

The Silver Lining

*The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,
upon them hath the light shined.*

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

Isaiah 9:2,7

December 2005

Sermon by Bro. Joe Gerst, Iowa City, IA

Isaiah 53 and St. Luke 2:1-21

The question was raised in the Old Testament, "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation?..." Isaiah 53:8. It is a question yet for you and I. Who will declare today the name of Jesus Christ? The Lord brought that question forth to us and He said, will He find faith when He returns to this earth (St. Luke 18:8)? Will we be ashamed of Him or will we find Him so precious to us that we are not ashamed but rather thankful? That we will want everyone to have the joy of knowing Him as our Savior as we have found Him.

The angels certainly were not ashamed. They came in their glory and they declared His coming. They declared that this little baby was the Son of God. They declared that He was come to be a Savior, not simply to this little group of shepherds but to all mankind. (St. Luke 2:9-14) But we know that this salvation is not automatically given to everyone simply because it is available to everyone. But it is given to those who end up receiving it and seeking it. That is the blessing that all of us can enjoy. No one need be left out. Everyone is eligible.

Why are we eligible? Is it because that we have been good enough? No, we are eligible because we have been bad enough. We didn't have to drown in a deep lake of sin to be qualified to need salvation. But because we were sinners, God said He so loved mankind that He sent His Son, that if we believe on Him, we will find salvation (St. John 3:16). We know the steps that God has prescribed for qualifying for that salvation. We know, based upon His Word, the things that we will do to maintain in our life that hope of salvation. Tonight, we don't want to slight that part of the message, but we do want to praise God for being gracious enough unto His creation, you and I, to send His Son.

Many of us in this room have chil-

dren. All of us have been children of someone. Hopefully every one of us were privileged enough to have parents who loved us. Who cared for us the best they understood and knew how. For those parents who understood of the ways of God and loved and followed God, they have taught us of this precious plan of salvation. Because it is simply the greatest message that can ever be imparted from one generation to the next. We can give all kinds of advice on how to live in this world, how to be a good neighbor, how to be a good business person, how to be a good worker, how to be a good employer. We can give all kinds of advice. But we know there will come a day that all of these things won't matter at all compared to whether we have imparted to our children the message of salvation. But the point, dear ones, that we want to make is that, when we have children, we recognize a little better, if you will, their value.

What would it be like to know that before a child was conceived into our family, what his destiny was to be? That his destiny was to go to a land where he would be despised, ridiculed, hunted and finally nailed to a cross by people who hated him and to be taunted until he died. I am not sure exactly how we would handle that.

As many things in this life, it is almost worse waiting for something to happen than it is for when the thing actually happens. God knew this for centuries. But He fulfilled it anyway. That is why tonight we have a reason to come together and to worship this great God. Dear ones, we have a reason to worship Jesus Christ. We maybe get almost the idea, if we don't think about it a little bit, we almost get the idea because He was a little baby, He didn't have a choice in this thing. But the wonder of it all is I don't believe He had spent His centuries of time be-

fore He came to this earth, as a tiny infant. But rather I believe He spent His time as an adult, as He is today. We can read indications of that and we know that is a fact when we read in God's Word. He simply came to us

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

Light From The Word



Writings based
on God's Word

December 2005

Obedience

Thy Word, O Lord, forever is the mirror where we see our faults and duties as they are, Our likeness unto thee ("Obedience to the Word" Zion's Harp p. 142).

Obedience means to do as requested or required. Whether one agrees with the request really doesn't change the meaning of the word. There are, of course, some requests or orders we should not obey. There are so many who do not understand right and wrong as based on God's, Word that we need to be careful who we listen to. Being obedient to those who advise us to behave contrary to God's Word is, of course, very dangerous.

On their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, the children of Israel were often disobedient. The consequences of this behavior was severe. All except Joshua and Caleb, of the children of Israel who were twenty years old and upward, died in the wilderness and were denied entrance into the Promised Land because of disobedience.

As we study the Old Testament, we find many details in the old law that made total obedience seem difficult. Sometimes we do not understand why all of the detail is important. When Moses told the people what the Lord had said, they "...answered with one voice, and said all the words which the Lord hath said we will do" (Ex. 24:3). Later, when Moses had received much detail about the curtains in the tabernacle, various coverings, vessels, etc. we are told "Thus did Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he" (Ex. 40:16).

