside to honor our mothers; how blest if we have had godly mothers.

Our ministers this month were Bro. Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Greg Lehman (Wolcott, IN).

Our visitors this month were from Akron and Rittman, OH; Bloomington, Morton and Tremont, IL; and Nashville, TN.

Our congregation also gathered on a Saturday evening for a potluck at Phil and Mona Steffen's to celebrate the birth of Kieran Subra and the coming marriage of Bro. Adam Merkle and Sis. Jill Gramm. Our little congregation is growing.

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; afternoon service begins at 12:15.

If you are planning to visit Washington, D.C. for vacation or business, please call Bro. Adam Merkle (703) 929-7941 or Bro. Adam and Sis. Liz Hermann (703) 516-4345 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 as well. We would be happy to have an evening of fellowship and/or singing.

FLORIDA FORT LAUDERDALE Renee Mangold

We were blessed to have with us several visiting ministers this month. Visiting were Bros. Chuck Kellenberger (Sis. Debbie, Elgin, IL), Paul Zimmerman (Sis. Loretta, Forrest, IL), Dwight Stoller (Sis. Lori, Latty, OH), Ted Luginbuhl (Sis. Stephanie, Smithville, OH), Garry Bucher (Sis. Lois, Valparaiso, IN), Jim Ramseyer (Sis. Marlene, Bay City, MI) and Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Sis. Frances, Wolcott, IN). We pray that God would bless His servants for their continuing efforts in His work.

Once again we had our monthly church supper. It is a blessed time of fellowship where we always enjoy each other's company and sharing a meal together. Of course, any visitors are always welcome.

We had our Sunday School Easter picnic this month. The children had a wonderful time. It's our prayer that they will always keep with them the faith they were raised in and the memories of special times like Sunday School picnics.

Sis. Josephine Martin had a special birthday this month and the church had a surprise dinner celebration for her. We gathered at the fellowship hall for dinner and birthday cake.

We are returning to our Wednes-

day evening singing services at 7:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall for the summer.

As our winter residents leave, we pray that they will have safe journeys and that God will keep them in good health until their return.

FLORIDA NORTH FORT MYERS Mary Masters

We are so thankful to have visiting ministers with us once again this month. We would like to thank Bro. Ron Heiniger (Sis. Kayleen, Bloomington, IL), Bro. Nile Bucher (Sis. Phyllis, Bluffton North, IN) and Bro. Garry Bucher (Sis. Lois, Valparaiso, IN) for their kindness and love in sharing to us out of God's Word during their time here.

We had a wonderful Easter gathering at the home of Bro. Stan and Sis. Naomi Vogel. After a delicious meal, we enjoyed singing hymns outside on the lanai.

We have had several of our loved ones with health concerns. Please pray for Bro. Wayne Rocke, Bro. Allen Furrer, Bro. Bob Hany, and Bro. Glen Hodel that God would restore full health and healing where it's needed.

Recently, I was pondering the ten commandments and the precepts that are set forth in God's Word. It hit me that God's infinite love and mercy are at the root of these instructions so that we can experience a life of fullness, joy, and blessings. No matter how Satan "dresses up" sin, it always leads to heartache and loss. We may wonder at the harsh punishments that are recorded in the Old Testament for sin, but we must realize that these events were written for all people for all eternity as a warning.

"The Lord is not slack concerning

his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

II Peter 3:9

FLORIDA, SARASOTA **Carol Koehl**

The weekend of April 3-4 was very special, as we witnessed the testimony and the baptism of Bro. Jeremy Calame. Bro. Jeremy's parents, Bro. John and Sis. Jody Calame (Rittman, OH), brothers, sisters, grandparents and many other relatives were able to be here for this joyous occasion. We were also thankful for the efforts of Elder Bros. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) and Merle Hartzler (Rittman, OH) and Bros. Todd Stoller (Latty, OH) and Ron Heiniger (Bloomington, IL).

Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA), Bros. Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL), Ron Allenbach (Kiwona, KS) and Bill Brake (Sardis, OH) also brought us the Word this past month.

Bro. Ben Rassi (Morton, IL) was in the hospital. Bro. Ben and Bro. Glenn Price both continue to need our prayers.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA **Carol Kaufman**

We were blessed to have Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Sis. Linda, Francesville, IN) come and share the Conference letter with our congregation. We are also thankful that Bro. Jerry Bauman (Sis. Martha, Rittman, OH) along with some of his children were able to spend Good Friday evening with us. May God richly bless each one for their faithful service to Him.

It was with great joy and thankfulness that Bro. Steve Gutwein was able to announce to our congregation that Ben Stoller (Bro. Linn and Sis. Brenda) has received peace from God and looks forward to baptism. May he continue to seek to please God in all he does.

Our prayers have been with Chris and Sis. Peggy Camp in the passing of Chris' sister, Corliss (Oakridge, TN), who had been sick for quite some time. May his family continue to feel God's comfort in their lives.

Within one week's time, Bro. Keith Kaufman (Sis. Carol) injured his hand and Brian and Kelly Camp (Chris and Sis. Peggy) suffered minor injuries in a car accident. We are so thankful for God's healing touch for each of them.

The Sunday School children told us about the events of Jesus' last week, His suffering, His death and His resurrection. May we fully realize the tremendous love God and Jesus have for us.

God has richly blessed us with visitors this past month. May God richly bless you for your willingness to take time to visit. It is very much appreciated. We would love to have more visitors to fill our sanctuary and encourage us on the straight and narrow way. Please let us know of your plans to help us prepare 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. Tom Waldbeser 770-463-4788, Bro. Ted Hirstein

770-632-1287, Bro. Linn Stoller 770-631-4554, or Bro. Keith Kaufman 770-304-8335.

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

O Lord my God, when I in awe-
some wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands
have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling
thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout the uni-
verse displayed...
When thru the woods and forest
glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in
the trees,
When I look down from lofty
mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the
gentle breeze...

With awesome wonder spring has
once again come and with it the mira-
cle of growth, the warmth of the sun,
the smell of the rain and the reason of
rejoicing. Christ the Lord has risen
from the grave!

And when I think that God, His
Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take
it in -
That on the cross, my burden
gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my
sin!

Listening for their names the
children listened to Bro. Dean's mes-
sage as he incorporated each child's
names in the ABC's of Easter during
his message on Palm Sunday after
the Sunday School shared their
pieces and songs at our Easter pro-
gram. May we remember each and
every day of the year that Jesus died

for us. Will God someday call our names from the Book of Life or will our name not be written there?

Our thanks to our visiting minister, Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern, KS), on Easter Sunday.

When Christ shall come with shout
of acclamation
and take me home, What joy shall
fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim, my God, how
great Thou art!

Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) and Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) were with us to commemorate Communion. We as a congregation are always blessed by breaking the bread and sharing the wine and are united as one as we go onward together.

Bro. Sam Bachtold presented a Bible study on David's view of God and God's view of David through David's eyes. May we never take lightly the spiritual teachings we have here on earth.

Our prayers are with Trent Steffen (Bro. Dean and Sis. Carol) who is on the mend as he suffered a broken nose.

Bro. Matt Hein is hoping that soon he will be able to go to his heavenly home. Our prayers are with him as he struggles from day to day.

Although we all look forward to that great reunion in Heaven, while we are yet here on earth, our congregation is hosting a reunion for all who have once attended Belvidere church on October 16-17.

May our souls find many reasons in the coming month to sing to God!

Then sings my soul, my Saviour
God, to Thee;
How great Thou art! How great

Thou art!

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

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Isaiah 53:5

On April 4, we had the Sunday School Easter Program. We were reminded, through the songs performed by the students, of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection.

We gathered together on the evening of Good Friday to consider what Jesus went through on our behalf. We reflected on Jesus' prayer in the garden, "...not my will, but Thine, be done." (Luke 22:42). Then on Easter Sunday we rejoiced at our Sunrise Service as we remembered that the tomb was empty and Christ has risen from the dead!

We were thankful to have visiting ministers, Bro. Jeff Thames (Washington, IL) and Bro. Tim Hohulin (Roanoke, IL). We were blessed by their preaching and are grateful for their willingness to come and serve.

Our congregation rejoices with two of our converts, Melinda Metz and Charles Knapp, who have announced that they have found peace with God and would like to share their testimonies on May 15. Melinda is the daughter of Bro. Gene and Sis. Carol Metz (Roanoke, IL). We pray for God's continued grace in their lives.

We were also thankful to hear that Dustin Rabe, son of Bro. Derek and Sis. Julie, has repented and begun his walk with God. Our prayer is

"as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (I Peter 2:2)

Our dear Bro. George Stimeling has recently returned home from the hospital after undergoing heart surgery. We also pray for Bro. Bob Hany and Sis. Ellen Vogel as they have also spent time in the hospital this month. May the joy of the Lord be your strength! We pray for their continued recovery.

**ILLINOIS, BRADFORD
Steve Endress**

We were blessed with many visitors this past month. March 28 was our invite-a-guest weekend. Among our guests were ministering Bros. Warren Zahner (Rockville, CT) and Fred Funk (Morton, IL). Other visiting ministers during this month were Bros. Jerry Wagenbach Jr. (Oakville, IA), Walt Herrmann (Princeville, IL), Don Manz (Junction, OH), and Glen Braker (Princeville, IL).

We had a blessed evening partaking of Holy Communion. Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield, IL) assisted Bro. Marvin in serving the members of our church. It seems that Christ, through the bread and wine that He used, wanted to impress upon His brethren the importance of our common union. Even as grains of wheat must lose their identity in order to form bread, and grapes to wine, Christ wanted to signify to us that we must lose our identity and be knit together in love, without seam, to truly be part of His body. Without a common union, there can be no communion. May the Lord Jesus and His written Word always be the foundation of our union that we would endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Bros. Loris Stisser (Sis. Lottie) and Richard Slutz (Sis. Marilyn) have recently spent time in the hospital. We hope they have full and speedy recoveries.

We enjoyed our Sunday School's Easter program after the Good Friday service. We are thankful for the number of young families we have. It is encouraging to see our Sunday school steadily increasing in size. We hope that each one will be a part of our future church.

ILLINOIS CHAMPAIGN-URBANA

Karla Kieser

Greetings from Champaign-Urbana! This month was made extra special with the remembrance of Christ's death and resurrection. The Sunday School gave their Easter program in place of our afternoon service on April 4.

"Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Luke 24:46-47

Later on in this chapter, it talks of the witnesses of Christ's resurrection and heavenly departure and how they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continuously in the temple, praising and blessing God. This passage really struck me, as this is how I should be going about my daily life, with great joy for this gift of forgiveness and with continuous praise to God.

For those of us who are out of college and/or older and missing those "College Weekends", we were given

another chance at a weekend of fellowship and worship together. Many of us went to Gridley the first weekend of April to what was the first of what hopefully becomes a semi-annual gathering. The topic for the weekend was "Contentment" and we were privileged to hear from ministering Bros. Mark Streitmatter from Bloomington and Erik Givens from Princeville.

We thank our visiting ministers from this past month, Bros. Stephen Baner from Gridley and Dennis Kaufmann from Bloomington.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Rachel Meyer

Greetings of love and kindness from Chicago. It has been a busy month in our church and I will start with welcoming a new brother to our assembly. It is a pleasure to have Bro. Dan Currier (Goodfield, IL) worshipping with us as he pursues education to become a Physician's Assistant. We also rejoice with Bro. Daniel Messner as his engagement was recently announced to Sis. Kasey Kaeb from Roanoke. We look forward to meeting Sis. Kasey and welcoming her as well.

We thank our two visiting ministers, Elder Bro. Curt Frank (La-Crosse, IN) and Bro. Rick Plattner (Fairbury, IL). We appreciate their willingness to be used by God on our behalf. Please come again!

There were several in our congregation who received medical treatment this month. Bro. Boyd Metzger had surgery, Sis. Phyllis Anderson was also hospitalized and is now doing quite well and Hope Nenadov also had some tests which led to a good result. We are so sorry that Sis. Mabelle Welk suffered some fractures in a fall and is now hospitalized. We love each one of these dear

ones and pray God will continue to be their Healer.

God also says that He will be our Comforter. Our dear friend, Eugene Lehman, passed away just last week. He is survived by his wife, LaVirra, and several grandchildren. We have many good memories of Eugene throughout the years he and LaVirra have assembled with us.

Several others have lost loved ones within their families. Our dear friend, Mike Ryan, lost his mother this month. A loss like this is always painful but we know God hears Mike's prayers and we will pray that God will comfort him as well. Sis. Gladys Fisher's brother, Bro. Carlton Wittmer, of Eureka, IL, passed away, as well as Sis. Lucille Koehl's brother, Robert Hari, of Montana. The Bible says that we rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep, and there is a time for both. May God be with each one of you.

Lastly, we said farewell to a dear family that has assembled with us and whom we have grown to love and cherish. Bro. Mike and Sis. Gretchen Zimmerman and their children have moved to Eureka, IL. They related how God moved mightily in their lives during their time in Chicago, bringing them unto repentance, baptism and then blessing them with a family of four dear children. Their family has been an encouragement to our congregation, and we know they will bless the Eureka church as well.

As I write this, I have final exams looming before me and the time is short. I came across a quote by Victor Kiam. "Procrastination is opportunity's natural assassin." There is no time for me to waste because my opportunity to do well in my classes hangs in the balance of how proactive I am in my studies. The

same applies spiritually. Maybe you were going to write that note of encouragement, phone that sister or brother you know is having a rough time, stop by the nursing home ... you fill in the blank. Our opportunity is now. Let's not lose it and miss a blessing.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK
Susan Waldbeser
Andrea Walder

Through the power of Thy dying,
 Into Thy death, Lord, draw me;
 Let my body, all my being,
 There be nailed, Lord, with Thee;
 Calm and gentle May my will be;
 To my love give purity!

Zion's Harp #226, vs. 8

Our Sunday School Easter program was held on April 4 and we thank the children and their teachers for reminding us through their songs and verses of the great suffering Christ endured on our behalf and then of His triumphant resurrection, conquering death and grave. Then, on April 7 we had the blessed opportunity of partaking of Holy Communion. We thank Elder Bro. Charles Sauder (Tremont, IL) for being here to assist our Elder Bro. Tom Stock in this work. As we think of Jesus being the ultimate sacrifice, may we show our gratefulness by sacrificing self and yielding completely to Him each day.

We were privileged to have had several other visiting ministers this past month and we thank Bros. Rick Plattner (Fairbury, IL), Randy Mogler (Washington, IL), Dave Obergfel (Peoria, IL), Dan Moser (Elgin, IL) and Jim Kaeb (Bern, KS) for being with us and allowing themselves to be used in God's service.

Our congregation has been affected by several deaths. Our sym-

thy goes out to Bro. Vernon and Joanne Clauss in the passing of her sister, Sandra Bartter of Chagrin Falls, OH. Eldora Belle passed away this past month and we extend our sympathy and prayers to her mother, Sis. Aldean Kaufmann, and siblings, Bro. Sid and Sis. Sandy Kaufmann, Wally and Rhonda Kaufmann, Arlan and Clem Kaufmann, Bro. Wes and Sis. Lisa Kaufmann, and Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Denise Kaeb. We also want to remember Bro. Bill and Sis. Marge Rinkenberger and Bro. Ed and Sis. Marjorie Alt in the death of their brother, Bro. Charles Rinkenberger, of Congerville, IL. Our thoughts are also with his sisters - in-law, Sis. Em Eisenmann, Sis. Sal Markwalder and Sis. Laverne Kaufmann. Our friend, John Oberfeldt, passed away this month and we want to hold his children and their families up in our prayers. We extend sympathy to Bro. Art and Sis. LouElla Hari in the death of his brother, Robert Hari, of Worden, MT.

Bro. Les Walder (Sis. Dorothy), Sis. Evelyn Rudin (Bro. Ben) and Sis. Mary Bauer have spent time in the hospital recently, and we pray for God's healing on their behalf. Our heartfelt prayers also go out to three year old Lana Kaeb (Bro. Les and Sis. Christine) of Francesville, IN, and her family as she is undergoing treatment for leukemia. We pray that her health could be restored, according to God's will, and that she could be strengthened by His grace to endure the treatments. Grandparents are Bro. Elmer and Sis. MaryLou Kaeb and Bro. Larry and Sis. Jeannie Kaufmann of our congregation.

As a new couple has been joined together, we offer our prayers for God's guidance in their lives. Tim Eisenmann and Lenore Gooden of

Lenoir City, TN, were united in marriage on April 9. Tim is the son of Bro. Ken and Sis. Sharon Eisenmann.

We rejoice with Ron and Sis. Shirley Krumwiede as they welcome a new granddaughter, Torie Ann. Parents are Joe and Deanne Rothemel of Broadlands, IL.

ILLINOIS, CONGERSVILLE
Arlene Banwart

Our thanks to Bros. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS), Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL) and Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL) who brought God's Word to us when the Bradford and Princeville Bible Classes visited us. We pray friendships can be made that inspire each other toward heaven.

Our congregation welcomes two new baby girls. We pray they will come to love and serve God. Elizabeth was born April 3 to Bro. James and Sis. Carrie Tate. Jonathan and David are her older brothers, and grandparents are Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean Knapp (Forrest, IL) and Don and Marilyn Tate of Gridley. Marie Elise arrived April 12 to bless the home of Bro. Dave and Sis. Sandy Steiner. Also welcoming Marie are brothers, Samuel, Aaron and Silas, and grandparents, Bro. Melvin and Sis. Irma Walder (Champaign, IL) and Bro. Richard and Sis. Ann Steiner (Tremont, IL).

Bro. Charlie Rinkenberger, age 86, passed away April 4. We pray God will comfort his dear wife, Sis. Martha. Sympathy is also extended to their children, Bros. Mike (Sis. Pat) and Jake (Sis. Glenna), both of Congerville; Tim (Gwen) Rinkenberger of Valparaiso, IN; Sis. Mary (Bro. Byron) Schrock of Washington, IL; and Sis. Rachel (Bro. Dale) Zeltwanger of Morris, MN; to his brothers, Bros. Joseph (Sis.

Irene) of Goodfield and William (Sis. Marge) of Cissna Park; his four sisters, Sis. Fannie Wiegand of Eureka, Sis. Marie Hohulin of Fairbury, Sis. Marge (Bro. Ed) Alt of Cissna Park and Arlene (Robert) Kaehr of South Bend, IN. He faithfully served God over 57 years and was an encourager and song leader. Assisting our ministers at the funeral were Elder Bros. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN) and Art Nohl (Morris, MN).

It has been a blessing for me to write the news these last two years. We hope Sis. Rachel (Bro. Kevin) Schrock, who has offered to take the next term, will experience the same.

I was privileged to spend 19 days in Japan with Bro. Andrew and Sis. Jana Klaus helping in their home. They have seven young children and he ministers in our Tokyo church. It was such a blessing being there with their God-fearing family and yet meeting people who worshipped idols and prayed to the dead. Next to our church in Shioda are a Shinto shrine and a Buddhist temple! I would like to ask you to join in praying for Japan. Also pray for the Sunday School children that they can believe and be strong even though the parents don't believe in God. Some mothers come to the Easter or Christmas programs where the plan of salvation is taught, but seldom do the fathers come.

Pray for the church, for growth, for families to come. Pray for the young brother in church. Presently the Klaus family is the only family with young children who come to the Tokyo church. Pray for the believers, as most are the only one in their families that believe. Pray that the rest of their families could find salvation. Pray for the leaders in the churches, and the ministers. What they face is a little different than what our Elders face in the U.S.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Amy Gasser
Miriam Gasser

"For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth: so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

Isaiah 61:11

How reviving to the spirit and senses is this time of year, when even the earth awakens from winter's sleep and bursts forth with new life. Through verse and song, our Sunday School students relayed the message of salvation and the true meaning of Easter on the evening of April 4.