What was the result of the willingness of Moses and the people when they did all that the Lord asked of them? "...the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Ex. 46:34-35). A similar incident occurred at the dedication of the temple. King Solomon had instructed the builders of the temple to follow the details without deviation. At the time of the dedication of the temple "...it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord" (I Ki. 8:10-11).

Throughout the scripture we read of many others who were also put to great tests and in faith obeyed God. David spared Saul's life on several occasions because he knew of a truth "...who can raise his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless" (I Sam. 26:9)? David's obedience under difficult circumstances led to many blessings after he became king.

Under very trying circumstances Ruth the Moabitess chose to follow her mother-in-law and travel to a strange land. She knew that God would be with her and she said "...for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." (Ruth 1:16). She was obedient to Naomi, her mother-in-law, after they returned to the land of Naomi's people.

Esther was placed in a position, as Queen, where she could save the lives of her people by entreating King Ahasuerus. In order to do so she had to approach the king without having been called — an act punishable by death. After three days of fasting by all the Jews in Shushan, she went into the king with the attitude that "...if I perish, I perish" (Es. 4:16). Her willingness to obey saved the lives of her people.

The greatest act of obedience, of course, was the willingness of Jesus Christ to go to the cross and shed His blood for our sins. He was greatly burdened by this very difficult assignment. He knew the pain and agony that awaited Him. He prayed fervently three times that if there were another way perhaps He could be spared this terrible ordeal. All alone, His disciples having fallen asleep while He prayed, He pleaded with God for an escape, but each time He added, "...nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mk. 14:36). Jesus won a victory of obedience to God.

We also are faced with many decisions about whether to obey God or not. Some of those decisions are obvious to us. Some are not so obvious. All of us must decide whether we will obey the call to repent, be converted, and take up the cross and follow Him. Although we may not always have recognized when God called us into His service, we did know that the time would come that we must answer the call.

But what about the daily tasks that confront us? Many times each day we face the

need to make decisions about obedience to God. Some of the tasks are significant. Some may seem trivial. What happens to us if we ignore the "little" things?

"Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?" (Is. 7:13). Jesus reminded us of the importance of obedience even in small things. A nobleman had given ten of his servants a pound to use until his return. The amount of return was not the issue. The diligence of the labor was. Those who were faithful were told "...because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities" (Lk. 19:17). Peter reinforced the importance of diligence and faithfulness in small things. "...be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (II Peter 3:14). It truly takes obedience in small things to make sure we are without "...spot, or wrinkle..." (Gal. 5:27).

There are many places in the scripture that remind us of the blessings of obedience to "...all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). Jesus reminded us of the blessings of detail when He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Mt. 22:37-38).

Sometimes we may get discouraged and think it is just not possible for us to be good enough. It is just not possible to be as faithful as we would like to be. When John was on the Isle of Patmos and wrote to the seven churches of Asia, Jesus told him to write "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) ...Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer ... and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:9-10). "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation..." (Rev. 3).

Jesus knows our plight. He knows the deceitfulness of Satan. He knows the difficulties we face and He has a beautiful promise to him that overcometh.



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

Preschool of Athens, Alabama

A small Preschool, affiliated with the Athens, Alabama church was established as a pilot project in 1981 for the purpose of evaluating the feasibility of Christian schools. This Preschool has provided opportunities for many of our members to do missionary work through teaching and volunteer activities. It has provided an opportunity for many children to get a preschool education in a Christian atmosphere; it has served as a mission outreach with the hope of bringing additional people to the Athens church; and it has helped bring teachers, volunteers, board members, and other visitors to the Athens church from the northern churches. During the past twenty-four years of operation, attendance at the school ranged from a few students the first year to a peak average monthly enrollment of 48 students in 1996. Current enrollment is 21 students.

The Athens Preschool was established as a separate corporation under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic Christian Church of America, and is governed by a set of by-laws. It operates under the oversight of a volunteer Administrator who is accountable to a School Board made up of five brothers. The School Board is accountable to the Elder Education Committee who serve as Counseling Elders for this project.

Goals and objectives

The general goals of the Apostolic Christian Preschool are to help young preschool age children develop in the areas of: *Intellectual growth* – language development, reading and math readiness, science concepts; *Social growth* – behavior,

values, respect for others; *Spiritual growth* – love of God, love for others; and *Physical growth* – gross and fine motor activities, good hygiene, nutrition, body structure and function, activity and rest.

The Preschool opens each morning with children being dropped off anytime between 6:00 - 8:30 AM. During that time, the children are engaged in creative free play and activities teaching fine motor skills. At 8:30 AM, the day begins with singing and a Bible story. There is an hour of lessons in separate classes based on the age of the student. Each day, the children are provided a hot, nourishing lunch along with morning and afternoon snacks, time to play on the playground, and a period of rest. The Preschool closes by 5:30 PM. Field trips are taken periodically to enhance study of a unit topic.

Teachers and oversight

The teaching staff at the Preschool has been the backbone of the school. Two of the current staff are sisters from the Athens church who have worked there since its beginning in 1981. Several others from the Athens church, and seventeen different sisters from churches in Illinois, Indiana and Ohio have devoted from one to many years teaching the little children at the Preschool and/or coordinating the activities there over the past twenty-four years. The efforts of these teachers have made a significant impact upon the lives of many children. There is currently a need for an additional full-time teacher at the school.

The Athens Preschool is administered by a Board of five brothers who each serve a five-year term, one being replaced each year. Since 1981, a total of twenty-three differ-

ent brothers have volunteered their time to serve on the Board, making at least two trips each year to Athens for board meetings during their five-year term. These brothers are responsible for hiring teachers, approving annual budgets, reviewing financial performance against the budget, establishing pay ranges and annual salary changes for the employees, among other duties.

Support and involvement

Throughout the years, numerous individuals have volunteered time during the summer or other school breaks to help out at the Preschool in maintenance activities, or to provide a vacation period for the teachers. Many others have contributed as sponsors for those students whose families could not afford to pay full tuition. Several Sunday Schools have made financial contributions to the Preschool over the years. These contributions and volunteer help have been invaluable towards keeping the preschool functioning. One area of on-going need is for one or more young sisters to move to Athens to provide companionship and accountability for the sister(s) who serve as teachers. There seem to be adequate opportunities for other employment in the area.

More information

For more information on supporting the efforts at the Athens Preschool, please contact Bro. Mike Moore, Administrator, at 256-729-0620 or ALM38@aol.com; or Bro. Bob Walder, Chairman of the Preschool Board, at 309-965-2965 or bobw@mtco.com. For those who are interested, a monthly newsletter is available which is prepared primarily for updating parents of current activities.



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

School in Juarez, MX

Another school year has begun at the Escuela Primera de Ammar school in the city of Juarez, Mexico. The thing that is different about this school compared to the public schools in Mexico is that Jesus Christ is taught on a daily basis to students who may have never heard the Word of God.

This school is very transient because Juarez is a border town and many come from the interior hoping to find a better life by seeking employment at an American factory or hoping to get to the United States. Many times, expectations are not met and they return to the interior with their children.

Child Sponsorship

Each year when school begins, a small group of brothers or sisters from the AMMAR Child Sponsorship field office have the opportunity to travel to Juarez. While there, they enroll new students and remove the names of students who have left the school. In addition to obtaining the current enrollment, they meet with the staff at the school, observe the classrooms and the function of the school. They measure each of the children for uniforms and take their pictures. The pictures and updated enrollment are sent to Morton, IL to the main Child Sponsorship office where they are processed for the sponsorship program.

The measurements are brought back to Bluffton, IN where uniforms are purchased or sewed, packaged and then sent to the Ammar school. In addition, each student receives a sweater as a Christmas gift from their individual sponsor. It is such a blessing to know that we truly can make a difference in the life of a child.

In early October 2005, four sisters representing the Bluffton field office made the trip to Juarez to learn more about the school and the opportunities with the sponsorship program. Because of the language barrier, the difference between the Mexican and American culture, and because they are not there on a daily basis to monitor the daily activities at the school, they felt this trip to Juarez was needed to give insights for future decisions. As they learned more about the Mexican culture, they developed a new appreciation for the work being done, and the Christians we work with.

The group was taken to a store to buy school supplies for the school year. When they arrived at the school, chapel was in progress and Minerva was teaching a Bible School lesson to approximately 120 children, from kindergarten to sixth grade. She used a flannel graph set that had been donated by World Relief to keep their attention and taught them about a leprous man. She then related that to the students' lives by explaining that we can have leprosy of the heart by telling lies but that Jesus can cleanse our hearts. The students all said their Bible verse together and a male teacher led the children in prayer. They were then dismissed to their classrooms.

Beginning with a hot lunch

Apostolic Christian World Relief involvement in Juarez began in the mid 1980's. At that time, a hot lunch program began and continues today. In addition to serving a hot lunch, a Bible lesson and singing is part of that program. Minerva, the current Bible lesson teacher, was one of the young children who benefited from the hot lunch program. It is encouraging that this program has shown

fruit in this way. God continues to bless this simple program.