Bro. Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL) visited Elgin the following Sunday and served us through the Word. We thank him for his earnest labors.

Ministering Bro. Gary Anliker has experienced the power of prayer in his recovery from two knee surgeries on March 17. Just two weeks later, he was able to stand at the pulpit after the main Wednesday evening service. On the other hand, we are saddened that Sis. Mabelle Welk fractured her pelvis in a recent fall. We pray the Lord will comfort her and grant relief and healing as much as possible.

We extend sincere sympathy to Bro. Gene (Sis. Libbie Ann) Moser and Sis. Lois (Bro. Frank) Schock in the death of their sister, Sis. Marie Feucht (Latty, OH), on April 12. May the Lord comfort them and their families in this time of loss.

Finally, we want to thank Bro. Tim Sauder (Leo, IN) for coming to give a Sunday evening presentation on the mission and services provided by the Gateway Woods Children's

Home. It was interesting and very informative.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Cindy Stoller
Lisa Metzger

On April 3 we appreciated the opportunity to partake of Holy Communion and ponder the great sacrifice our Lord Jesus is for us. Elder Bro. Don Braker (Kansas City, MO) was present to help Elder Bro. Ervin in this sacred work. We thank them for their willingness to serve.

Other visiting ministers include Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Congerville, IL) and Bros. Ned Stoller (Alto, MI), Rick Plattner, Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL), Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL), Wayne Wiegand (Goodfield, IL), Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO) and retired Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL). We are thankful to the Lord for providing edification for us through these servants.

Our precious Sunday School students brought the valuable message of Easter to us in verse and song on April 7. We really appreciate their efforts.

We extend a warm and hearty welcome to Bro. Herman and Sis. Mary Baer who have recently made Eureka their home. They formerly assembled with the Princeville brethren. May they feel at home here. As we welcome the Baer's, we say "farewell" to Faith Nenadov (Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn) who has relocated to Phoenix, AZ. We are sad to see her go, but truly wish her God's provision.

We have had several loved ones who have gone to their eternal reward. We wish to offer our sincere sympathy to Sis. Mabel Wittmer in the death of her husband, Bro. Carlton. His sisters from Eureka are

Sis. Dorothy Hartter and Sis. Delores Martin. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Leroy Fehr as he has said his last "goodbye" to his dear wife, Sis. Wilma. Sis. Edna Fehr (Bro. Leroy's sister) is also in our prayers during this time of sadness.

Bro. Melvin Stock (Cissna Park, IL), father of Sis. Bev Hartter (Bro. John), passed away recently. Also, Dan Kaufman, the brother of Sis. Elsie Zimmerman (Bro. Earl), has departed from this life. May the Holy Spirit be near to provide comfort to all who are grieving.

"Weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice." We are happy for Bro. Jake and Sis. T. Anne Wiegand in the joyous arrival of their baby daughter, Sara Louise. Her excited sisters are Anna and Emma. Grandparents are Dale and Sis. Freidora Wiegand and Bro. Craig and Sis. Trudy Rudin (Forrest, IL).

Our congregation has been wonderfully blessed with more souls seeking the Lord in repentance. We are so thankful for Ryan and Kandi Carr (Bro. Tim and Sis. Donna Carr and Glen and Sis. Becky Bauman). "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." (Psalm 118:23). We wish them God's sufficient grace.

Our medical and hospital patients were Sis. Velma Leman (Bro. Gerald), Bro. Ernie Knecht (Sis. Judy), Bro. Jim Vierling (Sis. Linda), Bro. Wayne Getz (Sis. Mary), Bro. Clarence (Mitz) Lehman and little Logan Kupferschmid (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Julie). May God watch over them and grant them healing.

Bro. Lowell Stoller and Sis. Molly Schmidgall were united in marriage on March 28. Their parents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Jane Stoller and Bro. Paul and Sis. Kris Schmidgall. Another wedding took place on April 11. Bro. Phil Wettstein and Sis. Kristin

Wuthrich (Bloomfield-Pulaski) were married as one in the Lord. Their parents are Bro. Jake and Sis. Mary Wettstein and Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Lora Wuthrich. We rejoice with them and hope for each couple blessed lives together.

We were very happy to hear of the engagement of Bro. Clint Metzger and Sis. Kayla Steffen (Congerville, IL). Their parents are Bro. Harlan and Sis. Shirley Metzger (West Bend, IA) and Kent and Sis. Beth Steffen (Congerville, IL). May God blend their lives together according to His perfect will.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

Joann Zehr

Tammy Hinrichsen

Greetings from Fairbury! Our congregation has been blessed by many visitors this past month. With all of the company, we have had several ministers come and serve us; they include Bros. Tom Troxel (La-Crosse, IN), Glen Braker (Princeville, IL), Frank Sauder (Roanoke, IL), Ralph Garber (Morton, IL) and Jim Kaeb (Bern, KS). Thank you for worshipping with us!

We rejoice that Bethann Kafer (Bro. Ben and Sis. Carol) answered the call of our Lord and has begun her repentance. Our prayers are that God will give her the grace to continue and grow on the firm foundation which is Jesus.

As our country struggles with those who would redefine marriage, it is uplifting to witness a couple joined together in Holy Matrimony as God created. April 4 was the wedding day of Sis. Amy Schlatter and Bro. Grant Hartman. Their parents are Sis. Sherri and the late Bro. Mark Schlatter from Forrest and Bro. John and Sis. Rosemary Hartman from Fairbury. We rejoice with them

and wish this couple the blessings of God. Also, believing that God has brought them together, Bro. Derek Rassi (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Diane) and Sis. Rebecca Stoller (Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill) from Forrest announced their engagement. May our Lord bless this couple as they prepare for their wedding day and their future together.

Babies bring such joy to our hearts and homes. On April 12, Bro. Ivan and Sis. Cinda Fehr welcomed a baby girl, Kara Lynn. Kara's big sisters are Sis. Shannon and Traci, and her big brothers are Ryan, Tyson and Stan. Grandparents are Bro. Glenn and Sis. Kathryn Fehr and Bro. Allen and the late Sis. Carolyn Zimmerman.

On Good Friday evening our brothers, sisters and friends came together to remember the suffering that Jesus went through on our behalf. Then Easter Sunday we all rejoiced in the knowledge that the grave was empty and Jesus had triumphed over death! God be praised!

ILLINOIS, FORREST

Lori Dotterer

Jill Wenger

Through the earthly institution of marriage we are reminded of our spiritual wedding with Christ. Let us adorn ourselves with simplicity of faith and works that we may present ourselves as a chaste bride for Christ.

Exchanging wedding vows were Sis. Amy Schlatter (Sis. Sherri) and Bro. Grant Hartman (Bro. John and Sis. Rosemary), Fairbury, IL. May their lives be enriched as they walk the pathway together as husband and wife. We enjoyed the many visitors here for the occasion.

We rejoice with Sis. Rebekah Stoller (Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill) and Bro. Derek Rassi (Bro. Dennis and

Sis. Diane, Fairbury, IL) as their engagement of marriage was made known. We wish this young couple the blessings of the Lord.

Flourishing youth, Thou our hope
and our fond expectation,
Hark to the voice that is calling in
kind invitation.

Zion's Harp #168

Our Bible Class Sunday School students experienced a fulfilling day when the Oakville, IA, Sunday School students came to spend the day with them. This brought visiting ministering Bros. Greg Lehman (Wolcott, IN) and Dan Moser (Elgin, IL) into our midst to be with our young people that Sunday.

"Out onto Calvary's Hill, where Jesus died I'll go..." Our Sunday School children took us out to Calvary's hill on Good Friday evening through song and verse. None of us were left on the hillside wondering, for Christ arose triumphantly over death and grave to give us life eternal.

Bringing to us the bread of heaven through the Word were Bros. Dennis Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL), Art Mueller (Belvidere, IL), and Darren Fehr (West Bend, IA). Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH), Bros. Brian Huber (Francesville, IN), DeWayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN), Al Schambach (Remington, IN), Paul Gasser (Akron, OH), John Hartman and Paul Kilgus (Fairbury, IL) were here to rejoice with Sis. Amy and Bro. Grant on their marriage in the Lord. We thank these brothers for lending themselves in the Lord's service.

We sympathize with Sis. Marie Hohulin and family with the death of her son-in-law, Robert (Karol) Righter, and brother, Bro. Charlie (Sis. Martha) Rinkenberger, of Congerville. May this dear family

feel the comfort of the Lord.

We also rejoice with Scott Schmidgall (Bro. John and Sis. Janet) in his beginning in repentance and with Mary Edinger as she has found the grace to become more dedicated in serving the Lord. We pray that they may feel God's love and mercy in their spiritual journey.

Spending time in the hospital this month was Sis. Marian Rieger.

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Heather Hohulin

Rita Bauman

Sis. Wilma Knapp was hospitalized this past month, and is now home. Sis. Marian Wiegand who lives in the Eureka Home has fallen and broken her hip. We pray that both of these dear sisters may feel God's strengthening hand.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Joe Rinkenberger (Sis. Irene) in the loss of his brother, Bro. Charlie Rinkenberger, Congerville. Though there is sorrow, there can also be rejoicing as he has laid down his cross and picked up a crown of victory.

We thank the Lord for willing servants who minister the Gospel to us. Much appreciation goes to Bros. Erik Givens (Sis. Deb, Princeville, IL), Stephen Baner (Sis. Donnalou, Gridley, IL), Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction, OH), Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL), Brian Huber (Sis. Jacki, Francesville, IN), Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue, Francesville, IN).

Many enjoyed and appreciated the "Bringing Them Up" seminar April 2-3 by Bro. Jeff Thames (Sis. Brenda, Washington, IL). We thank him for his efforts.

Good Friday, we had the privilege and joy to partake of Holy Communion. Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL)

helped with this occasion.

The general sobriety and quietness surely brings into view the suffering and dying of the Saviour on the cross. May we continue to focus on the cross daily and thank our loving Saviour for paying the ransom for our sins and giving us our only hope for salvation.

On Palm Sunday, our hearts were warmed as we listened to our Sunday School students recite their verses and sing Easter songs. They sang with such enthusiasm that it pricked our hearts and reminded us that we should all look within ourselves and appreciate the precious blood that was shed on our behalf.

The engagement of Sis. Elizabeth Good (Wendell and Sharon) to Bro. Michael Meister (Bro. Mike and Sis. Dorothy, Tremont, IL) was shared with us on April 11. Also making wedding plans are Sis. Mandy Schwenk (late Bro. Doug and Sis. Myrna) and Bro. Hans Schmidgall (Bro. Steve and Sis. Christine, Peoria, IL). May God lead, guide and direct them as they prepare for this next step in their life.

Note of Thanks:

We sincerely wish to thank all who remembered us with prayers, cards and visits with the passing away of Wes' brother, Dan Knapp. God's blessings to each of you.

Bro. Wes and Sis. Millie Knapp

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY

Perry A. Klopfenstein

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

Proverbs 13:14

"But the path of the just is like the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Proverbs 4:18

Wise counsel is surely given in God's Word. The Proverbs of Solomon (and others) are a source of inspiration and good guidance as we exist and in a whirl of social forces. To submit ourselves to truthful influences will help preserve us spiritually. The Word indicates that wisdom and understanding are much better for us than silver and "fine" gold. Notice the Word mentions not only gold, but "fine" gold. And the pathway of the just is one of illumination, as the true Light shines on our pathway(s). These are things to rejoice over.

We were happy to have Bro. Ed Sauder here on April 14 to speak on a topic he termed, "Revelations 101," a primer on end times. Bro. Ed spoke only of what the Scriptures said, and his remarks were enlightening. The most important doctrine of the end times is "readiness"; that is, the Lord will come as a thief in the night, and we are wise to make our hearts ready to meet our Maker. We all pray that multitudes would turn to the Lord before it is forever too late.

Bro. Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN) was a guest minister here on Easter Sunday. We are thankful for his labors, and may God bless him.

Sis. Martha Stoller has had a serious illness. Sis. Lucille Stoller is still residing, temporarily, at the Eureka home after a fall. Bro. Mike Butikofer will face back surgery. Bro. Louis Kieser has been ill, and is struggling. Surely, we pray for all who suffer in the body, and may God restore them to health, according to His will. We are thankful for doctors, nurses and medicines for those who

are ill; and thankful as well who for any who are involved in some way with the sick.

By the end of April most all the corn was planted in our area. Good weather allowed for fairly early planting. Good prices have prevailed, and prospects look good, but it is all in God's hands.

A daughter, Grace Alexandra, was born to Doug and Sis. Miriam "Mim" Funk Kath. This occurred on March 12. She has a brother, Brett, age 9. Grandparents are Bro. Virgil "Bud" and Sis. Shirley Funk, Congerville, and John and Jane Kath, Carlock. The only great-grandparent is Viola Kath, Carlock.

Jacob Levi Funk was born to Bro. Roger and Sis. Bonnie Funk on March 19. Jacob has twin siblings, Madison and Joseph, age 20 months. Grandparents are Bro. Virgil "Bud" and Sis. Shirley Funk, and Harold and Theresa Maubach, Henry.

Sis. Mim Kath is a sister to Bro. Roger Funk. Thus, the two aforementioned babies are first cousins and were born a week apart.

We wish much grace to these parents as they raise their children in godly ways. Today's society offers many challenges (and undermining tendencies) as children grow up.

Sis. Jill Gramm was married to Bro. Adam Merkle of Washington, D.C. The wedding took place at Leo, Indiana, where she works. Her parents are Bro. Donald and Sis. Rosie Gramm, Gridley; and he is the son of Dr. George and Karen Merkle, Bluffton, IN. We wish this dear couple many blessings, and are glad they sought God's will in this important step.

Note of Thanks:

Thank you for the prayers, cards and gifts I received following my hip

surgery. We have a precious fellowship for which I am so thankful! God bless all of you.

Sis. Dorothy Ringger

ILLINOIS, MORTON

Julie Bahr

Christie Zeller

We had the reading of the Memorandum on March 17. Elder Bro. Charles Hemmer (Sis. Marian, Peoria, IL) shared in this work.

Three more dear souls have professed peace and are ready for baptism. They are Scott Warner (Sis. Debbie), Trisha Sauder (Bro. John and Sis. Peg), and Tracy Zimmerman (Bro. Joe and Sis. Barb). We rejoice with them and their dear families and wish them God's continual grace and strength.

On April 4 we had our Easter Program. What a blessing it was to hear once more the story of our dear Saviour's death and resurrection through song.

Our Sunrise Breakfast service was held Easter Sunday, April 11, at the Fellowship Hall. Bro. Bob Pflederer brought us the Easter message.

We also were privileged to hear the wedding engagement of our Bro. Paul Grimm (Bro. Mark and Sis. Becky) to our Sis. Elizabeth Koch (Bro. Stan and Sis. Jennifer) on Easter Sunday. May God continue to bless this dear couple.

Family Worship was held April 14, at the Fellowship Hall. A presentation was given by Bro. Tim Sauder (Leo, IN) and Bro. Jeff Thames (Washington, IL) on Gateway Woods.

Sis. Janice Schubert (Peoria, IL) passed away. She is a sister to our Sis. Doris (Bill) Michel.

Bro. Carl Wittmer (Eureka, IL) passed away. He is a brother to our

Bro. Walt (Sis. Alma) and Bro. Maurice (Sis. Ella) Wittmer.

Daniel Kaufman of El Paso passed away. He is a brother to our Bro. Bill Kaufman and Gladys Carius. May God comfort these dear families.

Our other visiting minister for the month was Bro. John Rowell (Sis. Nelda, Burlington, IA). May God continue to bless these dear brothers for their endless labors of love.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA Lou and Marjean Lonteen

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

I John 1:5

Our congregation was blessed to have visiting ministers: Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley) ministered to us on March 21 and Bro. Ron Kipfer (Bluffton) on April 4.

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

I John 1:7

On March 20 we heard the testimony-of-faith of three dear souls who have sought the Lord in repentance and have found peace with God and man. They were baptized on March 21. They are: Sis. Sandy Fritzenmeier (Mark and Sis. Pam Fritzenmeier), Bro. Mike Jones, and Sis. Kelsey Klopfenstein (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Carol Klopfenstein).

"..Again, a new commandment I

write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."

I John 2:8

On April 4, Palm Sunday, our congregation was blessed to come together to partake of Holy Communion. We thank Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer and our ordained deacon Bro. Ken Hoerr for serving us.

Easter Sunrise Service was held at the fellowship hall on April 11. Everyone enjoyed a lovely breakfast, various songs by the choir, a duet, and congregation singing. Bro. Jim Hoerr shared uplifting resurrection scripture with us.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake."

I John 2:12

Rebekah Davidovics (Bro. Fedi and Sis. Ruth) has made known her desire to walk with the Lord. We pray for her and her family as they are in Europe.

"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."

I John 3:11

New babies:

Treyton Blake Graham was born to Bro. Blake and Sis. Rachel (Conrad) Graham on February 24. Grandparents are Bro. Richard and Sis. Jeanette Graham (Princeville) and Bro. John and Sis. Jane Conrad (Cissna Park).

Gabriel Joel Reinhard was born on March 12 to Bro. Tim and Sis. Joan Reinhard. He is welcomed home by Sis. Kristen, Sarah, Bethany and Hannah. Grandpar-

ents are: Bro. Paul and Sis. Rhoda Meister and Bro. Dan and Sis. Delores Reinhard (Croghan, NY).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

I John 4:18

We're thankful the Work Team that went to Rio Bravo, Mexico, on March 12 - 21, has returned safely home. They were blessed to work with building, painting, landscaping, and carpentry. They experienced many blessings of the Lord working together. Their theme was: Ezekiel 22:30, "Stand in the Gap". Eighty-two people went from six churches and served twenty-three deaf children who are learning sign language and learning about Jesus and His love for them.

"...Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

I John 4:17

On April 10, sixty-two team members left Peoria for Rio Bravo, Mexico. They are scheduled to return on April 17. We trust God is blessing each one for their efforts of love in this work.

"...Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

I John 4:22

Prayer requests:

Sis. Marie Hohulin as she recovers from knee surgery.

Ron Blumenshine as he recovers from hip surgery.

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."

I John 4:2

Notes of Thanks:

Thank you to my dear friends for your cards, flowers and memorials acknowledging the passing of my son, Bro. Doug Schwenk.

Sis. Ida Schwenk.

Thank you for your prayers, cards, and expressions offered on my behalf during and since my heart surgery.

Bro. Matthew Moser, Sr.

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

I John 4:4

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

Phyllis Knobloch Crystal Streitmatter

During the Easter Season, we sang this beautiful resurrection hymn: "Songs of praise to Thee are swelling, From thousand thankful voices telling; Oh, holy Hero evermore! Death is now sweet for believers; In Jesus we are heaven's heirs; The sting of death is now no more. For after the grave's rest, Jesus shall call His blest, Child awaken! Child awaken! He went before thru heaven's door, And brings us to His Father's house!" (Hymns of Zion #45)

The angel of death has visited our congregation quite a number of times this year already. The Martin family is mourning the loss of their sister, Sis. Janet Schubert (Sigfried) of Peoria, IL. Sis. Marian Hinshaw also passed from this life and our

sympathy goes to her family. Both were residing at Apostolic Christian Skylines. Sis. Sadie and Viola Streitmatter are mourning the loss of their brother, Glenn Streitmatter. May God comfort these dear ones.