Many mothers of students came at the start of the school day (1:00 PM) to prepare the hot lunch for the students. These students are fortunate to have a hot meal each day, but more fortunate to hear the Word of God. The students were well behaved and seemed to have a lot of respect for the teachers, the parents and for each other.

The power of the Gospel

The school in Juarez continues to grow. The building will hold 150 students and they now have 126 students enrolled for the present school year. The team came back from Mexico reassured that God is truly alive and working in the lives of the Christian believers who are reaching out and spreading the gospel to 126 children each day in Juarez, Mexico at Escuela Primera de Ammar. They challenge the young people to bring twelve new people to church each year to hear God's Word. Their statistics show that eight of the twelve will make a decision to come to Christ in humble repentance.

It is encouraging and humbling to consider the work that God is doing in Juarez, Mexico and that Apostolic Christian World Relief has had an opportunity to be involved for over 20 years. At the time of this writing, there is still a need to sponsor 40 students. If you wish to be involved in this work, you can contact the Child Sponsorship Office in Morton, IL. The cost per month for a student is \$25.00.

The address is:
ACWR Child Sponsorship
PO Box 36
Morton, IL 61550
Phone: 309-266-6080

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Do you ever wonder about your purpose in life? This question came up at a recent Bible study with a small group of residents at Timber Ridge.

Small Bible study groups continue to be held at several of our homes every month. One of the groups has a group of Timber Ridge residents who are severely challenged with physical disabilities. All of these residents use wheelchairs to ambulate and have adaptive equipment. The leader of this group is physically challenged, too. A staff assists the group. Sometimes the others can't understand this man's speech, due to his physical challenges. The staff helps interpret his speech for the others.

During the October gathering for the Timber Ridge Bible group, the leader made some statements. He said, "God put us in wheelchairs for a reason. He shows His power through us. He helps us. Others get to help us and this helps them, too. Someday in heaven we will not have these bodies." The other residents didn't seem to need to talk about the reasons why God "put them in wheelchairs." They started talking about heaven right away. One person said there are streets of gold there. One resident wanted to talk about other residents who died and are there in heaven. He said, "What about the guy who liked frogs, and the guy who had a coffee cup collection ... are they there?" Yet another resident said, "Well, the best part of heaven is that we will see God."

After the discussion, one resident in the group looked somewhat nervous. The leader asked him, "Are you going to heaven?" The

first resident answered, "I don't know." The leader then clearly outlined the plan of salvation. He spoke of Jesus' blood and the death, repentance toward God, and then life controlled by Jesus.

At this point the staff who assisted in the Bible study realized there is a purpose for every single living breathing soul on planet earth.

JANUARY birthdays at Timber Ridge, 2125 Veterans Road, Morton, IL 61550: Nicole Delicath (1/6), Stephen Penn (1/8), Jacqueline Willett (1/19), Bruce Steffen (1/19), Franz Fischer (1/26), John Eddy (1/27), Thomas Sides (1/31).

At Linden Estate, 1000 Linden St., Morton, IL 61550: Mary Schramm (1/13), Karen Blunier (1/14).

At 431 W. David, Apt. G, Morton, IL 61550: Rhonda Gerst (1/12).

GATEWAY WOODS APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME Tim Sauder

Seeking Jesus: For years I have been fascinated with certain parts of nativity scenes and the way in which the birth of Jesus is portrayed pictorially. It is a challenge to include all the components and people of that awesome story in one picture. While it is accurate to include the wise men in the story, placing them at the manger scene is not likely to have occurred.

Angels, shepherds, animals — yes, they were part of that holy night. Specifically a donkey is questionable since we have no written record that Mary actually rode instead of walked from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Even the "luxury" of a donkey or a wagon ride would have

been torturous. Just ask a woman who is nine months pregnant how far she wants to ride or walk on a rough road.

A closer reading reveals that the wise men came as late as two years after Jesus' birth and that the Lord and his parents were living in a house by the time of their arrival with their rich gifts fit for the King. Were there really three wise men? We don't know just how many. We know from the plural there were at least two and that they had three types of presents. But there could have easily been many more than three.

Many of us lose interest in the news events of last week and we move on to some more new, exciting or novel reports of wars, calamities, political intrigue or the results of game. The Magi were not easily discouraged. In fact they were quite courageous, tenacious and patient, and guided as much by faith as they were the star. The most important thing is that didn't give up and they searched for the one and only Jesus until they found Him.