Our visiting ministers this past month included Bros. Mark Streitmatter (Bloomington, IL), Brad Eisenmann (Chicago, IL), Brad Gudeman (Bradford, IL). Additionally, Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen was in our midst for a Wednesday evening service on April 14. We were reminded of the importance of putting off an earthly perspective, and putting on the heavenly.

Our dear Sis. Esther Kieser (late Bro. George) has been patiently suffering through a lengthy illness and hospital stay. Sis. Sadie Streitmatter and Bro. Leonard Menold (Sis. Marie) are also suffering ongoing illness. We pray that the grace of God will sustain them during this difficult time.

"I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."

Psalms 91:2

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

Joan Leman Doris Fischer

The angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repents, and we rejoice as well! Three have come in repentance recently: Jordan Schroeder (Bro. Duane and Sis. Rachel), Leah Bertschi (Bro. Rich and Sis. Bev) and Olivia Leman (Bro. Ben and Sis. Janet).

Our congregation was surprised when three engagements were announced on March 28. Sis. Betsy Braker (Bro. Jim and Sis. Marge) is engaged to Bro. Jake Zimmerman (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Mary Beth);

Sis. Kasey Kaeb (Bro. Bill and Sis. Patsy) is engaged to Bro. Daniel Messner of Washington (Elder Bro. Ron and Sis. Pam Messner); and Bro. Marc Knepp (Bro. Rich and Sis. Janet) is engaged to Sis. Stacie Rumbold of Peoria (Bro. Bob and Sis. Marge). In addition, Andrew Hoffman (Bro. Mike and Sis. Nancy) and Elizabeth Pantaleone (Dominic and Andrea) have announced their plans to be married, as have Sarah Knepp (Bro. Rich and Sis. Janet) and Luke Wiegand (Ed and Joanne). We offer our congratulations and our prayers for each of these couples.

Bro. Brad and Sis. April Hartter welcomed Alaina Ann to our world on April 6. Clayton and Gabe are pleased to have a baby sister, and grandparents, Bro. Bob and Sis. Chris Hartter and Bro. Doug and Sis. Gerry Kruse (Morton), are thankful too.

We appreciated having Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO) and Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield) visit and share our pulpit. And we're grateful for Elder Bros. Alfred Bahler (Wolcott, IN), Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield) and Wayne Banwart (Champaign) assisting in serving us Communion on Palm Sunday. Our service was a sacred time of remembrance of the suffering Savior and fellowship as a family of believers. We're thankful for your willingness to serve us.

The juniors and seniors took their talents and their spring break – as well as a group of parents and their Elder – on a work team to Jamaica. They returned with reports of a productive week, safe travels, and more than a little fun. Their labors are a blessing to the Deaf School, and they experienced the blessing of the bonds of fellowship.

While news from a far country is refreshing, this report doesn't cap-

ture the deep emotions of each event reported: the freedom of a convert's sin being lifted, the relief felt by the parents of a new convert, the faith-filled progression of an engagement in the Lord, the joy of a new baby, or the sorrow of seeing a loved one pass on. Each line represents the answer of many prayers, both by the individuals named, and by relatives and church family. We truly are a body that "Rejoices with them that do rejoice, and weeps with them that weep." (Romans 12:15)

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

Heather Rassi

LaVonne Wagenbach

We were thankful for the privilege of sharing Holy Communion in remembrance of our Lord's suffering. We appreciate our Elders and especially Elder Bro. Ted Witzig (Morton, IL) for his efforts on our behalf. Other visiting ministers this month were Bros. Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL), Ed Sauder (Roanoke, IL), Jim Butikofer (Iowa City, IA) and Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL). May God bless them for their efforts.

We wish Bro. Kerry Baer and Sis. Kelly Koch God's richest blessings as they begin their married life together. Their parents are Ray Baer of Morton and Sis. Janna Baer of Bradford, and Bro. Dave T. and Sis. June Koch.

The announcement engagement of our Bro. Michael Meister and Sis. Elizabeth Good (Goodfield, IL) was made known to our congregation. We rejoice with them and their parents, Wendell and Sharon Good (Galva, IL) and Bro. Mike and Sis. Dorothy Meister. May God's blessings be upon them as they prepare for their upcoming marriage.

Our prayers are with hospital patients, Sis. Jane Kaufmann (Bro.

Dale), Bro. Walter Aberle (Sis. Vera) and Katie Schaefer (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Tammy). We are thankful that they are now at home recuperating.

We sympathize with the family of Doris Miller as she was laid to rest. Her children are Russell Miller (Norma), Duane Miller (Cindy), Elaine Staff (Randy) and Mary Jane Foote. Also, one brother, Dale Musselman (Melva) of Morton, IL.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

Marcia Koch

Dianne Wyss

Several new babies have joined our congregation this past month. Matthew Brian Boles to Dan, Dawn and big brother Zachary Boles. Grandparents are Bro. Harvey and Sis. Sharon Martin and Joan Boles and the late Dennis Boles. Bro. Harvey and Sis. Sharon were blessed with yet another grandbaby, Anna Elise Friederichs. Baby Anna's parents are Scott and Lisa Friederichs. Her brother is Alec and paternal grandparents, Dick and Sandy Friederichs. Bro. Phil and Sis. Jessica Fritz welcome Wesley Thomas into their home. Siblings are Amber, Holly and Benjamin. Grandparents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Carol Schick and Bro. Ed and Sis. Sally Fritz.

As we just experienced the blessing of Easter, we give thanks to our Lord and Savior for His mercies and goodness. We thank our Sunday School children and their teachers for telling us the Easter story through song at our annual Easter program.

We thank Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Sis. Michelle, Philadelphia, PA) for assisting with Holy Communion. We also appreciate his willingness to serve from the pulpit on Palm Sunday. Thank you to Bro.

Duane Rocke (Sis. Bonnie, Minneapolis, MN) and Bro. Wayne Laubscher (Sis. Gloria, Cissna Park, IL) for ministering unto us.

Sis. Mary Schrock's (Bro. Byron) father, Bro. Charlie Rinkenberger, from Congerville has gone to his eternal reward. May the Lord add His comfort.

We continue to pray for Bro. Ron Kellenberger (Sis. Carole) as he continues with treatments up at Mayo Clinic. Sis. Louise Teubel (Bro. Ed) also spent time in the hospital this past month.

Our Bro. Daniel Messner was engaged to Sis. Kasey Kaeb from Roanoke. Their parents are Elder Bro. Ron and Sis. Pam Messner and Bro. Bill and Sis. Patsy Kaeb. May the Lord add His many blessings!

April 18 was the wedding day for our Bro. Grant Hangartner to Sis. Martha Strahm from Bern, KS. Parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Karen Hangartner and Bro. Wilfred and Sis. Verona Strahm. We welcome Sis. Martha and pray their marriage will be filled with the Lord's goodness!

INDIANA, BLUFFTON

Amber Steffen

Elizabeth Frauhiger

"For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee."

Psalms 86:5

We rejoice with a new convert who found this forgiveness in the Lord. Kreigh Aschliman (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Beth) made his beginning on April 13. Our thoughts and prayers go with him and his family as he begins his new journey.

We are also prayerful for our new

engaged couples. Bro. Brian and Sis. Deb have announced the engagement of their daughter, Sis. Nichole, to Bro. Tony Raber, son of Bro. Bruce and Sis. Mary. Our prayers are also with Bro. Mark Reinhard (Bro. John and Sis. Pam) and his fiancé, Sis. Angie Beer (Bro. Fred and Sis. Pat) from Milford.

The Bluffton congregation has welcomed several new faces in the last month. Bro. Jay and Sis. Rhonda Grube recently adopted three lovely children from the Ukraine. Their names are Joel, Reesa and Renae. Our prayers are most certainly with the children as they adjust to a new family and an entire new way of life.

We were blessed with three new bundles of joy in our church this month. Bro. Vince and Sis. Brandy Pfister welcomed their first baby girl on March 20, Lillian Marie. She is also welcomed by loving grandparents, Bro. Kendall and Sis. Sandy Ringger and Al and Becky Pfister.

Bro. Tom and Sis. Marilyn Baumgartner lovingly welcome their new granddaughter. Ava Katherine, born on April 6, is the daughter of Mark and Grace Baumgartner.

Rachel Bree was born to Bro. Nick and Sis. Leah Baumgartner on March 30. She is welcomed by her grandparents, Bro. Ted and Sis. Jane Habegger and Bro. Keith and Sis. Ruth Baumgartner. Our congregation prays a blessing on these new additions to each family.

With prayerful support, our church lifts up the many in the hospital this month. Bro. Dwight Gerber (Sis. Lucille) is struggling against his battle with cancer. Also in the hospital are Rick Gilliom, Bro. Paul Schladenhauffen (Sis. Millie), Sis. Carmon Bertsch (Bro. Mike) and Bro. Bob Reimschisel (Sis. Louise). Our prayers are with all these and

their families.

Nolan Barger joined the Lord on Sunday, April 11. Our prayers are with Bro. Gary and Sis. Sharon Barger and their extended family in the mourning of their father.

We are also prayerful for the family of Sis. Mary Moser as she went Home to be with the Lord on Friday, April 2. She left behind three sons, Steve, Dallas and DeWayne, and one daughter, Diane Wolfe.

Josephine Meyer, sister of Sis. Justine Baumgartner, passed away recently. Our sympathies go out to her loved ones.

Finally, we're very thankful and prayerful for the continued self-sacrifice that Bro. Joe and Sis. Denise Maller are showing for the Lord. We pray for them constantly as they strive towards their calling in Rio Bravo, Mexico.

INDIANA BLUFFTON NORTH Tiffani Schladenhauffen Darren Drayer

Greetings from your fellow laborers at Bluffton North. On March 20 we had the blessing of partaking in Holy Communion. Elder Bros. Ed Schwartz (Sis. Jeni, Bluffton) and Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Oakville, IA) joined us in the services.

We rejoice with Bro. Keith and Sis. Kay Steffen as their daughter, Jenna, has turned to the Lord in repentance. What a joy to see another soul embrace the truth of the Gospel.

Bro. Ryan and Sis. Sarah Corkwell have been blessed with a daughter, Elsa Rose; she joins a brother, Wyatt. Her grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Mary Jo Troxel and Robert and Telida Corkwell.

Our ministering Bro. Carroll and Sis. Louise Gerber recently celebrated 50 years of marriage. Their

mutual devotion to God and to each other is a great example to us.

Bro. Dan Keiser (Sis. Lora) spent time in the hospital this month. Our love and prayers are with him and his family.

On April 4 our dear Bro. Dave Roberts (Sis. Carolyn) passed away. We extend our sympathy to Sis. Carolyn and their son, Bro. David Roberts (St. Louis). Bro. Dave will also be missed by two brothers, Lawrence and Philip Roberts. Bro. Dave had a deep love for Christian singing, and it comforts us to reflect on the fact that he is now living out the words of the songs he cherished:

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

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE Jessica Murray

We express our thanks to Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Deb) for sharing the Word with us this past month. The Topical Bible Study was the focus of what our church needed to prepare for the upcoming events. Prayer was the topic and it seemed like it was in high demand as we had many ups and downs this month to pray about for strength and guidance.

With much prayer, and preparation from our Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein and our retired Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman, the church had a wonderful evening of Communion. As a congregation and as individuals, renewing ourselves with the Lord is such a refreshing feeling.

That feeling seemed to stay with

us as we were able to gather for services on Good Friday, and then be together early Sunday morning for Sunrise Services to reflect on that time in our Savior's life when He gave His all for our sins. This was then followed on Sunday afternoon by our dear children telling the Easter Story through song and verse. What an inspiring day it was, and we continue to praise God for all He has done for us.

Our prayers have been with those who were in the hospital this past month. Sis. Lorna Putt spent some time in the hospital and is now home but is still in need of many prayers. Our Bro. Walter Culp (Sis. Valera) is now residing at Parkview Haven after being in and out of the hospital for quite some time. Our prayers will continue to be with both of you. Many prayers are said, not only in Francesville, but from coast to coast and nation to nation. The Lord is in control and hears each and every one of them. Even in times when we don't understand why, we still know His way is the best and that He will guide us through the toughest times. We find this to be helpful when little ones are suffering and families go through major changes in their lives. Our Bro. Les and Sis. Christine Kaeb and their family are going through this, as their youngest daughter, Lana, is in the Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis. Lana, a vibrant three year old, is battling Acute Leukemia and Bacterial Meningitis. As we continue to keep Lana and her family in our prayers, we must also remember to pray for strength for the doctors, and that they seek the Lord first in their lives also. Our love, prayers, and support are with you always. May God give you the strength when you feel weak.

Our prayers are with our Bro. Nate and Sis. Sara Huber as they are

serving in Toga, West Africa, for a few months. They are working in the Third World Health Care Elective Medical Hospital, serving patients medically and spiritually. May the Lord bring you back safely and keep you safe while spreading His good Word. Our Sis. Joy (Bro. Bob) Huber has been in the hospital while they are working in the Magdalena, Mexico, area, starting an Orphanage there. Sis. Joy is recovering, but needs many prayers. You are under the care of the greatest Physician of all. We know that God is in control and leave it in His hands.

We give thanks as we see how God had answered many prayers by bringing Clint Wuethrich home from Iraq as he was there serving our country. Clint is the son of Bro. David and Sis. Mim Wuethrich.

Bro. Phil and Sis. Amber Leman have answered a prayer as they welcomed a baby girl into the world. Camille Rose is greeted at home by her big brother Ethan. Grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Sandi Ward, and Bro. Doug and Sis. Margaret Leman. May the Lord bless you and your family.

Our adult choir traveled to Goodfield, IL, for a blessed weekend of fellowship and singing praises to God. What an opportunity to show thanks and love for the Lord. All are thankful to have had a safe and uplifting weekend.

INDIANA INDIANAPOLIS Debbie Anliker Gail Bradford

Among our extended Christian family there are cares and concerns experienced by family members. We respond to these by praying for healing and resolution, by loving contact with those in trouble or sorrow, and

by physical acts of kindness.

This month we prayed for seriously ill little Lana Kaeb, for her parents, Bro. Les and Sis. Christine (Francesville), and for the medical personnel who are attending her in Indianapolis. We also prayed for Bro. Dave Roberts, now living in St. Louis, whose father, Bro. David Roberts, of Bluffton North passed away suddenly.

While a loving family can help in many ways, the ultimate source of solace is our God and His Son, Jesus Christ. We struggle to understand why things happen when and as they do. Our first recourse must be to God, as we fall on our knees and cry, "I don't understand this, Lord, but I trust in Thy perfect will."

Family members often help each other with tasks, too. This month Bro. Dick and Sis. Jeanette Graham traveled from Illinois to help "beautify" our church. Their daughter and son-in-law (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Doreen) and grandchildren live here.

Our beloved Sis. Edye Mayer celebrated a milestone birthday recently. Some of her family joined her for the happy day.

We are the frequent beneficiaries of visiting ministers. This month, the following brothers shared God's Word with us: Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi, South Bend), Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Sis. Leonda, Leo), Bro. Ken Lawson (Sis. Sharon, Dallas, TX), Bro. Erik Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL), Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL) and Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL). The latter two served Communion to us on the Saturday after Easter Sunday.

Remembering the Passion of our Lord and taking Communion are two of the most intense and powerful moments in the Christian's year. We listen to exhortations to follow God's

Word and gain courage from our Lord's suffering and resurrection. Being in communion with God and with each other as we share the bread and the wine reminds us that we are indeed a family, with God, the Father, as our head. Our commitment should be to obey Him and love each other as He commands us.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Hebrews 5:9

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

Out onto Calvary's Hill,
Where Jesus died I'll go.
To hear the words He speaks,
To see Him in His woe.
Zion's Harp #89

We were thankful to have the opportunity to reflect again on Christ's suffering and death on the cross for us. On April 2, we spent the evening together in Holy Communion. We pray that each one of us may have felt God's nearness and have been encouraged on in our walk of faith. We pray that God will bless visiting Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL) for sharing this time with us.

On Palm Sunday, our Sunday School children shared with us the Easter story in song and poems. We thank each of them for their efforts. It is always special to listen to our young children recount the story of Jesus' death and resurrection.

We also want to thank Bro. Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandy, Alto, MI) for his willingness to share the Word with us.

Bro. Brad Frank (Elder Bro. Curt and Sis. Lyla) had surgery on his

hand earlier this month from an injury sustained in a farming accident. We are thankful his hand is recovering, and that he is doing well.

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

Spring is here, flowers are blooming, birds have returned, colts, calves and lambs are in the pastures, seed is being sown. It reminds us of God's promise that "As long as the earth shall stand, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

Bro. Alan Schambach was one of our visiting ministers who reminded us of the importance of worship and fellowship.

Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer helped our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter serve us Communion. They emphasized what a privilege it is to partake of the Holy sacrament. They also reminded us that it is a commandment and that we should prepare ourselves.

Bro. Dan Koch reminded us of the wonderful value of prayer. It is the right way to start and end the day as well as our meals. Bro. Dan has never ministered to our congregation before, but we surely felt God's Spirit among us.

We rejoice with Sis. Angie Beer (Bro. Fred and Sis. Pat) as she is engaged to be married to Bro. Mark Reinhard (Bro. John and Sis. Pam). We wish them God's richest blessings.

Everett Price, who recently lost his wife, Sis. Leona, spent some time in the hospital. He has now returned home and is feeling better. Everett is 90 years old and needs our prayers and encouragement.

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

Our dear Sis. Angie May has gone to her final resting place with the Lord. She passed away April 2. She was married to the late Hollis May who passed away in 1987. Our sympathy goes to her children, H. Jeffery May of Grayslake, IL; Angela May and Deborah DelHoyo of Los Angeles, CA; and Stefanie Nyffeler of St. Gallen, Switzerland. Also surviving are her eight grandchildren. She will be greatly missed, for she was dearly loved.

We had our annual Easter program on April 4. All of the Sunday School students did a wonderful job bringing forth the joyful message that Christ is not in the tomb, He is risen and is calling us to be a part of His kingdom. Thank you to the teachers and parents who helped make it a special day.

We thank Bro. Ken Weerts (Sis. Myrna, Cissna Park, IL) for his effort in sharing the Word with us.

We rejoice with Sis. Rachel Virkler (Bro. Stan and Sis. Beth) in the announcement of her engagement to Bro. Craig Langhofer (Bro. Marty and Sis. Lavilla, South Bend, IN). Our prayers are with them as a wedding day is being planned for August 8.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND **Melisa Gerst** **Stacey Feller**

The following news was inadvertently omitted for the April issue of the Silver Lining:

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and

hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son."

Colossians 1:12-13

On Sunday evening, March 7, we gathered together to share Holy Communion. We thank Elder Bros. Curt Frank (Lacrosse, IN) and Dave Graf (Akron, OH) and their wives for traveling to be with us and assist with this blessed sacrament.

Sis. Sharon Flis recently experienced the loss of her father, Benjamin Karkiewicz. Sis. Sharon has spent many hours patiently and lovingly caring for him during his failing days. We express our deepest sympathy to Sis. Sharon, her son Bro. Ben, and daughter Ann Marie, and the entire family during this time of sorrow.

Bro. Ned and Sis. Heidi Stoller (Alto, MI) and their family were willing to come to assist on our pulpit recently. We were encouraged to come to the Lord with the simple plea for His mercy and for spiritual vision in this temporal world. Our thanks to Bro. Ned for sharing the Word.

In recent months, our small congregation has been blessed with babies and news of expected babies for which we are very thankful. Bro. Tim and Sis. Melisa Gerst and daughter Aelyse welcomed baby Joseph Aaron into their hearts and home on March 22. Grandparents are Bro. Lon and Sis. Sandy Butikofer (Elgin, IA) and Bro. Joe and Sis. Connie Gerst (Iowa City, IA). May the Lord bless this family with much joy and wisdom as they raise up their children in Him.

News for the May issue:

Our congregation extends thanks and appreciation to the visiting ministers who labored on our behalf this past month. They were Bro. Walt Rager (Sis. Sharon, Toledo, OH) and

our Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN). A blessed Easter sunrise service was held April 11 followed by a bountiful breakfast prepared by the brothers. An Easter program presented by the Sunday School children was enjoyed by all.

We rejoice with Bro. Craig Langhofer (Bro. Marty and Sis. Lavilla) as his engagement to Sis. Rachel Virkler (Bro. Stan and Sis. Beth, Remington, IN) was made known to the congregation. We wish them God's richest blessings as they prepare for marriage and their life together.

Our prayers and love go out to our ministering Bro. Wayne Lehman and his family as he is currently hospitalized. We plead for the Lord's healing mercies if it could be in His will. Our prayers are also with Bro. Man Huyn as he is in the midst of a month long journey to see his family in Vietnam. We pray for his safe travels and return home.

**INDIANA
WEST LAFAYETTE
Diana Houston
Nettie Haab**

Our visiting ministers this past month have been Bro. Ron Bollier (Sis. Edie, Indianapolis, IN), Bro. Tom Troxel (Sis. LuAnn, LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Robert Meyer (Sis. Ann, Bluffton North, IN), Bro. Dan Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN), Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi, South Bend, IN), and Bro. Gary Tonner (Sis. Diann, Bluffton, IN). We appreciate their willingness to travel over the miles and bring us God's precious Word.

On Palm Sunday, our Sunday School children told us about the "Gift of Hope" and the true meaning of Easter. What a privilege these children have to learn about Christ's sacrifice and His resurrection that

all might be redeemed. In all the commercialization, our stores seem only to carry items about the Easter bunny on this most holy of holidays.

Believing it is God's will that their lives be joined together, Sis. Angie Beer and Bro. Mark Reinhard's engagement was announced. They are both currently attending Purdue. Sis. Angie's parents are Bro. Fred and Sis. Pat from Milford, IN, and Bro. Mark's parents are Bro. John and Sis. Pam from Bluffton, IN.

**INDIANA, WOLCOTT
Heidi Bahler
Lisa Furrer**

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth ... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven ..."

Matthew 6:19-20

We rejoice with the angels in Heaven as Kimberly Lehman (Bro. Greg and Sis. Mary Beth) has answered God's call to follow Him.

Our Bible Class and their parents returned from a work trip to Mexico. It was a time of spiritual growth and getting to know and love others while laboring for the Lord.

After several weeks of being home bound, Joshua Furrer (Bro. Troy and Sis. Lisa) is able to be about and return to school. Another example of God's healing mercies and the power of prayer.

On a Wednesday evening, Bro. Allen Stoller (Sis. Susan, Bluffton, IN) brought to us a Bible study jointly with the Remington congregation. Thanks for sharing God's Word with us.

On Good Friday, all ages put on their new spring clothes and told of our Saviour's crucifixion and resurrection. What a wondrous story, especially when told by "little ones"

with faces all aglow with the love of Jesus.

What a blessed weekend we had when two dear souls were baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Maria Lehman (Bro. Greg and Sis. Mary Beth) and Austin Harris (Mike and Sis. Nancy Scott) told us in their testimony and then showed us in the baptismal water of their love for the Lord. Assisting our Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler were Elder Bros. Tom Klotzle (Sis. Jody, Altadena, CA) and Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN). Other visiting ministers were Bros. Neal Widmer (Sis. Kris, West Lafayette), Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL) and Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandy, Alto, MI).

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord..."

Psalm 127:3

Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karla Bahler welcome a new grandson, Ethan Lowell. Ethan was born April 14 to happy parents, Bro. Mark and Sis. Marcy Graf (Akron, OH).

Our dear Sis. Marge Hofstetter had eye surgery this month. May she feel the prayers and love of those who miss seeing her in church and God's nearness during this time.

IOWA, BURLINGTON

Laurie Schulz

Brenda Schulz

This month we were blessed to hear the testimony of our new sister, Krystal Knapp (Bro. Brian and Sis. Lorna). Helping our Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall in this work was Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Congerville, IL). We thank these brothers for their time.

Other visiting ministers this month were Bros. Dale Banwart

(Wolcott, IN), Tim Zimmerman (Lamont-Gridley, KS), John Steiner and Dale Frank (Oakville, IA). May God bless these brothers for their willingness to serve.

We are thankful that Sis. Rosie Obermann (Bro. Bill) is at home recovering after being in an auto accident.

Note of Thanks:

Thank you to each one who remembered us with cards, money, visits, prayers, or in any other way during the hospital stay, at Prairie Ridge Care Center, and in the passing of our sister, aunt, and great-aunt. May God richly bless you for your love and kindness.

The family of Sis. Ella Wagler

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

"The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come..."

Song of Solomon 2:12

What a blessing, each spring, to see the drab brown grass return to its healthy green color, the empty tree branches become full with green leaves, the daffodils, dandelions and the return of the robins. Each spring God allows us to witness this resurrection of new life in nature, as we are also reminded of the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour. I am reminded of the words of a song that says, "Beyond the dark and dismal tomb there are dwellings of light."

"Anew, Lord, we are bound to Thee." What a blessing and encouragement to sing these words after partaking of Holy Communion. But, realizing our continued need for grace, we continue singing the next

verse, "Lord, lead us then by Thy strong hand as pilgrims through this desert land."

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

What a joy to witness the surrender of a soul to the Saviour's calling, by turning their back on the ways of the world and seeking God's will and direction in their lives. After hearing her testimony of faith, we welcomed our new sister in faith, Maria Butikofer (Bro. Lon and Sis. Sandy), into the fold of believers. "A Christian through Christ has her liberty won!"

May God richly bless each of our visiting ministers for lending themselves in the Lord's service. Elder Bro. Wayne Fehr and Bro. Wayne Grimm (both of West Bend, IA), Bros. Joe Gerst and Jim Butikofer (both of Iowa City, IA) and Bros. Wayne Wiegand and Jeff Grimm (both of Goodfield, IL).

IOWA, IOWA CITY **Diana Butikofer**

Bro. Joe and Sis. Connie Gerst are grandparents again. Joseph Aaron was born to Bro. Tim and Sis. Melisa Gerst (South Bend, IN) on March 22.

Bro. Bob and Sis. Barb Fehr and their daughter, Sis. Lana, recently moved here from Philadelphia, PA. We are very happy to have another family here and welcome them into our Iowa City congregation.

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

March 20 was the wedding day chosen by Ethan and Trixie Metzger. Parents are Bro. Wes and Sis. Esther Moser and Bro. Harvey and Sis. Mary Metzger. Visiting ministers here on that weekend were Bros. Virg Metzger (Chicago, IL), Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN), and Larry Bahr (Fort Scott, KS). Jaci Larson and Daniel Moser were also married on March 20. Jaci's parents are Deb and Jerry Larson. We extend our congratulations to these newly married couples.

We have two couples who are making plans for upcoming weddings. Rachel DeHaan (Bro. Tim and Lois) is engaged to Steve Hartman; and Trisha Larson (Tedd and Sis. Diane) is engaged to Tyler Susie.

Mallory Sue Gramstad was welcomed by Bro. Kjert and Sis. Michelle, Korbyn and Jalyn on March 31. Bro. Pete and Sis. Susan Van Wyhe are her grandparents. Sis. Zelma Knobloch is Mallory's great-grandmother. On April 15, Ryan and Jodi Heyer were delighted to receive a healthy baby girl, Isabelle Marie. She has three brothers at home, Kyle, Kaleb, and Isaac. Grandparents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Jean Heyer and Sis. Iola Knobloch is her great-grandmother.

Our Communion service was held on April 3 with Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH) assisting our Elder Bro. Dennis Warner in this most serious remembrance. We wish to thank Elder Bro. Ken for being with us for services on Sunday as well.

Our sympathy and prayers are with the family of Sis. Marie Feucht (Latty, OH) as we heard of her death on April 12. Sis. Marie lived in Lester all of her married life but had moved

to be closer to her daughters, Sis. Paulette Sinn and Sis. Joy Sinn. Family in our congregation includes Sis. Martha Feucht, Sis. Emma Gerber, Paul and Jo Feucht, Sarah Feucht, Ruby Feucht, Sis. Martha (E.A.) Feucht, Sis. Emma Feucht and Bro. Phil and Sis. Donna Mogler.

Bro. Ron Kellenberger, Bro. Jake (Sis. Alice) Wulf, and Bro. Bill (Sis. Leona) Wulf were hospital patients this month. It is our prayer that they can regain a fair measure of health and strength. We also think of Sis. Martha (E.A.) Feucht and Bro. Lawrence Wulf as they are undergoing treatments.

We welcome Mark Dietrich (Bro. Jim and Sis. Joanne) as he has moved here from Oregon to work in our area.

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

II Cor. 5:17

On April 17, we gathered to hear the proving service for Troy and Gwen Metzger. Elder Bro. Gerry Hertz (Sabetha, KS) was our visiting Elder for this joyous occasion. Then on Sunday we witnessed their baptism and welcome them in as brother and sister in our Lord. May they strive daily to be true and faithful to their calling. Other visiting ministers for this weekend were Bros. Vernon Wettstein (Congerville, IL), John Steiner (Oakville, IA), Darrell Stoller (Bern, KS), Darren Fehr (West Bend, IA) and Beirne Messner (Morris, MN).

Anita Knobloch (Bro. Terry and Sis. Elaine) has expressed her feeling of peace with God and man. This good news was shared with us on April 18.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

Proverbs 1:7-9

As we remember Mother's and Father's Day, let us meditate on this beautiful teaching from the Word of Life.

IOWA, OAKVILLE **Sharla Wiegand** **Rosalie Wiegand**

To break Thy bread we now have gathered,

In covenant to drink Thy wine;
As brethren we unite together,
That unto death we might be Thine.

This promise we, with heart and will;

Give grace our promise to fulfill.

Zion's Harp #25, vs. 2

We gathered as brethren on March 27 to remember the supreme sacrifice of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Elder Bro. Don Braker from the Kansas City congregation came to help serve Holy Communion to us. As another hymn writer said, "We must remember Thee!" (Hymns of Zion #301).

On March 9, Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Pulaski, IA) and our Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall shared the Memorandum with the Oakville and Burlington congregations. It is a blessing to come together and to have our pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance. We thank all of our dear Elder brethren for their labor and prayers on our behalf.

Happy first-time parents are Bro.

Brian and Sis. Heidi Schmidgall. God blessed them on March 19 with a beautiful baby girl named Leah Jo. Grandparents are Bro. Keith and Sis. Tonya Lanz and Elder Bro. Jon and Sis. Julie Schmidgall. May the Lord give them godly wisdom in raising their little daughter in His ways.

**IOWA
BLOOMFIELD/PULASKI
Barbara Schock**

“Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.”

On March 20, we held Open House for our new church building in Bloomfield. We enjoyed having many visitors from the community, especially those who are in the assisted living apartments across from the church. They have said many times how they enjoyed watching our church being built. Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor, MO) was here for the day on Sunday. We thank him for lending himself to the service of the Lord on our behalf.

Now it is accomplished! I'm no longer mine;
Lord, I will forever and always be Thine,
For Thou hast created and purchased me too.
Baptized with Thy Spirit, Thou makest me new.
Zion's Harp #209 vs. 1

On March 27-28, we were able to listen to the testimony of Eric Wuthrich (Bro. Ken and Sis. Lora) on Saturday night, and on Sunday, witnessed his baptism. We joyfully welcome him into the fold as our brother in faith. Elder Bro. Gerry Hertz (Sis. Ellen, Sabetha, KS) was here to assist our Elder Bro. Doug in this

wonderful work and we thank him for his work.

On Palm Sunday, we were able to listen to the Sunday School children as they told and sang of the death of our Lord and Savior. May we always remember what happened there at Calvary.

On April 6, a bundle of joy, Rose Evelyn, entered into the family of Bro. Jeff and Sis. Angie Birkner. Welcoming her home are big brothers Justin, Jaden, and Harrison. The happy grandparents are Roy and Sis. Evelyn Metzger (Bloomfield / Pulaski, IA).

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall become one flesh.”

Genesis 2:24

On Easter Sunday, April 11, we were blessed with the opportunity to witness the marriage of our Sis. Kristen Wuthrich (Bro. Ken and Sis. Lora) and Bro. Phil Wettstein (Bro. Jake and Sis. Mary) of Eureka, IL. May God richly bless this couple as they begin their life together in the Lord. Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Sis. Charlene, Goodfield, IL), Bro. Brad Funk (Sis. Laura, Garden Grove, IA) and Bro. Randy Mogler (Sis. Evie, Washington, IL) were here for this special weekend.

As a minister asked once, have we ever thought about the timing of Christ's death? Is it an accident that He died during Passover, at three o'clock when the sin offering was slain? Was it an accident?

Graduating this year from High School are Jenny Schock (Bro. Dale and Sis. Teresa) and Bro. Eric Wuthrich (Bro. Ken and Sis. Lora). Graduating from college is Sis. Kristen Wettstein (Bro. Phil). May God be with each of these graduates

as they begin a new chapter in their life.

We welcome Bro. Bill Wuthrich back to our area as he has moved here from Eureka. We're thankful to have him back. Our thoughts and prayers are with Georgia (Joe Dean) Wells as she has been in the hospital and recovers at home. She is missed as she is not able to assemble with us as often as she would like.

As we approach Mother's Day, may we all remember to thank our mothers for the sometimes seemingly thankless job that they are undertaking. May God bless each of them!

**IOWA, WEST BEND
Betty Wirtz
Lori Skoglund**

“Mother is a Word Called Love”
Mother is a word called Love
And all the world is mindful of
The love that's given and shown to others
Is different from the Love of Mothers ...
For Mothers play the leading roles
In giving birth to little souls,
For though “small souls” are heaven-sent
And we realize they're only lent,
It takes a Mother's loving hands
And her gentle heart that understands
To mold and shape this little life
And shelter it through storm and strife ...
No other love than Mother Love
Could do the things required of
The one to whom God gives the keeping
Of His wee lambs, awake or sleeping,
So Mothers are a “special race”
God sent to earth to take His place,
And Mother is a lovely name
That even Saints are proud to

claim.

—*Helen Steiner Rice*

We extend belated congratulations to Gregg Barker and Joyce Fehr who were married on September 20, 2003, in Elgin, IA, and reside in Hammond, WI. May they enjoy a lifetime of love and contentment. Their parents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Charlotte Fehr and Mr. and Mrs. DeWayne Barker of Elgin, IA.

Hospitalized this past month were Aaron Massner (Bro. Darin and Sis. Twila) and Kara Fehr (Bro. Jason and Sis. Angie). Mike Van Wyhe was a surgical patient and his wife, Amy, was also hospitalized briefly. All are home and doing well. Marie Fisher is thankful to be home, but still needs our prayerful support as she has on-going health problems. Those of us who enjoy good health certainly should be very thankful.

Palm Sunday we enjoyed Easter hymns sung by our Bible Class. We can only pray that the words in these hymns have sunk deeply into their hearts and that they will always remember what the Lord has done for all mankind.

Our sympathy goes out to Sis. Judy Schmidt (Bro. Jerry) in the loss of her sister, Florence Mauck, Vancouver, WA. We also extend sympathy to the five sisters – in – law of Adeline M. Wirtz Spencer of Nora Springs, IA: Lucille Wirtz, Sis. Hulda Wirtz, Sis. Betty Wirtz, Beverly Wirtz and Marguerite Wirtz. Adeline was the last survivor of the Bro. Jacob and Sis. Anna Wirtz family.

JAPAN, SHIODA

Eiko Nozawa

Late in March our real flowering season starts. First, cherry blossoms. Then peaches and plums follow; peaches in pink, plums in white.

During this beautiful time, we had visitors.

On April 4, Bro. Andrew and Sis. Jana Klaus brought Sis. Arlene Banwart (Congerville, IL) and Sis. Grace Klaus, along with their children. The number of Shioda church attendants was doubled on this Lord's day, which added more power to singing praises to God.

Sis. Elisabeth Nagy was also with us this first Sunday of April. She arrived on April 2 and stayed in Shioda until April 15, when she headed for Tokyo to spend some time with Tokyo brethren. Sis. Elisabeth from beautiful Switzerland saw the beauty of those blossoms around here.

Even though we look different, speak different, live different, we still can feel one in the same Lord. What a wonderful blessing that is!

Annual Easter morning sunrise service started at 6:30 in a small look-out park at the foot of the mountains. I couldn't attend, but those who were there worshipped the risen Lord together, feeling the excitement of this morning about 2000 years ago.

JAPAN, TOKYO

Jana Klaus

Springtime in Tokyo means beautiful blooming cherry blossoms all throughout the city and a time of new beginnings as the new school and work year begins. These are two very nice things, but for us Christians, springtime means something even more important and wonderful — the celebrating of our Lord's death on the cross and miraculous resurrection. With joy, we celebrated on Easter Sunday with our morning Easter service followed by the afternoon Sunday School Program. The main focus is on the children, but re-

ally our whole church participates with Bible reading, ladies' singing, and other presentations. The children did so well this year with saying their parts in both English and Japanese and singing in both languages also. Most are Sis. Marie Inoue's English class students so it gives them a chance to speak English in front of a crowd.

The glorious message of Easter was brought forth very plainly, so we hope and pray that understanding was given and hearts were touched by the Lord to all those who attended, including many of the children's mothers.

We felt privileged and blessed to have Sis. Elisabeth Nagy come all the way from Switzerland (originally from Hungary) and worship with us on Sunday, April 18. Several years back, she heard a tape of Elder Bro. Akito Inoue telling of his life and Japan when he was in Budapest, Hungary, and ever since then, she had wanted to visit Japan. We are so thankful the Lord opened the door for her to come for 3 weeks, visiting both churches and spending time with some of the believers throughout the week. We admire her courage and her willingness to be a shining witness for the Lord wherever she goes. God bless you richly, Sis. Elisabeth! We will not forget you!

On a personal note, we, the Klaus family, are so thankful to report that Sis. Susie Katanic (originally Akron, OH, now Denver, CO) has accepted the call to serve in Japan for three months as our helper and support to the church. We truly praise God for providing first, Sis. Arlene Banwart (Congerville, IL) for a few weeks, who was such a blessing to our family and to the church, and now Sis. Susie. It is our prayer that her time would be very blessed.

KANSAS, BERN Sheri Edelman Sally Strahm

Little babies are miracles from God! Bro. Dayton and Sis. Wanda Menold welcome Thadd James. Amber is now a big sister. Grandparents are Bro. James and Sis. Lou Menold and Bro. Rodney and Sis. Arlene Grimm of the Sabetha congregation.

March 21 was the wedding day for Bro. Gale and Sis. Belinda Kellenberger. We rejoice with them and wish them God's richest blessings as they walk the path of life hand in hand. Their parents are Bro. Darrel and Sis. Gloria Stoller and Bro. Gene and Sis. Marian Kellenberger of the Sabetha congregation.