The saying "Wise men still seek Him" is just true as ever. Today there is light pollution making it hard to distinguish which is His star. There is so much noise, static and competition for our senses that it's hard to hear the clear message. There are more detours and distractions. And there are plenty of deceivers and detractors with official looking uniforms but who give out poor directions or who are quick to deny that there is such a Savior. There are still others who would say that any "savior" will do, as long as we are sincere in our search. That's a sweet sounding lie from the pit of hell.

The Word promises that if ask we will receive, if we seek we will find, and if we knock the door will be opened. (Matt 7:7) The Lord says "Seek ye me and ye shall live." (Amos 5:4) Hebrews 11:6 says "that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." In this season of shopping we need to be seekers instead, not satisfied with anything less than the real thing, the authentic item, the true Savior and Lord Jesus. And when we do, let us be wise men and women to humbly bow down in reverence, willingly surrendering our most precious gifts — our hearts and our lives.

News:

- Marc and Diann Grim are pleased to announce the birth of their new son, Marcus Jeremiah Grim. Marcus was born on November 16. We are also thankful that one of our pregnant teens in the west house gave birth to her baby boy. We welcome both infants!

- Please remember to pray for 3 families who recently returned from adopting children in China and for a 14 year-old mother who is placing her child for adoption. Also we currently have 3 girls who are in our Foster-to-Adopt program. We are so thankful for the families who want to make a difference in the lives of others.

- After years of sacrificial voluntary service and over two years as a full-time staff member, we bid farewell to Bro. Kevin Sauder as he leaves Gateway Woods Family Services to return to his previous employer. In addition to home-based services and Biblical counseling, he contributed greatly to our administrative process, seminars ministry, and printed materials.

**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
PRESCHOOL
Athens, AL
Melissa Slagel**

Thank you for the sun so bright.
Thank you for the moon at night.
Thank you for my family.
Thanks for friends who play with me.
Thanks for everything I see.
I am thankful, yes siree!

We certainly are so thankful for another wonderful month of learning and loving here at the preschool. The children seem to continue to soak up whatever we teach and model to them. Our older children love to play school and I cringe when I hear them say "okay I am the teacher". It is amazing to see us in so many things they say and do. It is a good reality check too! We pray that they can see God in us so that God can be seen in them as they grow and mature.

Everyday as part of our curriculum we read Bible stories to them. I wonder some days as they untie their shoes and then retie them again in hundreds of knots, or scrunching up their face at the child next to them, or searching their little arms and legs for ouchies...are they really hearing anything we are saying? I thank the Lord when it becomes obvious that yes they certainly are. One of our little 3 year old girls was reading a book one day and she told me "this girl's name is Samson." When I asked her why, she simply said "because her hair is long." We had just read the story of Samson a few days before. They really ARE listening and watching, even while knotting their shoelaces!

Throughout the month of No-

vember we did activities with the color brown. We also talked about healthy choices and nutrition. I don't think they were 100% persuaded that vegetables taste better than candy and chips, but at least I think we got the point across that candy all day, every day, isn't healthy. We also practiced Thanksgiving songs and poems and created pilgrim and Indian costumes. Then a few days before Thanksgiving we invited all of the special people in our lives for a little performance and feast. The children did a wonderful job and it was so rewarding to see the happy parents.

**ALABAMA, ATHENS
Louise Hall**

We have been privileged over the years as people have come to visit Athens, or have moved here to have built so many relationships. With the preschool here too, many teachers have come and then moved on. As a result, they and their families remain special to us. We had a Homecoming weekend this month to get together with all of those who have helped make Athens what it is. It was a special weekend filled with singing and worship. Thank you to Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Sis. Peggy, Goodfield, IL) who was our minister on Sunday. Also, thank you to Psalm 100 for coming and singing for us. God bless all who came and helped make it such an enjoyable weekend. We look forward to the great Homecoming where we will never have to say goodbye.

Bro. Jeff Thames (Sis. Brenda) came from Washington, IL, to do a marriage seminar for us on a Saturday this month. Several others

from IL came as well to take part in the weekend. God bless Bro. Jeff, all of his family and everyone who shared the weekend with us.

Our other visiting minister this month was Bro. Greg Stoller (Sis. Jill, Forrest, IL). Thank you for coming and bringing God's message to us.