God calls servants to speak the Word from Sunday to Sunday. We are thankful that we were blessed with visiting ministers this past month. Visiting us were Bro. Brandon Emch (Sis. Maria, Kansas City, MO), Bro. Tom Leman (Sis. Marlene, Denver, CO), Elder Bro. Gerry Hertz (Sis. Ellen) and Bro. Brandon Plattner (Sis. Rhoda) of the Sabetha congregation.

Our prayers go to Bro. Dan Edelman as he spent a couple days in the hospital.

Our congregation hosted an invite-a-couple the weekend of March 27-28. It was a blessing to enjoy the fellowship and be with those of our precious faith.

The Bern congregation partook of Holy Communion April 4. We thank Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Sis. Roberta, Smithville, OH) and our neighboring Elder Bro. Gerry Hertz (Sis. Ellen) for being with us. Good Friday services were held with the Sabetha congregation. May we remember what Jesus so willingly did as He died on the cross for our

sins.

Good Friday

Hill of Golgotha, a place of the skull,
Grim in its mission of hate,
The worst of all criminals were taken there
Where lingering death was their fate.
Death on the cross! The most dreaded words
Prisoners of old ever heard.
So cruel was the sneer and jeer of the crowd
As the stripping and hanging occurred.
This was the sentence of Jesus dear —
As the crowd so angrily cried.
Though totally innocent and loving still,
To be whipped and crucified.
Oh! The awful pain and weight He feels,
The cross too heavy to bear,
For it's loaded down with mankind's sins —
Yes, all of our troubles and care.
But love has triumphed and ever will,
No grave could hold Him long,
The angels came and He arose,
Having conquered death and wrong.
This is the Savior in whom we delight,
To serve, to praise and to love.
He gave His all. If we do the same,
We may join His glory above.

Our thoughts and prayers go to Sis. Lillian Esslinger as she is now residing in the Apostolic Christian Nursing Home. We pray God will be by her side during this change.

May we remember our mothers on Mother's Day! As our mothers have brought us into this world, nurtured us and daily cared for us, may we be ever so grateful and thankful for our loving God-fearing mothers.

As the school year is almost to a close, we think of our graduates and pray God will guide them and direct them in the decisions that lie ahead. Graduating this year as high school seniors are Jason Kaeb (Bro. Paul and Sis. Joan), Tara Rokey (Bro. Joe D. and Sis. Kathy), Whitney Wilson (Warren Lee and Laurie) and Amy Edelman (Bro. Rodney and Sis. Jolene).

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT Ethel Smith

Greetings to all our Apostolic Christian churches.

On March 24 we partook of the Holy Communion sacraments in remembrance of the death and suffering of our dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Anew, Lord, we are bound to Thee,
Through Thy blest sacrament,
which we
Partook, that joined in heart and hand;
To Zion's realm and Holy Land
We journey on...
Zion's Harp #200

"Thus united and in concord, Let us walk the path of life..." How wonderful it is to be renewed in spirit and feel the love of the Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father in each brother and sister. Elder Bros. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Lawrence Luthi (Lamar, MO), along with their wives, shared this blessed event with our congregation. We pray the Lord will richly bless them.

We were so privileged to host a group of about 50 young people. It is such a blessing to a small congregation to have this fellowship and witness our young people working together to provide for the weekend. Bro. David Marquart (Taylor, MO) was the guest minister. Bro. Tim

Hohulin (Roanoke, IL) had the afternoon services. We were so bountifully fed from the Word of God. We pray God will bless them and their wives for their labor of love.

Bro. Kim Sutter (Taylor, MO) spent Sunday with us. He stated it was his first time to visit Ft. Scott. Bro. Kim related that while we were having a moment of silent prayer before morning worship, that he could hear the Sunday School children singing in the background, "The way of the Cross leads Home." It touched his heart with this thought, "There is no other way but this..." Isn't this so true, there is no other way but this, the way of the Cross leads Home. We certainly thank Bro. Kim and Sis. Vonette for their visit.

We had some very cold weather right before Easter, but we awoke to a very Sunny Easter morning. Bro. Don and Sis. Aleta Banwart hosted a sunrise service and breakfast Sunday morning. The Sunday School presented a beautiful program of song and verse over the noon hour. Bob and Betty Lemon hosted a potluck for the whole church that afternoon. It was a very blessed day of fellowship in remembrance of our Lord Jesus, the risen Lord and Saviour. Let us remember that our body will be returned to earth but our spirit will live forever. Where will we spend eternity? This is the most important choice that we will ever have the privilege of making.

KANSAS, KIOWA **Jenny Stewart**

Spring is here and summer is just around the corner. It is a wonderful time of the year when new life is all about us.

We were so blessed to have several visiting ministers among us this month: Bro. Ed Fritz (Washington,

IL) and Bro. Cory Metzger (Wichita). Thank you for your message and the time you took to visit our congregation.

The angels were rejoicing along with our congregation as friends and brothers and sisters attended the baptism of Sis. Chelsie Bahr (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Janice). It was a special day for all. Thanks to Elder Bros. John Lehman (Bern) and Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley) for your help and support throughout the weekend.

Our prayers are with Sis. Mildred Farney as she was in the hospital this month. May God grant her strength. Sis. Marie Tucker is recuperating very well from her back surgery. Our continued prayers are with Bethany Hamilton (Sis. Sandra) for her illness.

KANSAS **LAMONT-GRIDLEY** **Eileen Bahr**

Grandparents' blessings this past month are: Bro. Steve and Sis. Dorothy Schrader – March 18: Niklaus Edward Schrader, son of Bro. John and Sis. Sara; Bro. Bill and Sis. Susan Emch – March 17: Dillan Grant Emch, son of Brent and Lisa; and on April 2, Anna Mae Emch, daughter of Bro. Brandon and Sis. Maria.

Thank you, Bro. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO), for ministering to us and also bringing Sis. Maria and baby Anna to visit us.

Tonya Edelman and John Mooney have announced their engagement and approaching marriage on September 4. Bro. Albert and Sis. Mara Jean Edelman and Peggy Mooney and the late Alfred Mooney are their parents.

KANSAS, SABETHA **Jeanelle Plattner** **Dawn Strahm**

March 21 was a special day for Bro. Gayle Kellenberger (Bro. Gene and Sis. Marian) and Sis. Belinda Stoller (Bro. Darrel and Sis. Gloria) as they became husband and wife. We certainly wish them God's blessings as they begin a new chapter in their lives as husband and wife.

With thankful hearts, we welcome Bro. Wayne and Sis. Carrie Grimm into our precious brotherhood. What a blessing to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of these two dear souls the weekend of April 3-4. May we all continue to encourage and pray for our two new lambs.

Addison Marie Grimm has added much joy to the lives of first-time parents, Bro. Kurt and Sis. Hannah. Happy grandparents are Bro. Doug and Sis. Jeryl Grimm and Bro. Guy and Sis. Lynette Koehl (Morris, MN). Bro. Loren and Sis. Jeanne Edelman as well as Laura, Tristan, and Deborah welcome Kaden Andrew into their hearts and home. Kaden's grandparents are Sis. Marjorie Edelman, and Bro. John and Sis. Cornelia Aberle. Bro. Rod and Sis. Arlene Grimm also have a new grandson, Thad James Menold (Bro. Dayton and Sis. Wanda, Bern, KS). Sis. Lois Grimm is the great-grandmother of Addison and Thad. May God's blessings be with these families as they love and care for their new bundles from heaven.

Our visiting ministers this past month included: Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH), Bro. Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL), and Bro. Doyle Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN). Many thanks to each one for their labors of love in the service of our God. We extend a special thank you to Bro. Andy Stoller for his wili-

ness to deliver our Communion Exhortation.

We say a special thank you to all our willing workers as our church received its annual spring cleaning. It truly is a blessing to be able to work together as a church family to keep God's House neat and tidy.

Note of Thanks:

I want to thank my thoughtful friends and relatives for the birthday wishes and also I appreciate all the prayers on my behalf. God bless each of you.

Bro. Walter Strahm

KANSAS, WICHITA

Emma Miller

We have two births to announce for our congregation. Rochelle Dawn Sandahl was born March 1 to Candice and Scott Sandahl. Her maternal grandparents are Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Ruth Long and her maternal great - grandparents are Bro. Milton and Sis. Lillian Bowers.

On March 25, Niklaus Edward Schrader was born to Bro. John and Sis. Sara Schrader. His brothers, Hans and Stafen, welcome him home. His grandparents are Sis. Kathleen Gallatin and Bro. Steve and Sis. Dorothy Schrader.

Bro. Phil Bowers has been bedfast and has had to lie on his back during this time. Bro. Max Reimschisel reported that they had created a way for his reading material to be anchored above him so he could read in that position. Phil was especially anxious to help his nephew with his homework, Bro. Phil continues to be an inspiration to us all.

Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Morris, MN) and Elder Bro. Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, IL) and their spouses, Sis. Sandra and Sis. Jane, spent the past weekend with us in

Wichita in order that we could partake of Holy Communion. We truly appreciate the effort it takes for these dear brothers and sisters in faith to travel the miles for our benefit.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON

Betty Baltic

Barb Huber

As the gardener tills the soil and plants the seed, so the Master Gardener, our Heavenly Father, continues to work in His garden, the lives of His children, cultivating His prized fruit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23). As we allow the fruit of His Spirit to grow and develop in our lives, we reap the bountiful blessings of His work. We have been recipients of His work resulting in many blessings this past month.

March 27 was a special evening when we were privileged to partake of Holy Communion and remember our dear Saviour who shed His blood, allowing His body to be broken for each of us. Our Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Sis. Roberta, Smithville, OH) was assisted by Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sis. Linda, Sardis, OH) in serving us the Lord's supper. We pray God's blessing upon these dear Brothers for being willing to be spent on our behalf.

Elder Bro. Andy Stoller also shared a slide presentation of the World Relief mission work in Eastern Europe. A potluck was provided adding a special time to the evening of fellowship together.

"...Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."

Hebrews 1:7

What a high calling our ministers have! We are so grateful to all the visiting ministers who traveled many miles to expound unto us the Word of God. May the Lord richly reward and bless them and their families for their efforts and labors of love. We wish to thank Bro. Brian Huber (Sis. Jackie, Francesville, IN), Bro. Wally Ramsier (Mansfield, OH), Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH), Bro. Paul Kilgus (Sis. Carmen), and his father, Bro. Duane Kilgus (Sis. Arlene) from Fairbury, IL, and Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI). A time of added spiritual refreshment was appreciated when other visitors came to worship with us from Indianapolis, IN; Bloomington, Chicago, Eureka, Fairbury, IL; Burlington, IA; Sabetha, KS; and Rittman, OH.

Jonathan Huber (Ben and June) has been serving in the Marines. His unit has been assigned to Fallujah, Iraq. The week of April 7, he suffered a shrapnel injury to the heel of his foot along with a sprained ankle. Several weeks later, he was placed on full duty again. We're thankful for the Lord's mercy and continue to uphold him in the comfort of Psalm 91. At that time, he shared with his parents in a phone conversation that he knows prayer helps and encouraged everyone to continue praying for their protection. Thank you for remembering Jonathan and all the soldiers in your prayers.

In the month of May, we are reminded of Mother's Day. The fruit of the Spirit is truly portrayed in the lives of our precious mothers. What a blessing our Mother's are! "Behold thy Mother!" (John 19:27). How important it is to remember that in the depth and agony of Calvary, Jesus did not forget His mother and instructed John to care for her. From

this, He reminds us to not forget our mothers, another lesson from the 'last words' of His ministry. "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." (Proverbs 31:30)

Again, we extend a warm welcome to come and visit us in Lexington. You may contact Bro. Dan Baltic (502) 696-9979, Bro. Doug Germann (859) 224-8710, Bro. Lester Huber (859) 745-2541, or Bro. Jan Neukomm (859) 273-8574.

MEXICO, IXTLAN **Rosario Gonzalez**

Each day we remember how God made us free from sin when He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for our sins. We rejoice because Jesus was willing to give His life for us. We know He is not dead. He is alive! He arose from the tomb. He defeated death and had victory over Satan.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

I Peter 1:3

A few weeks ago we said "farewell" to our Sis. Erica Schambach (Elgin, IL). The time she spent with us and our little flock was a blessing. May God be with her in her daily walk.

Yearly our Bro. Bryan Stoller (Fairbury, IL) comes down and willingly helps those who have problems with their sight. About 300 people from this town and surrounding villages were benefited. Thanks to all who were willing to help in this work. We know that all we do should be for the glory of God.

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

We are happy to welcome Ramona Humphreys and her boys, Jalen and Jared, home from their three month stay in Houston, TX. We are thankful that all went well and are continuing to pray that God will give her strength and healing. Also, we welcome home Bro. Bill and Sis. Judy Gerst this month; they have been in Texas as well.

Congratulations to Bro. Tim and Sis. Melanie Tomic (Kaeb) as they welcome their third son, Jonathon, to their family.

Our thoughts and prayers go to Sis. Rhonda Rairigh-Colter (David) and their family as she is hospitalized for cardiac problems. We are thankful that Bro. Joe and Sis. Melva Oesch are home recovering well from their outpatient surgery. Also, Dennis Koehl is home and recuperating well from his surgery he had last month. We continue to pray for their health and healing.

Our sympathy goes out to Sis. Liz Blough (Bro. Marv) for the loss of her mother, Agnes Dawson, age 88. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family, Liz.

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

It is such a refreshing feeling to see the arrival of spring! As the trees and flowers begin to blossom and bloom, may we feel invigorated by Christ's love in our hearts and minds.

Visiting ministers this past month were Bro. David Steffen (Sis. Linda, Elgin, IL) and Bro. Hartzell Kaisner (Sis. Mary, Detroit, MI). We wish to thank these brothers for

their willingness to serve us and pray that the Lord continues to bless them.

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord..."

Psalm 127:3

Bro. Bob and Sis. Kayleen Grew were recently blessed with the arrival of their firstborn. Mikayla Elizabeth was born on March 23. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Neil and Sis. Sharon Ramseyer, Cindy Grew and Darrell Grew.

Norm and Sis. Linda (Knochel) Andrzejewski are grandparents once again. Little Layne Hogan was born to Brian and Kery Periso on March 31. A brother, Kade, also welcomes him home. We wish Bro. Bob and Sis. Kayleen and Brian and Kery the Lord's blessings as they strive to raise their children in the service of the Lord.

We pray that the Great Physician's healing touch will rest with Jennifer Curtis (Jim and Laurel), Sis. Esther Meister, Sis. Esther Waibel, Sis. Charlene Wieland (Bro. Brian), and Sis. Lois Wieland. Each of these have been under physician care this past month.

Our prayers are with Gordon and Sis. Lynn Kimmerly in the passing of Gordon's mother, Emmaline Kimmerly. May they feel God's nearness in the days ahead.

When upon life's billows you are
tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, think-
ing all is lost,
Count your many blessings; name
them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the
Lord hath done.

Are you ever burdened with a load
of care?

Does the cross seem heavy you are
called to bear?

Count your many blessings: ev'ry
doubt will fly,
And you will be singing as the days
go by.

Hymns of Zion #116

At this time of year when we set
special days aside to remember our
earthly mothers and fathers, let us
continue to be thankful to our Heav-
enly Father for all the blessings that
He bestows on us.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

Krista Wieland

Jamie Bahr

We have been blessed with the
birth of Brynne Aleise to Bro. Keith
and Sis. Alisa Beyer on March 30.
She is welcomed home by Auburn,
Braden, Brecken, and Addison.
Thankful grandparents are Elder
Bro. Mark and Sis. Bev Bahr and Bro.
Martin and Sis. Karen Beyer
(Sabetha, KS).

Bro. Ted Orcsik (Bro. John and
Sis. Eszter) announced his engage-
ment to Sis. Andrea Farkas (Bro.
Zoltan and Ilona) from Dunavecse,
Hungary. We wish them God's bless-
ings as they plan for their upcoming
marriage.

Our visiting minister this month
was Bro. Jim Ramseyer (Sis.
Marlene, Bay City, MI). We thank
him for his service to us.

We wish to remember Tatten
Strassheim in prayer, son of Bro.
Eric and Sis. Jodi, as he was hospital-
ized. We are thankful he has re-
turned home.

We learned this month that Bro.
Kevin and Sis. Amy Hodel will be
moving to Indianapolis in the near
future. We are saddened because we
will greatly miss them but also com-
forted by the knowledge that they
are following God's will. We will miss

you, Kevin and Amy! Visit often!

The Sunday School classes
blessed our congregation with our
Easter Program held April 4. Thank
you to the teachers, students, par-
ents, and everyone else who sup-
ported them. How thankful we are
that Christ did not stay in the grave,
but rose again and can dwell in each
of our hearts today!

MINNESOTA MINNEAPOLIS

LaRae Dill

The weekend of March 27 and 28
was special for us. Elder Bro. Jay
Luthi (Sis. Jane) from Lamont-
Gridley, KS, assisted with Commu-
nion services on Saturday evening.
Bro. Leroy Messner (Sis. Joanne)
from Winthrop, MN, was here as
well. We were all refreshed by the
Easter message brought to us by the
Sunday School on Sunday. Many
thoughts and questions regarding
the cross of Christ were expressed
through song - "Have you been to
Calvary? Have you knelt there by the
tree?" "I am so glad that Jesus loves
me, Jesus loves even me." "It is sweet
to know as I onward go - the way of
the cross leads home." And at the
conclusion of the program, the reas-
surance that "...the cross it standeth
fast - Hallelujah!" Also in celebra-
tion of the Easter season, the annual
Easter breakfast was held on Easter
morning. We were pleased with a
good turnout, and a number of visi-
tors in attendance.

Maxine Larson was hospitalized
once again, but is home now. Two
sisters in our congregation have new
addresses. We wish Sis. Millie and
Sis. Katie God's blessings in their
new living situations.

Millie Schmidgall

Meadow Woods, Apt. 206

1301 East 100 St.

Bloomington, MN 55425

Kathryn Blunier

Rosewood Estate, Apt. 310

2750 Victoria St. N.

Roseville, MN 55113

Bro. Jeff Reinhard has relocated
to Minnesota from Bluffton, IN. He
is presently working in Mounds
View, MN. We welcome Bro. Jeff and
already appreciate his cheerful fel-
lowship.

Tim McMillan is engaged to Nada
Kusicki of Lake Forest, CA. Tim is
the son of Robert and Darlene
McMillan of Chicago, IL. Nada's par-
ents are Don (Dusan) and Maria
Kusicki of Carson, CA. We wish
them God's blessings and many
years of happiness together.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Katie Koehl

Heidi Nohl

We were blessed to have visiting
Bros. Steve Martin (Eureka, IL),
Greg Stoller (Forrest, IL), Pat Zaugg
(West Bend, IA) and Bro. Ken
Wuthrich (Indianapolis, IN) with us
to share the Word this past month.

April 4 was the weekend of Bro.
Mitchell Koehl and Sis. Janelle Joos'
wedding. Their parents are Bro.
Randy and Sis. Shirley Koehl and
Bro. Harvey and Sis. Debra Joos. We
wish them God's richest blessings as
they begin their life together.

Our Communion service was held
the evening of April 4. Elder Bro.
Leroy Messner was here to assist our
Elder Bro. Art. It was a blessing to
gather and be reminded of the sacri-
fice that was made on our behalf.

Bro. Kurt and Sis. Hannah
Grimm (Sabetha, KS) welcomed Ad-
dison Marie into their home. Thank-
ful grandparents are Bro. Doug and

Sis. Jeryl Grimm (Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Guy and Sis. Lynette Koehl of Morris.

Bro. Greg Rueter and Sis. Shelia Nohl were announced for marriage. We wish them and their parents, Bro. Jim and Sis. Carolyn Rueter and Bro. Larry and Sis. Bonnie Nohl, God's richest blessings as they plan for their upcoming marriage.

Our thoughts and prayers are with several of our congregation as they have lost loved ones in the past month. Sis. Hildy Koehl (Bro. Jim) laid her mother to rest, Sis. Hilda Stefan (Bro. William) of Lamar, MO. Sis. Rachel Zeltwanger (Bro. Dale) also lost her father, Bro. Charlie Rinkenberger (Sis. Martha), of Congerville, IL. On April 9, we had the funeral of Kathy Joos (Pete). Our prayers are with Bro. Albert Joos and Kathy's parents, Lester and Lenore Willert. Surviving are their three sons, three daughters – in – law and seven grandchildren. We pray that God will provide His comfort to each.

Hospitalized this month were Bro. Doug Koehl (Sis. Maxine), Bro. Arnie Koehl (Sis. Sharon) and Allan Burnham (Sis. Ilene). Bro. John Schaefer was admitted to hospice care. Our prayer is that God will provide healing care and that His will is done.

On Wednesday, April 7, we gathered for our annual Easter program. It was very encouraging to listen to the voices of our Sunday School children as they reminded us of the cross and the empty tomb.

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

Sympathy goes to the family of Bro. Dick VanDeest (Sis. Nancy) on the death of his mother. May God bless them with his healing hand.

We also want to keep the Dan Messner family in our thoughts and prayers as they deal with health issues.

Our Easter Sunday morning breakfast was again a great success as the students, with the direction of the Sunday School teachers, served the congregation. We thank them for their willingness to serve us.

Note of Thanks:

We want to thank you for the kind thoughts, prayers and those who sent cards during the loss of my mother, Grace VanDeest.

Bro. Dick and Sis. Nancy VanDeest and family

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

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

II Cor. 8:9

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Romans 8:31-32

Some months there seems to be little news. We are thankful not to have to report any unpleasant news, but only the Good News of Jesus Christ whose suffering, crucifixion and shed blood washed away our sins and whose resurrection gives us hope for life everlasting.

We are ever thankful for Bro. John Rowell (Sis. Nelda, Burlington, IA), who while visiting their children in the Kansas City area, was willing

to share God's Word with us.

Our church has increased in number with the birth on April 2 of Anna Mae, firstborn daughter of ministering Bro. Brandon and Sis. Maria Emch. Maternal grandparents are Bro. Perry and Sis. Carol Klopfenstein (Gridley, IL) and paternal grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Susan Emch (Lamont- Gridley, KS). May God bless this dear family and give them grace and guidance as their precious little one grows up.

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

Our visiting ministers this past month were Bros. Gary Brown (Forrest, IL), Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA) and John Hartman (Fairbury, IL). May God continue to grant them grace and humility to speak His Word.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and love to Bro. Willie Stefan on the passing of his dear wife of 51 years, Sis. Hilda. Other survivors include two sons, Willie Stefan (Natalie) and Paul Stefan (Debbie), both of this area; one daughter, Sis. Hildegard Koehl (Bro. Jim) of Morris, MN; 11 grandchildren; and 9 great – grandchildren.

Bro. Greg, Sis. Wendy and Levi Braker are thankful for the safe arrival of Isaac Eugene on March 20. His grandparents are Bob and Sis. Janice Stoller and Eugene and Judy Edelman (Sabetha, KS).

Note of Thanks:

Our family wishes to express our sincere thanks to all who offered such kind expressions of love, support and sympathy during the hospitalization and passing of our beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great – grandmother. May God be

your rich Rewarder.

The family of Sis. Hilda Stefan

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Krista Banwart

Joy and sorrow. God sends these to us through the seasons of life to draw us closer to Him.

Joy. One of our joys this past month was a visit from Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor, MO) for Communion exhortation. How thankful we are that Christ calls us to examine our hearts at the foot of His cross, not to condemn us, but to set us free. Other visiting ministers who shared with us this month were Bro. Lenny Meyer (Sis. Charlotte, Chicago, IL), and Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Sis. Charlene, Goodfield, IL).

Sorrow. Our sorrow is with Bro. David E. Roberts in the sudden passing of his father, Bro. David L. Roberts (Bluffton North, IN). We will continue to pray for Bro. Dave, his mother, Sis. Carolyn Roberts (Bluffton North), and their extended family in this season of loss. We are thankful with them that Bro. Dave was a faithful ambassador for Christ. He looked forward to being at home with Jesus. May we hold not only the promise, but the reality of Heaven, close to our minds and hearts until this season we call life ends, and we, too, enter there.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Susan Haerr

We had a number of events to help celebrate this awesome Easter season. Our Sunday School kids presented an Easter Program on Palm Sunday. It was a privilege to be able to witness them performing their parts. As well, a number of us started Easter Sunday off with our annual Easter breakfast. Thank you so

much to all who had a part in that.

Communion, as always, was a special time to reflect ... both on what Christ has done for us and on how we are looking in the mirror of the Word. A special thank you to Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus and his wife, Sis. Jenna (Remington, IN), for making the trip to Taylor and sharing that weekend with us.

We want to express our deep sympathy to the family of Bro. Rodney and Sis. Barb Heimer, Jesse, Jacob and Sis. Heidi at the passing of Sis. Barb's sister-in-law, Kathy Joos, of Morris, MN. May God comfort you.

Spending time in the hospital in the last month were Sis. Rosie Massner (Bro. Allen) and Nikki Haerr (Bro. Norman and Sis. Sally). Both have been released and we are so thankful to have them back with us.

Finally, we wish to express our sincere thanks to Bro. Kent Kloter and his wife, Sis. Janelle, of Goodfield, IL. Bro. Kent was with us on a Wednesday night to share a Bible study on the Beatitudes. Thank you, Bro. Kent, for using the gifts that God has given you to bless us.

NEW YORK CROGHAN-NAUMBURG

Hope Graves

We would like to extend our thanks to Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) and his family for spending the weekend with us on March 27-28. We shared a potluck dinner together on Saturday, followed by the reading of the Memorandum. May we keep the many teachings and exhortations we heard in our hearts to guide us in the days ahead.

We enjoyed listening to the Sunday School children present their Easter program during the

noon hour on Palm Sunday. May they each remember the teachings they have learned and the true reason why we celebrate Easter. We also remembered our Lord and Saviour's suffering on the cross in an evening service on Good Friday.

If we would Christ's disciples be,
Our will with His must blended be.
Our very self must be overcome,
That we may say, "Thy will be done."

As Jesus in Gethsemane,
By prayer attained the victory,
So shall we when we seek His face,
Still find in Him abundant grace.

Hymns of Zion #63

Our hearts were joyful along with grandparents, Bro. Dan and Sis. Delores Reinhard and Paul and Jane Grube, to hear of three new additions to their family. Bro. Jay and Sis. Ronda Grube (Bluffton, IN) recently returned from the Ukraine after adopting three siblings, Joel Vitaliy (8), Rinae Kristina (7) and Reesa Valeriya (5). They are joining Rozanna, Jayson, Justin, Rachelle along with Reagan and Jamison who are siblings also adopted from the Ukraine three years ago. May the Lord richly bless Bro. Jay and Sis. Ronda with wisdom, patience and love as they adjust to the many changes ahead, including teaching the children the English language.

Our prayers go out to several families who have met with the loss of a loved one in the past months. We remember Bro. John and Sis. Esther Rauhe in the passing of her brother, Raymond Virkler, on January 30 from Morton, IL. Our prayers also extend to the family of Sis. Berdena Widrick who passed away on March 24. Our thoughts are with Bro. Ted Virkler, Sis. Jeanie Herzig and Sis. Rita Petzoldt in the loss of their aunt,

Ruth Brown. Also passing away suddenly was Marlene (Kenny) Virkler's father, Joseph Kennell.

We pray that the Lord will continue to be at the side of Bro. Clifton Farney who was recently hospitalized, but has since returned home.

OHIO, AKRON **Joyce Gasser**

We extend sympathy to Bro. Glen and Sis. Joan Greenbank, as Bro. Glen's father, Bro. Gordon Greenbank, on April 2 went to his eternal rest at age 86. He had married Sis. Emily Bauman and in January they had their 63rd anniversary. For a while they lived at Norton and came to our Akron church. They moved to Phoenix, and returned to live in the Rittman area, and his funeral was at Rittman church. Sis. Emily survives and all nine sons, two daughters, and 34 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. The family would like to thank everyone who has supported them and Bro. Gordon at this time and throughout his life.

We are sorry that Sis. Mary Ann Weigele has been having health problems and was again recently hospitalized. We are hoping that she will soon realize more improvement.

Bro. Joseph Grossenbacher was hospitalized and we are thankful he is able to assemble with us again.

We appreciated Bro. Gary Maibach visiting us Easter Sunday and his ministering to us.

OHIO, COLUMBUS **Nancy Banks**

Greetings to all! It is with much thankfulness that we welcome the spring season with a new convert. Elizabeth Conzo has taken the most important step by beginning her repentance. We pray the Lord will give her much grace as she begins this

special walk in faith.

We rejoice with Casey Banks (Bro. Larry and Sis. Nancy) as he has been announced as having peace with God and man. We look forward to his evening of testimony and pray for God's nearness and guidance in his life.

We lift our friend, Will Sauder (Bro. Bill and Sis. Becky), up in prayer as he serves his country in the Army Guard overseas. May the Lord lay a protective hand over Will and the rest of our servicemen during their tour of duty. Should anyone wish to send Will words of encouragement, his address is as follows:

SSG Sauder, William K.
785th Med. Co. (CSC)
FOB Speicher
APO, AE 09392

We were thankful to have Bros. Mike Baumann (Mansfield, OH), Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH) and Dale Stoller (Fairbury, IL) as our visiting ministers this month. May the Lord bless them abundantly for their willingness to serve our congregation.

OHIO, JUNCTION **Cindy Schlatter**

"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; ..."

Genesis 2:18

Bro. Wendell Spangler (Bro. Jim and Sis. Carolyn) and Sis. Kari Manz (Bro. Les and Sis. Karen) had their engagement made known to us on April 4. We trust our Heavenly Father will be with them to lead, guide and direct as they plan for their future together.

"Preach the word, be instant in

season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

II Timothy 4:2

We are thankful for faithful brothers who are willing to come visit us and "preach the word." Visiting us this past month were Bro. Ted Luginbuhl (Smithville, OH) and Bro. Larry Wenninger (Latty, OH).

OHIO, LATTY **Bonny Wenninger** **Amanda Steffen**

We rejoice with our new brother and sisters in Christ, Reid and Amanda Stoller (Bro. Bill and Sis. Barb) and Joy Stoller (Bro. Craig and Sis. Ruth) as they were baptized on March 28. May God bless them with the grace and strength needed to continue to follow Him.

Our congregation was thankful to have a number of visiting ministers this past month. We want to thank Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, La-Crosse, IN) and Bros. Bill Waibel (Sis. Carol, Bay City, MI), Brad Gudeman (Sis. Teresa, Bradford, IL) and Dan Stoller (Sis. Debra, Remington, IN).

We are thankful that Joni Sinn (Bro. Tom and Sis. Kim) has recognized her need for a Saviour and has begun her repentance. With humbleness of heart, may she accept the grace from God, which will enable her to walk a new life with Him. Our prayers are with her as she turns her life over to the Lord.

Hospitalized this month were Bro. Tom Laukhuf and Sis. Edie Stoller (Bro. Glenn). We pray that God will continue to bless them with strength and healing in the days ahead.

Shane Gerber (Bro. Rod and Sis. Edie Laukhuf) was announced for

peace on April 11. We wish her God's guidance and nearness as she prepares for baptism.

Another soul has been called to her eternal home. Sis. Marie Feucht passed away on April 12 after her battle with cancer. What a comfort it is to know that she is now safe in the arms of Jesus. We extend our sympathy to her daughters, Sis. Joy Sinn (Bro. Steve) and Sis. Paulette Sinn (Bro. Gary).

OHIO, MANSFIELD **Esther Baumann**

...In Christ ye are my brethren
duly;
We share salvation through His
grace.
We drink one cup; we break one
bread;
One Saviour suffered in our stead.
Zion's Harp #25, v. 5

On March 27, our congregation was thankful to be able to share Holy Communion together. We thank Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie) from Gridley, IL, for assisting in this special service.

We also appreciate Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen's (Sis. Loretta, Alto, MI) visit and his willingness to minister to us.

Kindly, keep the following recently hospitalized patients in your prayers: Shirley (Graszl) Roberts, Elmer "Bud" Sauder, Bro. Lawrence Popp (Sis. Vi), Joseph Sabo (Bro. Jason and Sis. Nora), Bro. LaVern Dotterer (Sis. Christine), and Bro. Joe Pamer (Sis. Betty).

OHIO, RITTMAN **Laurel Indermuhle** **Anne Widmer**

"Beloved, follow not that which is

evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."

III John 1:11

In the Easter season, we remember the perfect example of He who is of God and did good in the sight of His Father. Our wonderful Saviour and Christ gave everything that He had to give so that we could have our sins forgiven and the hope of a home in Heaven singing praises to our Great Father throughout all eternity. It is a great thing to do that which is good and to be of God and not that of evil. Those of us who have tasted the wonderful bliss of salvation want nothing to do with evil and must strive daily to show those around us that which is good so that they too would desire to do that which is good and to be of God and to leave the evil that they indulge in behind.

To prepare for the Easter season and to follow Christ's commandment to eat of His body and drink of His blood, we were thankful for the time to prepare for and then partake of Communion. Each day in our Christian walk of life should be walked close to our God and Saviour, but this is such a wonderful cleansing time to readjust and to make sure that we have everything in order in our lives. So often in our day to day life, our salvation and diligence can start to become lax and our focus becomes a little bit fuzzy. However, when we are taken back to that moment when Christ knew that He had to give it all up, although He didn't want to, He did His Father's will and not His own. It is a reminder for all of us that we need to give up all of self and be all of God. We were blessed with Elder Bros. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL), Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH) and Andy Stoller

(Smithville, OH) who were here to help with Communion in our congregation. We were also thankful for Bro. Ron's services the following day and his willingness to be a servant of the Lord.

This month Elder Bros. Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH) and Aaron Steffen (Alto, MI) and Bros. Fred Domka and Dan Goric (Rockville, CT) also lended their services to our congregation. In this large country that we live in, it is such a blessing to be able to travel miles and miles to congregate with those of like mind and faith. We are so thankful for those who are willing to travel the miles to deliver the Word as well.

On March 27-28 we had Invite-A-Friend here in our congregation. It is always nice to have visitors.

Over the last month, we have been showered with more of God's little creations. Bro. Chad and Sis. Cindy Indermuhle welcome home their first baby, Carmen Rose. They had to wait a little longer than expected for her, but are glad to have her home and healthy. Bro. Dwaine and Sis. Joan Indermuhle and Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz (Junction, OH) are thankful for their new granddaughter.

Also, Bro. Ryan and Sis. Laura Riegenbach are first-time parents, bringing home Owen Patrick, named after his maternal grandparents, Bro. Richard and Sis. Pat Steiner. Bro. Don and Sis. Gail Riegenbach (Smithville, OH) are his paternal grandparents, no doubt thankful for another grandson to add to their family.

Bro. Mark and Sis. April Dotterer are first-time parents as well, multiplying their family from two to four. Max Henry and Morgan Michelle were earlier than expected and continue to stay in the hospital, but have brought a smile to more than one

face. Bro. Rick and Sis. Dawn Dotterer and Bro. Max and Sis. Diane Miller (Smithville, OH) are the loving grandparents of this double bundle of joy.

Levi, Luke, Benjamin and Joseph Schar have another brother to add to their family. Bro. Gary and Sis. Vicki Schar have been blessed with Abram Glenn. Bro. Rowen and Sis. Judy Schar and Bro. Ron and Sis. Lynell Palitto (Akron, OH) have another grandson to love and cherish.

Jessica Steiner is quickly becoming outnumbered by her brothers; however, I am sure she is glad to welcome home her fourth brother, Justin Ronald, to go along with Jeremy, Riley and Reid. Bro. Rod and Sis. Jill Steiner no doubt have a house full of love and laughter. Justin's grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Ruth Steiner and Bro. John and Sis. Joyce Schamback (Akron, OH).

Bro. Ron and Sis. Joanne Christian have a little granddaughter to add to their family. Bro. Marvin and Sis. Pam (Smithville, OH) have been blessed with Alayna Joy to add to their family circle. God is so good and has given us all so much; isn't it wonderful to know that we have a Faith in which we can bring up our children?

While waiting for her little ones to come into this world, Sis. April Dotterer (Bro. Mark) spent some time in the hospital. We are thankful that she was able to come home and that the babies are thriving quite well. Also, Bro. Melvin Beery spent the night in the hospital after a surgery, but is home and doing well. His sister, Sis. Ruth Beery, has also spent some time in the hospital. Roger Hessidence (Evelyn) was hospitalized for a few days, but is out now and is on the road to recovery. We pray that God will continue to

touch these loved ones with His healing hand.

We send out heartfelt sympathy to the families of Bros. Ernie Howell and Gordon Greenbank and also Sis. Barb Mathys who all passed away. When we are young, although we know better, we think that life will last for a long, long time. However, we are told that life is like a vapor and if you stand outside on a cold day and count how long a vapor lasts, it is but a few seconds. Our life here on earth is but a few seconds in the whole scheme of eternity. We can be so grateful that we have a way of escape from eternal death.

Life begins, life ends, but in the middle, we have so many important steps. The most important step is choosing to serve our Great Master. It is very exciting when we are able to complete the second most important step, marriage, that God has planned for us. We were pleased to hear the engagement of Bro. Eric Hartzler (Bro. Dean and Sis. Jan) to Sis. Jamie Zollinger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry, Sardis, OH). Both of them attend Sardis church at the present time, which is wonderful for Sardis that their small church can continue to grow.

We would also like to welcome our friend, Brad Gasser, to our congregation from Junction, OH. He has moved to our area to work for Bros. Todd and Dan Graf, learning the construction trade. We pray that he will feel welcome in our congregation.

At All - Ohio Weekend, Bro. Mike Baumann taught Sunday School and talked about the Fruit of the Spirit. He told us that Goodness is Love in action. So to show the world around us the Love that we have in our hearts, let's put it into action and practice Goodness every chance we get.

OHIO, SARDIS Jami Zollinger Terry Zollinger

In sorrow and pain Thy trust do retain
In Jesus the merciful Saviour.
Zion's Harp #46

Sorrow and sympathy is felt for Sis. Terry Zollinger's (Bro. Gary) brother, Ted, in the loss of his dear wife, Crystal, on March 22. May we look to the Lord and His Word for strength and comfort.

When burdened with care,
When thou wouldst despair,
Then call on thy loving Redeemer.
Zion's Harp #46

Young Malachi Blough (Bro. Alan and Sis. Renee) had to visit the hospital this month due to respiratory problems. He did not have to spend the night and thankfully came home after treatment. May we rejoice for His healing power!

Thus united And in concord
Let us walk the path of life;
Hand in hand, O may love bind us
For each other's welfare strive.
Thus it is our Saviour's pleasure,
As His footprints plainly show.
May God's love, our greatest treasure,
Richly ev'ry heart bestow.
Only he is called a brother
Whom the tie of love does bind;
And the love of God, the Father,
Filleth soul and heart and mind.
With the love of God inspired,
There is joy for us on earth;
May the Spirit, we've acquired,
Grant us blessing, peace and mirth.
Zion's Harp #237

On Easter Sunday, April 11, the

engagement of Bro. Eric Hartzler (Bro. Dean and Sis. Jan, Rittman) and Sis. Jami Zollinger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry) was made known. It is such a great joy when an engagement is announced in a little church, but when both the brother and sister attend the same church, everyone is rejoicing. May this special couple continue to look to the precious Lord for guidance and love. The tentative date for the wedding is July 4, Lord willing.