Several were in the hospital this month. Our prayers go out to Bro. Arnold Haggemaker who has been having some heart problems. Daniel King is also having complications as a result of a motorcycle accident a year ago. We know the Lord is the ultimate healer and we continue to pray for him. Daniel is the grandson of Sis. Katherine King. Sis. Ruby Ross has also been sick and we pray that she will be well again soon.

Eric Coulter remains stationed with the army overseas. Eric is the son of Bro. David and Sis. Barbara Coulter. He will not be able to come home for Christmas. We need to pray for him that he can feel the presence of God. Mail can be a big day brightener when you are as far away as he is. I am sure he would appreciate feeling the support. His address is:

PTV. Eric Coulter
Alpha Battery
1st. BN-38 FA
Camp Casey
South Korea
APO 96224-15683

ARIZONA, PHOENIX
Ron and Ev Hoerr

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

Ephesians 6:11

Our youth group did enjoy their visit to Prescott in November. God's love overwhelmed our precious young ones, many of them repenting.

The Sunday School picnic was well attended October 30.

Our beloved winter visitors and residents are arriving and God's love is very plentiful.

God blessed our parents who learned more of what the Word says about bringing up our children. We thank Bro. Jeff Thames (Sis. Brenda) for lending himself to our service.

We appreciated visiting ministers: Bro. Jeff Thames (Washington, IL), Bro. Curt Kaufman (Tucson), Bro. Todd Zollinger (Silverton, OR), Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL), Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL) and Bro. Marshall Heinold (Ixtilan).

Many prayers have been needed for our loved ones: Sis. Ruth Vaughn, Sis. Toni Bentley, Jacob Hand, Lauren Meiss, Dakota Thorpe, Sis. Shirley Mohrman, Bro. Herb Knochel Sr., Sis. Bertha Miller, and Bro. Clarence Beyer.

We are thankful that God has touched the hearts of Amy Ebert, Carl and Donna Richardson, Madison Gutwein, T'Kya Hoerr, Bethany Knochel, and Laura Wiegand, each of whom has made a beginning in repentance.

God's love and greetings to all.

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT
Jane Hodges

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

Which through grace is kept in
store

For thee when thy journey's o'er.

Zion's Harp #105

Bro. Henry Volz Jr. passed from this life on November 4 at the age of 87. He had been unable to worship with us for almost two years due to declining health. His services were held at the church on Sunday, November 13, but his graveside services were held in Omaha, Nebraska, where he was buried next to his wife, Philomena, who presided him in death in 1991. At his service, Bro. Jim Furrer mentioned how Bro. Henry was always at the construction site when our church was being built, cleaning up after the workers and keeping track of things. He loved being involved.

Bro. Tyler Scott has moved to the Prescott area from Bluffton, and is working with Bro. Dan Dubach in his landscaping business. We welcome Bro. Tyler into our congregation and wish him the Lord blessings in his new home and job.

We were blessed with a visit by several of the single members from the Altadena and Phoenix churches on Veterans Day weekend. We thank them for their visit and pray they received a blessing as we did from their visit.

ARIZONA, TUCSON
Lisa Knapp

We have the best news possible to report this month. Our number of converts has just risen from two to four. That is big news in a little church like ours! We are thrilled to be able to report that Doug and Young Bauer have expressed their need for repentance and their de-

sire to work out their soul salvation in our church. Along with Christie Kaufman and Krystal Tyler, we now have four souls repenting. I guess my faith is weak because if you would have told me six months ago that we would have four converts by Thanksgiving, I believe I would have had my doubts. It is truly amazing how the Lord works to strengthen our faith when we need it the most. I stand humbled in awe of His grace and mercy. The Tucson church is rejoicing with all of our converts and praying God will surround them with His love and grace as they strive to learn and grow. Thanks be to God!

With Thanksgiving coming next week, we certainly have much to be thankful for as you just read. We just enjoyed a visit from our Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich and his wife, Sis. Nancy. They spent the day with us this past Sunday and Bro. Jon visited with our converts. We thank them for their service of love on our behalf.

Our temperatures are in the 70's as we head into the weekend before Thanksgiving. Overnight lows are in the low 50's and the days are beautiful and sunny.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA **Robin Moser**

"I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvelous works."

Psalms 9:1

Thanksgiving is upon us again and we are reminded of our many blessings – of spiritual freedoms, heritage, and the ultimate Gift. May we all look to share these blessings that have been entrusted to us, and show forth His marvelous

works.