A couple of reminders: School is out or will be out soon. With the children running and playing, please watch out for them.

On June 27 is the annual memorial service in New Martinsville, WV. Morning song service starts at 10:00 a.m., then a lunch break, and afternoon service begins at 1:00 p.m. We would like to welcome anyone who would like to attend this blessed event. Sardis will host a Saturday evening service at 7:30 prior to the Sunday service. If anyone has any questions or would like a place to stay, please phone Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle at 740-483-1593, Bro. Bill Brake at 740-483-2353, or Bro. Mark Ramsier at 740-483-1806.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE

Alyssa Miller
Rachel Maibach

Out onto Calv'ry's hill,
Where Jesus died I'll go,
To hear the words He speaks,
To see Him in His woe.
How great the pains, O Lord,
Afflict Thee on this day;
"My God, my God," He calls,
"Forsake me not I pray."
He bows His head and cries,
"'Tis finished, all is done,
O God, receive my soul."
Life's victory is won.
Zion's Harp #89

How thankful we were as we gathered on Good Friday and Easter Sunday to remember the agony of His suffering and the joy of His resurrection! We have such a beautiful gift that God has given to us through His Son, Christ Jesus. He truly did win each of our own life's victory for us. We can't even imagine the cost of the struggle He went through to win this victory.

God has blessed our congregation with three precious little girls this month. Bro. Adam, Sis. Ann Uhler and Lane welcome Elise Rachel in their home. We rejoice with Bro. Marvin and Sis. Pam Zollinger as Alayna Joy joins their family. Big sister, Carla, and brothers, Josh, Aaron and Matthew, are excited. Bro. Brian and Sis. Alyssa Miller and Shem are thankful for Adeline Jo's safe arrival. Also, Bro. Max and Sis. Diane Miller welcome twins as their first grandchildren. Max Henry and Morgan Michelle were born to Bro. Mark and Sis. April Dotterer (Rittman, OH). Bro. Don and Sis. Gail Riegenbach are also thankful for another grandson, Owen Patrick. His parents are Bro. Ryan and Sis. Laura Riegenbach (Rittman, OH).

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

Eccles. 3:1-2

As we welcome new arrivals into our world, we also grieve with those who have lost loved ones. Dale Uhler's (Sis. Marilyn) mother, Thelma, passed away this past month. We are sad to hear, yet thankful he is in a better place, that Bro. Gordon Greenbank has crossed to his eternal home. We wish his wife, Sis. Emily, and his daughter,

Sis. Janice Rufener (Bro. John), God's nearness during their time of feeling this loss.

We hope and pray for God's healing hand on our Bro. Elmer Blough (Sis. Lorene), Bro. Chuck Nieman (Sis. Delphine), Sis. Mildred Hartzler, and Sis. Shelly Beery (Bro. Dwaine) as they have been hospitalized this past month.

We are thankful that our Bro. Larry Wenninger (Latty, OH), Bro. John Grimm (Columbus, OH) and Bro. Doug Harmon (Toledo, OH) were able to come and serve us from the Word of God. May He be their Rewarder.

OHIO, TOLEDO

Rebecca Beard
Teresa Rywalski

What a wonderful heritage for us to be able to go into the house of the Lord and hear His Word proclaimed. We wish to thank our many visiting ministers for their service. Visiting us this month were our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) and ministering Bros. Bill Waibel (Bay City, MI), Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL) and Art Ingold (Rittman, OH).

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

Psalms 127:3

Brad and Holli Shields welcomed Isaac Bradley on March 27. May they bring him up in the light of God's Word.

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

Eccles. 3:1-2

Sis. Herma Whittaker has fought

a good fight and has laid down her cross as she was called Home to her Heavenly Father. We pray the Lord will comfort her family, Bro. Glenn Whittaker, Mike Whittaker, Sis. Mary Croy (Joe) and Kathy Warrington (Steve), as they go through this time of change.

OREGON, PORTLAND

Louisa Gallup

Greetings everyone!

As of this writing, the Easter season has come and gone. We hope everyone had a blessed time, rejoicing in the promise the Easter story brings. Our Sunday School students brought us this story recently, in scripture verse, song and poems memorized by the younger ones. They did their best and it was, as always, a joy to hear their young voices praise our Creator. May the Lord bless and keep them and work in their lives as they are growing up.

Sis. Connie Steffen (Bro. Garth) had surgery recently and is now at home recovering. We miss her and hope she will be able to assemble with us again soon. May God hear our prayers on her behalf and heal her.

We thank all visitors who joined us for worship this past month. Special thanks to the song leaders who took turns to come and help, as well as the following ministering brethren: Elder Bro. Art Metz (Sis. Betty), Bros. Ed Knecht (Sis. Judie) and Don Sinn (Sis. Linda), all from Silverton, OR.

OREGON, SILVERTON

Kelsey Walder

We rejoice with Bro. Nick and Sis. Mary Kuenzi in the birth of their grandson, Javen Raymond, on March 17, born to Bro. Merlin and Sis. Marilyn Meyer of Lester, IA. Also welcoming their little brother

are sisters, Jessica and Erica. Little Javen's arrival was within a few days of the one-year anniversary of the passing of Bro. Merlin and Sis. Marilyn's eldest son, Jaden. May our loving Lord continue to hold the Meyer family up in His arms and provide comfort as only He can.

Riley Thomas was welcomed into the hearts and home of Bro. Tom and Sis. Edith Sinn on March 26. Also welcoming him are his brothers and sisters, Kenton, Laura, Darwin, Trenton, Nelson, Troy, Erinn, Travis, Desiree, and Katrianne. Grandparents are Sis. Marion Sinn of Silverton and Bro. Dan Edelman of Bern, KS. Our prayers are with each of these families as they seek the wisdom from above to raise their children up in the fear of the Lord.

To God be the glory great things
He hath done,
So loved He the World that He
gave us His son,
Who yielded His life an atonement
for sin
And opened the life-gate that all
may go in.

Gospel Hymns #813, vs. 1

On April 4, at our Sunday School Easter program, we were reminded in verse and song of our Lord's lonely road to Calvary, His death and shedding of blood for our sins, and His glorious resurrection from the dead. A special thanks to the children and young adults who memorized verses and sang songs for the congregation, and to their parents and teachers for their encouragement and support.

Our friend, Pat Hari (Phil), has become very ill. Our prayers are with her and her husband that they can seek the Lord out and feel His almighty comfort during this time in their lives.

On March 21, our Bro. Lee Kuenzi (Sis. Janet) turned eighty.

All of his children and their spouses were home to help him celebrate his special day. We were thankful this included ministering Bro. Trent Meiss (Sis. Lucy) from Eureka, IL. May God bless him for his labors to bring the Word to us.

We wish to extend a warm welcome to Tom Young who has recently moved from Illinois and is attending in Silverton.

PENNSYLVANIA PHILADELPHIA

Nathan and

Mary Elizabeth Gasser

We are pleased to welcome to our congregation Bro. Ben and Sis. Jaime Maller, and their children, Brant, Luke, and Breanna, who moved here from Bluffton, IN. Bro. Ben has found work in the area and we are delighted that they will be worshipping with us. We wish them God's abundant blessings in this new endeavor.

The wonderful springtime weather made a perfect day for spring cleaning this month. What a blessing to work together in the upkeep of our precious church building. We thank all who participated, and all who give their time and energy throughout the year in these various duties.

As is our tradition, we gathered this month on Good Friday evening to remember the death upon the cross of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. Let us all remember this, His ultimate sacrifice, throughout the year, and honor Him with our lives.

TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE

Mike and Monica Fritz

Recently, we were privileged to share Holy Communion. Elder Bros. Phil Stettner (Sis. Maureen, Bluffton North, IN), and Bill

Schlatter (Junction, OH) were here to serve us.

We have also been encouraged by the Living Word, shared with us by our visiting ministering brothers: Bros. Sid Kaufmann (Sis. Sandra, Cissna Park, IL), Ted Luginbuhl (Sis. Stephanie, Smithville, OH), Bob Meyer (Sis. Ann, Bluffton North, IN), and Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, LaCrosse, IN). We have also enjoyed the blessing of precious fellowship with brethren and friends visiting from Rockville, CT; Cissna Park, Forrest, and Roanoke, IL; Bluffton North, Francesville, and LaCrosse, IN; Morris, MN; Akron, Junction, and Smithville, 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: Leo, IN (5/23); Burlington, IA (6/6); Chicago, IL (6/13); Roanoke, IL (6/27). We do not have a visiting minister scheduled for Memorial Day weekend (5/30) or Father's Day (6/20). 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 and would welcome any midweek visitors. Contacts are Bro. Don and Sis. Faye Sauder (615) 373-8928, Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz (615)

952-9933, and Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 662-2946.

TEXAS, SAN MARCOS

Amy Ringger

Our family is thankful to be in the process of moving from our home in Austin to our farm place south of Bastrop, Texas. The updated contact phone number for us is 512-923-2053.

The ministers we had this month were Bros. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo), Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest), Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton), and Lyn Fiechter (Sis. Ronda, Bluffton). Thanks to them and our visitors from Lester, Alto, Eureka, and Roanoke.

We look forward to hosting visiting ministers from the following churches in June: Bloomington (6), Wichita (13), Mansfield (20), and Bradford (27).

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.

TEXAS, ZAPATA

Mary Plattner

Easter Sunday the small congregation from Zapata traveled to Pharr, Texas, to have services with the group that lives in that area. A blessed Sunday was spent together.

Bro. Leland and Sis. Mary Plattner have two new grandchildren in their family. Samuel Lyndon was born to Andy and Kristi Plattner and joins a brother, Jacob. Ella Ruth was born to Rick and Lila LaGrange.

We have been blessed with rain in our area and the Falcon Lake is again filling. Although still not near capacity, it is nice to be able to see it rising again after several years of drought.

This summer the Zapata congregation will be traveling to Pharr, Texas, occasionally for services. If anyone plans to come to our area, they need to call prior to arrival to make certain on the location of services. Contact either Bro. Leland Plattner or Bro. Lloyd Nohl.



Sermon continued from page 2

want-the presence of the Lord, the blessing of the Lord in our life is better than all that the world can offer.

There was a time in history where there were just a few that knew what the Word of God was, what the Commandments were. The scribes and the Pharisees recorded this and there were just a few. They didn't have, in times past, and really it isn't even that long ago, perhaps our grandmothers and grandfathers barely knew how to read. And our greatgrandfathers and grandmothers, maybe perhaps almost all of them didn't even know how to read- or didn't have access to learning.

This is a time and a place where as we look at the historical perspective of the Word of God, perhaps it was similar in that day. Where there were just a few that were able to gain the access to God by knowing, by being able to read and understand what the Word of God is and what it means.

So God was plenteous in mercy and compassionate. Willing that none should be lost. He had ways and means of gaining the attention of mankind, of you and I, As we read these stunning accounts of the power of God, even as great fear fell on them (Acts 5:11), surely, as we know that God is the same yesterday, today and forever, a fear of God can fall upon us as well. Because God is all omnipotent, all powerful, all knowing. Yet He is, as we read at the middle of this chapter where we finished, He has been so kind and merciful to give us a way of escape. A way of escaping the destination that unconverted man is destined to. A way of escaping damnation and condemnation.

This is a merciful God because how many times in the wilderness can we read the children came from Egypt and were going to a promised

land, a land that God promised would be full of freedom, full of milk and honey, just an abundance (Exodus 3:8). There were cities there that they just had to take. God was going to deliver this all unto them. And as they got into the hard times, God was still there as a pillar of fire at night and a cloud in the morning (Exodus 13:21). He was there all the time. But the people saw the hard times. They began to murmur and they began to wish they were back to Egypt, where at least they were able to have food (Exodus 16:2,3). They were grumbling and groaning, not mentioning the fact that they were slaves.

As time went, as Moses was beginning to be raised up, they had to find their own straw and they had to make just as many bricks (Exodus 5:1-9). Their life was miserable. It was miserable! It was unbearable! Yet they looked back and they could only remember the good things of that miserable life.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." (Psalm 23). When we have the Lord as our Shepherd, it is always better. It is always better than what the world has to offer. Always better. Always better. There is a peace that no one can take from us. And God promises in His Word that He will provide. He will provide for our daily needs.

So as we read, in our first chapter, of God's omnipotent power and presence, He is a God of order. He expects us to be able to submit our ways unto His ways and come to a good end by doing this. In and of itself, had David been able to bring that ark back without the presence of the Levites or priests as it was dictated in the law there, and gain the presence of God that way in the symbolic way of bringing that ark back, what would the need have been for the priests and the Levites in the future? God is a God of order and He has placed people and things and ordered everything for one pur-

pose. One purpose. So that many can be saved. Many can be saved.

The way of salvation is the same today as it was for our great, great - and however many greats you want to put on it - grandfathers. But there are no grandchildren in heaven. So each and everyone of us has to come this way of salvation through Jesus Christ and experience the power of Christ's atoning blood to relieve us from the miserable life of sin. The miserable life of sin.

Are we any different than those? There are sometimes when we may look back and think that it was better before. May it be a fleeting thought. May it be a temptation that Satan would put into us. The psalmist said, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Let's not let that thought ever remain. Let it fly through like the bird flying through a tree. As it has been said before, not give the bird a place to make a nest and later turn it into evil.

So we read in this second chapter, of a day and time where the presence of God at the beginning of the establishing of the churches was a powerful presence. Here were two early believers, Ananias and Sapphira, who wanted to give the appearance that they wanted to serve God with their whole heart and their whole possessions (Acts 5:1,2). And their whole possessions. Because the church at that time was a communal type arrangement for whatever reason. Whoever needed was given and whoever had excess gave. Everyone was supplied.

Here we see how two individuals came. They had sold a possession. They had agreed to tell how much they were giving and lie about how much they were keeping back (Acts 5:2). It was within their own power to keep back. All they had to do was to tell the truth. To tell the truth. And once again, the church of God was just as in David's time. God will

Sermon continued on next page...

... sermon continued

never be mocked. God will never be mocked. He knows all things. He sees all things. He knows our lives in and out. Sometimes we are in denial of that. But God will not be mocked.

Here, as these two wanted to give the false impression that they were more than what they were, the Holy Spirit condemned that mind set. And the power of God was exacted, just as Uzza, in his innocent way, tried to help to stabilize the ark, fell dead right there, so did Ananias and Sapphira (I Chronicles 13:10, Acts 5:5,10). In both chapters we read that great fear came upon the people (I Chronicles 13:2, Acts 5:5). Great fear.

God could do this very same thing today. He certainly could. We trust that His mercy will be greater than His vengeance in our lives. That He gives us another chance to come through the blood of Jesus and repent. Repent for our sins. But you know, as we look at this historically, if the church of God would have been built upon falsehoods, the church that we have today would not have stood. Would not have stood.

If we could have read a little farther here, we read of how there was such an uproar. Of how the truth was being established and it was grounded. We can't go against Jesus Christ and Him crucified. That is the most powerful, grounding foundation of the world and of each of us. They wanted to try to find a way to dismiss this. The scribes and the Pharisees wanted to try - well really it was Satan working through - wanted to find a way to minimize and extinct the truth of God. And the wise Gamaliel, who had taught the Apostle Paul, said, if this is of God, there is nothing you can do to stop it. If it is of God, there is nothing you can do to stop it. And if it isn't of God, it will be like the several different examples of people who led

up factions to go out and to do their own thing and they were all gone. When the individual died that led the faction, so did the movement. (Acts 5:34-39)

Dear ones, this is not what has happened to Christianity. This is not. It is living proof. There can be no stronger proof that God is and He sent His Son Jesus to die for the sins of mankind than the very fact that this way of salvation is alive and well and souls are still being called by God. By the fear of God and the recognition of condemnation.

Hell is an awful place. It is more awful than we could ever begin to imagine. There is a consciousness in hell that will be forever. We know that from the parable - not the parable because it is a true story - of the rich man and Lazarus. As Lazarus was in the bosom of Abraham and the rich man was in hell and the mighty gulf was between them, and the rich man could not come out of that place, he consciously knew what was going on. He said, let me go back to my brothers and tell them how many torments there are in this place. (St. Luke 16:19-31)

Oh the mighty gulf that God did span. He gave the way of escape, the way of salvation. We read of it here.

"Then Peter and the other disciples answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29). God has provided. Is there confusion? When Jesus was talking to His disciples, He said, do you understand? (Let's paraphrase a little.) Do you understand the meaning of this? And they said yes Lord. Jesus would have told them one hundred thousand times if it would have taken that for them to understand. And to understand what it is to obey God rather than man.

Jesus is the perfect example. The perfect life of obedience to God rather than men. Countless times Satan would have had Him. We think of the time where he went out

in the wilderness. But countless times Satan would have had Him use the power of God to his own ways and means. Every time Jesus denied Himself and took up the cross, so to speak, and followed and obeyed God rather than men.

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree." (Acts 5:30). The tomb is empty. Jesus Christ is not in that tomb. The Word tells us many times that He is at the right hand of God interceding for us. He is alive, interceding for us, knowing our tests and trials and waiting for us to ask for help. He would go to the Father and find a way that we could have help in this time or need that we have.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31). We are such a fortunate people to be living in this day of grace. The moment of time has passed where history and spiritual reawakening has happened. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Then the Lord knew that no man is an island. There was a day where - I've said it before, forgive me for saying it - I thought I could take a canoe and cross the Atlantic ocean and make it to England on a journey all by myself. I was told that would be very risky. Chances of you making that destination are slim to nothing. So God established the churches. He established the churches whereby we can come together and in heart and spirit and mind, by the power of the Holy Spirit, come to agree on what is beneficial for our soul's estate as we live and walk here on this earth. What are the things that are pitfalls? What are those carts that will seemingly bring the ark and the blessing of God into our lives but are really contrary to God's will? This is part of the many functions of the church that we are so blessed to be a part of that. The truth has been established

and maintained.

You can't add to the truth. You can't add to it. It is. It stands on its own. So the way of salvation for us and the way of salvation for those that have gone on before us is the same. That in itself also is living proof of God's faithfulness to each of us.

"And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; "and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch." (Acts 5:12). Dear ones, what variance was to be gained? Their spiritual needs were totally fulfilled in this way of life they embarked upon. Were totally fulfilled.

"And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." (Acts

5:13,14). You see, there was four hundred and some odd years of just darkness in this world. It was just darkness. There was this hope of the Savior coming. There was spiritual darkness. It is a testimony of God's faithfulness that Ananias and Simeon and the shepherds and the wise men were still looking, after four hundred and some years, for the Savior to come. There were still those that kept the truth and passed it on to their generations; that God was going to bring light into this world. He did it. He did it. And now the light has come. And there were multitudes of men and women who wanted to leave there darkness behind and come into the light of God. Come into the light.

We know they came by repentance. Sin is darkness. Evil is darkness. When we confess that sin and believe that the Son of God, Jesus

Christ, when He gave His life, there is no remission of sin except there be a sacrifice of blood. His blood was sufficient. And now we read here that multitudes, both men and women, believed that God is. That this is the way, the truth and the light. Multitudes came from darkness into the light. Into the light. Dear ones, we can be so thankful that those multitudes did.

It doesn't take but a few generations of darkness. The Lord can bring back the light. Dear ones, the darkness is a powerful thing, but not nearly as powerful as the light. Not nearly. God is all powerful. We have heard it said before that Satan is mighty, but God is almighty. Dear ones, to have the Almighty caring for us, watching over us as our Shepherd, recognizing that with Him there is no want.

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
E-mail: paulkaeb@ksiconveyors.com

Iowa: Martin Zaugg
Phone/Fax: 515-379-1693
Cell: 515-320-2404

Illinois: Marvin Sauder
Phone: 309-925-4171
Fax: 309-925-2409
Cell: 309-241-8171
E-mail: mmksblf@dpc.net

Indiana: Gerry Waibel
Phone/Fax: 219-279-2582
E-mail: glwaibel@hotmail.com

Ohio: Ken Zollinger
Phone: 330-925-6370
Fax: 330-927-6370
Cell: 330-466-2247

2004 Tennessee Fellowship Weekend

Make plans to attend the 13th annual Tennessee Fellowship Weekend scheduled on Saturday, May 29 and Sunday, May 30 during Memorial Day Weekend. In addition to singing, elders/ministers will be speaking on the topics of "Commitment or Lukewarmness" (Bro. Ted Hirstein—Atlanta, GA), "Attendance to Sound Doctrine" (Bro. Fred Funk—Morton, IL) and "Holding the Faith for Coming Generations" (Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen—Alto, MI).

On Saturday afternoon, an auction is planned at the Tennessee Fellowship Area with proceeds used to maintain the property. Everyone is encouraged to bring at least one item to donate to the auction. Church services will be held on Sunday at the Athens, Alabama Apostolic Christian Church. Bro. Doyle Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN.) and Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) plan to minister the Word of God.

To facilitate transportation to and from the Tennessee Fellowship Weekend, a bus has been chartered. The bus will leave at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning (May 29) from Indianapolis, IN and arrive at the Tennessee Fellowship Area in time for the auction. The bus will then return to Indianapolis, IN on late Monday morning (May 31). The cost per person to ride the bus is approximately \$50. This does *not* include food or motel expenses (for two nights). To make a bus reservation or to find out more information, contact Tenn. Fellowship Board Member **Bro. Bob (Sis. Luann) Gerber** at (219)279-2800 or via e-mail at bgerber@premierfm.net.

Tennessee Fellowship Singing Weekend Schedule

(All Activities at the Tennessee Fellowship Area)

SATURDAY, MAY 29

- 12:00 p.m. Registration and Donation of Auction Items (Lunch on your Own)
- 1:30 p.m. Auction commences with Song and Prayer
- 5:30 p.m. Supper
- 6:30 p.m. Singing begins (Congregational and Special Numbers)
- 7:00 p.m. Topic — "Commitment or Lukewarmness" (Bro. Ted Hirstein—Atlanta, GA)
- 7:30 p.m. Singing resumes

SUNDAY, MAY 30

- 10:00 a.m. Church Services at Apostolic Christian Church in Athens, AL
 - A.M. — "Attendance to Sound Doctrine," (Bro. Fred Funk—Morton, IL)
 - P.M. — (Bro. Doyle Frauhiger—Bluffton North, IN)
and (Elder Bro. Andy Stoller—Smithville, OH)

Lunch On Your Own

- 2:30 p.m. Fellowship resumes at Tennessee Fellowship Area
- 3:00 p.m. Singing begins (Congregational and Special Numbers)
- 5:00 p.m. Topic — "Holding the Faith for Coming Generations"
(Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen—Alto, MI)
- 5:30 p.m. Supper
- 7:00 p.m. Singing resumes

To assist us with auction registration and planning, please e-mail a description of your auction item(s) to: don.sauder@juno.com or leutholdg@aol.com.

Include the following information—Item Name and Description, Donator's Name, and Home Church—in the e-mail.

Weekend Dress - Attire for the weekend should be modest and properly reflecting children of God.

Contact Information

We encourage everyone to attend this weekend of fellowship, singing, and worship of the Lord. If you plan to attend, please call or e-mail Sis. Gwen Leuthold (info below) as soon as possible to assist with planning. The contacts below will also be able to give you additional information on **Overnight Accommodations** and **Directions**. Additionally, we ask that you please spread the word to others in your area/congregation to let them know about the Tennessee Fellowship Weekend.

Sis. Gwen Leuthold, Tenn. Fellowship Secretary
(615)662-2946 or leutholdg@aol.com

Bro. Don Sauder, Tenn. Fellowship Chairman
(615)373-8928 or don.sauder@juno.com

Bro. Mike Moore, Tenn. Fellowship Treasurer
(256)729-0620 or alm38@aol.com

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

HAITI					
ORG.	DATE	AREA	COORDINATOR	PROJECT	CAPACITY
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JAMAICA					
CCCD	June 4 - June 12, '04	Deaf Village	Taylor/Princeville BC	Work Place	50
CCCD	June 26 - July 3, '04	Knockpatrick	Mansfield BC - Pete Webel	Deaf School	40
CCCD	July 17-24, '04	Knockpatrick	Chicago/Francesville BC - Tom Neu	Deaf School	40

COORDINATOR	PHONE	FAX	E-MAIL
Jon Zeller	309-266-9009		jzeller@mtco.com
Derek Sauder	309-925-7502		Sauder_Derek_A@cat.com
Jay Maibach	330-939-5234		jmmaibach@valkyrie.net
Bob Beebe	574-291-2158	574-299-8173	rbeebe@surfpure.com
Tom Hitz	734-454-9229	734-454-9259	thitzhome@juno.com
Phil Isabel	219-261-3541	219-261-2885	
Greg (Beth) Herman	309-243-5610		gberman@juno.com
Craig Emch	330-939-4591	330-939-4591	
Terry Miller	IL Phone: 309-696-7804	FL Phone & Fax: 941-485-4302	none
Dean Pashak	989-662-7685	989-662-7685	dwpashak@charter.net
Bill Rager	419-263-2989		
Pete (Linda) Webel	419-756-2587		
Kevin Sauder	309-925-2409	309-925-2409	kjs@a5.com
Rich Bertschi	309-467-6110		lemangm@mtco.com
Ted Habegger	260-694-6765		th@parlorcity.com
Mike Reinhard	248-477-2287	248-427-0396	mlreinhard@msn.com
Warren Kloter	309-208-2785		wkloter@myexcel.com
Tom Neu	630-983-6267		mtneu@aol.com
Rick Wuethrich	219-567-9488	219-567-2542	topnotch@home.ffi.com
Art Mueller	608-676-4365		

CCCD=Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf

MEBSH = Missions of Evangelical Baptists of South Haiti

Palm Grove = Mission of Haiti

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

TBA = To Be Announced

Palm Grove = Mission of Haiti

A.W.A. - B. = Apostolic Water Aid/Bluffton

A.W.A. - FRW = Apostolic Water Aid/Francesville, Remington, Wolcott

A.W.A. - T = Apostolic Water Aid/Tremont

(*) = Changes or additions since last issue

()** = Spring Break Timeframe

Nurses Needed

Fairview Haven, a continuing care retirement community, is looking for several loving and caring nurses (RN or LPN) to join our staff. If you would desire an opportunity to serve our older brethren and friends, please seek the Lord's direction and consider a job of service in Fairbury, IL. We would be happy to provide you with a competitive wage and benefit package and would even assist in relocation if needed. If you would enjoy working in a positive Christian environment and would like to make a difference in the lives of others, please consider this opportunity to serve. If interested, please contact Rick Plattner, Administrator, Fairview Haven, 605 N. Fourth St., Fairbury, IL 61739; phone (815) 692-2572.

- NOTICE -

**Repair and Distribution of
Worn Bibles,
Bible Story Books,
Hymns of Zion,
Tabernacle or
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
307 First St
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)

Counseling for depression, anxiety, relationship problems, etc...

- Information about mental health issues and relationship problems
- Referrals to qualified mental health professionals in your area
- Telephone consultations with a counselor
- Staffed by professional counselors and registered nurses
- All calls are strictly confidential



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.

For information contact Roger Sauder, Chairman, 954-584-0947 or e-mail at rjsauder@juno.com.

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: bibledist@parlorcity.com

Mexico Work Teams 2004

Location	Date	Project	Coordinator	Phone & (e-mail)
Rio Bravo	June 19-26, 2004	Construction	Joe Zimmerman	309-263-0254
Rio Bravo	July 3-10, 2004	Construction	Dean Fiechter	260-565-3439 dafiechter@parlorcity.com
Rio Bravo	July 10-17, 2004	Construction	Dean Fiechter	260-565-3439 dafiechter@parlorcity.com
Juarez	September 1-8, 2004	Medical/Dental	Cheryl Herrman	309-385-1082 cherylh@mtco.com

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



Houseparents Needed

Gateway Woods has appreciated the Lord's blessing of being fully staffed with Houseparents. At this time, however, we are experiencing a staff opening. Bro. Erik and Sis. Carrie Wiegand (Goodfield, IL) are planning to leave Gateway Woods in the near future. This offers an opportunity for a couple, directed of the Lord, to come to work in a full-time on going ministry at Gateway Woods. This position offers competitive wages and benefits and a close relationship with brothers and sisters whose hearts and lives are dedicated to a common mission with an eternal reward. If you feel the call to explore these possibilities, please call one of the brothers listed below.

Ed Graf
Residential Program Director
PO Box 151
Leo, IN 46765
1-888-443-4283
ed.graf@gatewaywoods.org

Lynn Stieglitz
Counseling Elder
15417 Doty Rd.
New Haven, IN 46774
260-657-1033



Scholarships Available

Gateway Woods offers four \$1,500 scholarships to students enrolled in undergraduate or postgraduate work leading to a degree in a social services field (this unfortunately does not include Nursing). The scholarships are available to any member of the Apostolic Christian Church or friend who attends on a regular basis. A description of the scholarship and application are available by contacting Bro. Joe Gerber at 888-443-4283 or joe.gerber@gatewaywoods.org.

Applications need to be returned to Gateway Woods by June 1, 2004. We encourage all eligible members or friends to apply.



This continues an 8-part series on church practices. The following are excerpts from booklets distributed to Sunday School teachers by Apostolic Christian Publishing in Eureka, Illinois.

CLOSED COMMUNION

In America today there are widely divergent Christian groups. Pluralism and diversity seem to be the hallmarks of our time. It's fair to conclude there are some falsehoods and error. It's also possible that some who profess Christ may have sin in their lives.

To insure, as much as possible, that only worthy souls take communion, this rite has been open only to baptized souls (within our church) who have sincerely examined themselves prior to taking part in this very sacred service.

Preparation

Contingent on a believer properly taking Holy Communion is that he be ready, or "worthy," to actually take it. One does not arbitrarily participate, but must be in a state of readiness. This does not imply one has to be perfect to take communion. One must, however, be free of willful sin, be walking in a state of grace and be at peace with God and man.

One must also, through the grace of God, be living in separation from the world of sin. The Apostle Paul instructs, *"Wherefore whosoever shall eat of this bread, and drink of this cup of the Lord*

unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:27) and *"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body"* (1 Corinthians 11:29).

If a person would take communion unworthily two things result: (1) he is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, and (2) he eateth and drinketh damnation to himself. This is very serious. Can the church, in good conscience and in obedience to Scriptures, allow just anyone to participate in view of the Bible's high standards regarding this ceremony?

For Members Only

In "closed" communion, this service is confined to members of a particular denomination. This policy is not for the purpose of exclusion, but is more a recognition of the solemn fact there are Biblical requirements for participation in the life of true Christian brotherhood. Can a church, in good conscience and in obedience to Scriptures, allow persons to take Holy Communion indiscriminately? One would have to ignore the Apostle's teaching to do so.

A noted historian once wrote: "Closed communion is made necessary by the fact that not all Christian groups today require strictly Christian standards; that is, some denominations definitely tolerate sub-Christian standards on the part of their members. If all Christian

denominations had identical standards for a high Christian life including separation unto God and nonconformity to the world, there would be no occasion for closed communion."

Brotherhood

Before one can truly gain a clear grasp of why a policy of closed communion should be maintained, he must fully understand the concept of brotherhood as it relates to the precepts of the body of Christ — the church.

The church, in reality, is a brotherhood consisting of brothers and sisters in the Lord. They are members one of another, and each esteems the other over himself. Thus, when brethren join together for the sacred act of Holy Communion, they should join do so with a sense of oneness, both in doctrine and practice. It would be inconsistent, as well as contradictory, if the table of communion was open arbitrarily to any professed believer. If this occurred, the communion with the Lord would not be a common one, nor would the various communicants be perfectly joined together, or united in the likeminded way that is so enriching to the truly converted, and from which we as a church have benefited so much over the years.

If communion was "open", all degrees of religious thought and attitude would be unnaturally mingled together, and the oneness taught by Scriptures would not

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REMEMBERING

...continued from page 50

be realized. Probably, many would be taking only Communion *unworthily*, which the Bible teaches against. If left open to all, the church might be granting a false security to certain persons by giving recognition they are Christian when, in fact, they are not — never having repented for their sins. Perhaps they might be converted — perhaps not. For those who would not be, the church would be unintentionally acknowledging they are. This would be wrong.

If, by such an open communion policy, occasionally a sinner took communion, the church cannot overlook the Scripture found in I Timothy 5:22: "*neither be partakers of other men's sins.*"

To keep this rite a holy and Godly one patterned after Scriptures, to insure brethren observe it "in common" and to maintain the Scriptural command that all take it *worthily*, closed communion is the only way a church can confine this sacred ritual to those whom the church feels are truly converted. And too, closed communion helps shield our doctrine from falsehoods.

Our forefathers, since the beginning of our church in the early 1800's, saw the value in holding to a high standard, both in maintaining sound doctrine, and in conducting a communion ceremony that was in accord with the Bible's teachings.

It is a particularly wise policy today due to the widespread proliferation of Christian diversity, and varying winds of doctrinal teaching.

By: Perry A. Klopfenstein

Next Issue:

More Church Practices

The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

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"Rejoice in the Lord"

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

If you wait to rejoice until there isn't anything to be sad about, you will never rejoice. Philippians 4:4 reads, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice."

Paul and Silas had been beaten and thrust into the inner prison when they "Prayed and sang praises unto God." (Acts 16:25). They rejoiced in the Lord under difficult circumstances.

In the book of Habakkuk, 3:17, we read, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

The Lord Jesus Christ said, as recorded in John 16:33, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

In Proverbs 17:22 we read, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Indeed there are many scriptures which teach us to rejoice in the Lord. The life of a believer does not have to be melancholy, although there are many sad things in life. Illness, death, war and sin are all around us. And yet, in the Lord, we are comforted.

We must be careful not to be too cheerful in the presence of those who are depressed or who are grieving over the loss of a loved one.

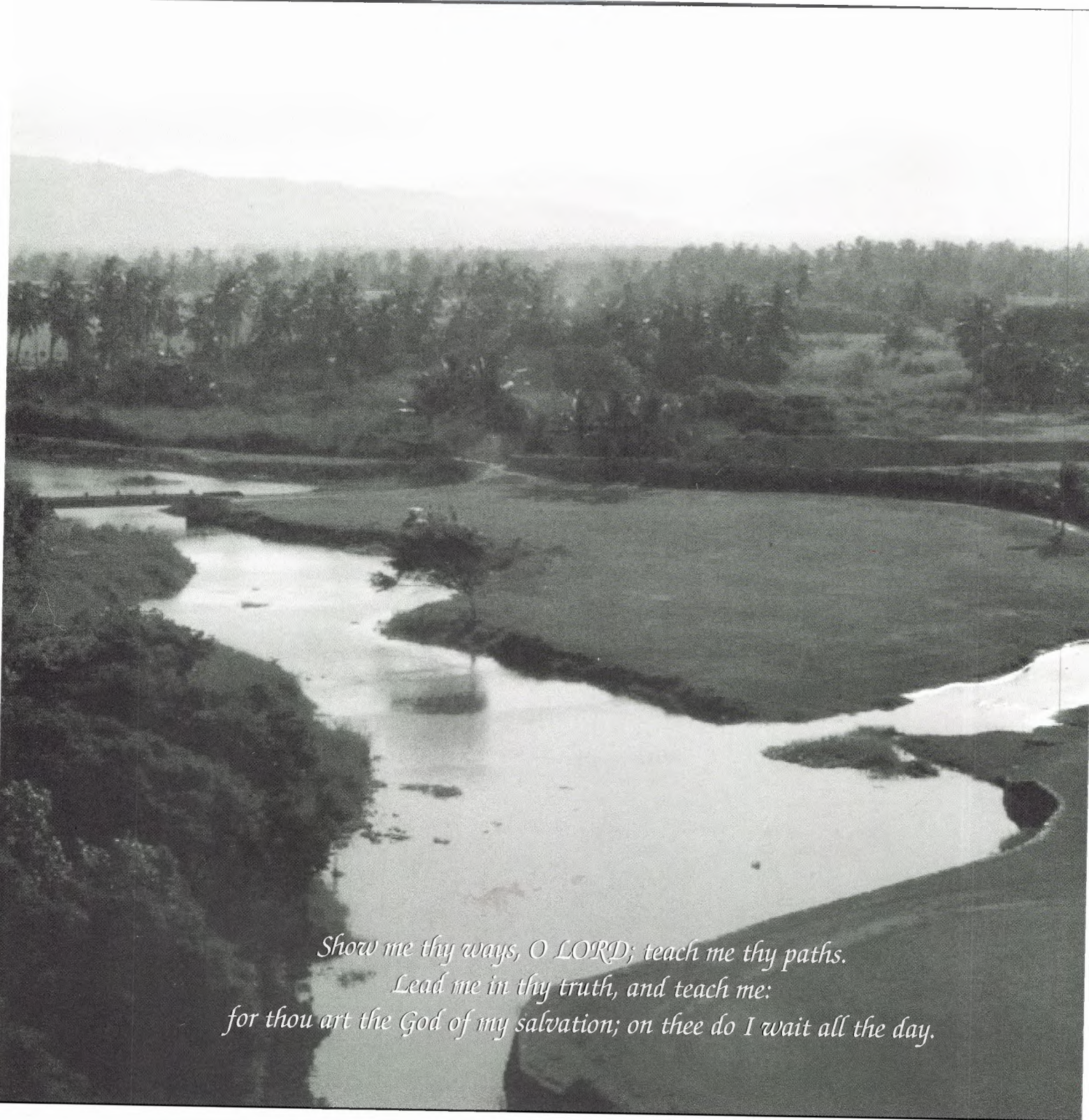
Some people even object to a bright outlook when there is nothing to be downcast about. Several weeks ago, at our local Jr. High School where I help with teaching English, one of the lady teachers told me as we approached the classroom, "Mr. Ehnle, please don't tell this class that it is a wonderful day. Every day is not wonderful." I obliged, but it is hard on me to change my routine.

To those of you who are depressed, I do not mean to criticize you. We cannot always control our own feelings. However, in the midst of your depression, please try to think about how wonderful it is that we can see, we can hear, and we can think. The Apostle Paul encourages us to think about good things, as much as possible. "If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8).

There are different kinds of rejoicing and our rejoicing should be of a pure nature. We should be happy that we are redeemed. God loves us. Let's trust Him.

As a child, my mother taught me this poem. "It's easy enough to be happy, When life flows along like a song. But the man worth while, Is the man that can smile, When everything goes dead wrong."

The Bible tells us to rejoice in the Lord. By the grace of God, we hope to fulfill that teaching. If you wait to rejoice until there isn't anything to be sad about, you will never rejoice.



*Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.
Lead me in thy truth, and teach me:
for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*

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