We are thankful for visiting ministers who shared the Word with us this month, including: Bro. Greg Lehman (Sis. Mary Beth, Wolcott, IN), Bro. Jim Koehl (Sis. Hildegard, San Diego, CA) and Bro. Andy Klaus (Sis. Jana, Tokyo, Japan). Our church has sensed the prayers and support of many during these past few months, and we appreciate ministers who have traveled to be with us.

We especially would like to welcome Bro. Andy and Sis. Jana Klaus to northern California, where they will be living for a few months. We are thankful they will be able to worship with us in Altadena, and are appreciative of his willingness to help on the pulpit.

Our congregation would like to wish God's richest blessings on the wedding engagement of Lindsey Aberle (Bro. Doug and Sis. Sandy) and Nick Alt (Darrell and Jenny). Our prayers are for His leading as they plan their future together.

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO **Peggy Jevremov**

As we approach the Christmas season, may we remember to look beyond the manger to the cross and the precious gift of salvation that was made available to all mankind through the shed blood of our dear Saviour. It is a gift that is freely given, but for us to obtain it, we must be willing to receive it.

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

As with joyful steps they sped
to that lowly manger bed,
There to bend the knee before
Him whom heaven and earth
adore;
So may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy seat.

Holy, Jesus, every day,
keep us in the narrow way,
And, when earthly things are past,

bring our ransomed souls at last,
Where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds Thy glory hide.

We so enjoy the visitors we have from time to time. We want to thank Bro. Nelson Beer (Sis. Shelby, Milford, IN) for his willingness to share God's Word with us this past month. May the Lord richly bless all those that serve us in the ministry.

Our prayers continue to be with those of our congregation who are unable to assemble with us: Sis. Julianna Topolchanyi, Bro. Rory Strahm, and Bro. Tibor Bozzay.

COLORADO, DENVER **Ann Gonglach**

This fall, my 10-year-old son studied angels and how they have interacted with people. It's interesting that there were many visits by angels surrounding the event of Christ's birth: from Zachariah's vision in the temple to Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and Joseph being warned to flee to Egypt. God's special messengers heralded this birth, as the most important birth in the history of mankind. As we see symbols of angels at Christmas-time, they are a vivid reminder of the glory and singularity of the birth of God's Son.

God's plan fulfilled as He had
willed,
Then came the Christ on earth
The star so bright in deepest night
Foretold His blessed birth.
The angel's throng with joyous
song
Appeared to shepherds meek
The angel's word the shepherds
heard
Then went they forth to seek.
Hymns of Zion, #35

On October 21-22, the Psalm 100 Quartet from Indiana, taught us the basics of music and sang for us. That same weekend, Bro. Ron Heiniger (Sis. Kayleen, Bloomington- Normal, IL) taught a study on worship and praising God through music to our Young Group, and preached the Word to us all on Sunday.

Bro. Duane Metzger (West Bend, IA) once again ministered to us while he and his wife, Sis. Ruth, were here in Colorado to meet their new grandchild.

Our sympathies are with our Bro. Tom Leman (Sis. Marlene) whose father, Bro. Wilmer Leman (Eureka, IL) passed away this fall.

Sis. Sue Steffen (Bro. Larry) is thankful to be recovering from foot surgery.

We are glad to have Brittany Moser (Garden Grove, IA) here with us for a while as she attends school.

It was a blessing to share with the underprivileged when we again participated in a Thanksgiving food drive with other churches in our community to help collect holiday meals for needy families.

**CONNECTICUT
ROCKVILLE
Laura Virkler
Amber Reutter**

"All come and thank the Lord..."
As we approach a day set aside to give thanks, there is so much that comes to mind to be thankful for. Surely we are a people most blessed. May we all be thankful for the bounty we have in this life and for a Father who loves and cares for us so well.

We rejoice with more souls who have come in repentance. Our prayers are with Doug Luginbuhl (Bro. Rick and Sis. Sue) and Bryan Eastwood (Mark and Nancy). May the Lord be with them as they begin a new walk of life.

Sis. Verona Schneider (Bro. Emmanuel) underwent surgery this past month and we are thankful that she is steadily recovering.

Note of thanks:

We wish to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who remembered us with your prayers, calls and cards in the illness and passing of our beloved husband, father and grandfather. We have been deeply touched by your kindness and pray that God will reward each and every kind deed.

Humbly, the family of Bro. Clarence Mangold

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON
Henrietta Meyer**

"...every one loveth gifts..."
Isaiah 1:23

Thanks be to God for the wonderful gift He has given in His Son, the Lord Jesus. May we all keep this in mind as we approach the holi-

days.

As I write this in mid-November, it is hard to believe what the calendar says. The temperature and the leaves on the trees make me think mid-October.

We are glad to have Bro. Dale Koch from Tremont, IL, worshipping with us while employed in Raleigh, NC. It is over a four hour train ride each way for him.

We have been listening to the annual Conference tapes. What a blessing — not only the inspiring messages, but also the technology that allows those who cannot attend to hear the messages.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. David Steffen (Elgin, IL), Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA), Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL), Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (Bluffton North, IN). We are thankful for these Brothers and the family that came with them to minister to us. Other visitors this month were from Champaign, Eureka and Tremont, IL; Rittman, OH; Bluffton, IN; Philadelphia, PA; and Wilmington, DE. We hope our visitors will come visit us again.

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 and Sis. Liz Hermann (703) 212-7339 or Sis. Henrietta Meyer (703) 904-8301 for assistance and to let us know how many to expect for Sunday services. If you would like

to get together on Saturday evening, please let us know that as well. We would be happy to have an evening of fellowship and/or singing.

**FLORIDA
FT. LAUDERDALE
Renee Mangold**

We have weathered another serious hurricane in our area. The awesome forces of these storms are a very real reminder of the power of our Lord. We have begun to return to life as usual here and are thankful that, while there were damages to properties, we all are fine.

We are praying for Maritza Albu, the daughter-in-law of our dear friend, Martika Albu, who is ill and has a six-month old baby. We pray that God would put His healing hand on her.

Our sympathies go to Bro. Mike Hohulin (Sis. Faye) on the passing of Mike's father, Bro. Bob Hohulin, Roanoke, IL. May they be comforted by God's promise of heaven and gain peace from His hand.

Bro. Ron Jones (Sis. Liz, Portland, OR) was with us and shared God's Word with us. We pray that God would bless him for his service.

**FLORIDA
NORTH FORT MYERS
Naomi Vogel**

Bro. Vic and Sis. Dottie Beer hosted their annual picnic on October 30 at their home in LaBelle. They had a lot of extra labor involved in their preparation because they had to clean up a lot of downed tree limbs after hurricane Wilma and were without power until the day before the picnic. After feasting on a delicious potluck meal, we enjoyed singing songs of praise.

On November 6, we heard the testimony of Sis. Carolyn Siegel followed by her baptism. Our Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz was here from Bluffton to perform this blessed sacrament. It was good to hear Sis. Carolyn's "story" and we welcome her into our church family.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Bro. Vic Beer's brother, Marion Beer, of Denver, CO. There were services in Denver and in Milford, IN, where he was buried. Bro. Ron Koehl came from Sarasota last Sunday to assist Bro. Marvin Steffen in Bro. Vic's absence.

A 50th wedding anniversary is becoming more of a rare event in today's world. We rejoice with Bro. Ray and Sis. Jeanie Haerr as they celebrated their 50th anniversary on November 13. They flew to Chicago to celebrate with their children. Congratulations, Ray and Jeanie!!

Bro. Mel Schrock had surgery on his hand to replace the tendon between his thumb and first finger. It was worn out, which indicates a life of hard work. Our prayers are for a rapid recovery and good results!

Our little congregation had grown quite a bit, but is beginning to diminish again as some return to their northern homes to spend the holidays with their families. We pray for their safe return, and know that many more will be coming south after the holidays.

**FLORIDA, SARASOTA
Robin Wiegand**

Greetings to all. We had the great blessing of receiving many teachings based on God's Word through special seminars for women and for the entire church given by Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr. (Mor-

ton, IL) and by the reading of the Memorandum by Elder Bros. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) and Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL). May God help us to apply these truths to our lives.

Sis. Vera Martin hosted our World Relief evening. We painted and colored t-shirts for less fortunate children this holiday season. May all be richly blessed throughout the Thanksgiving and Christmas season and remember the many things we have for which to be thankful. We in Sarasota are thankful to see our winter visitors returning, which is a special blessing.

**GEORGIA, ATLANTA
Kevin Kipfer
Benjamin Stoller**

As we watch the changing of the leaves, we begin to reflect on the changes in our lives. Let's be sure to be ready for that final change.

Warm, hearty fall greetings. We were very thankful for our visiting ministers during the past month. On October 16, Bro. Dave Obergfel (Sis. Kathleen, Peoria, IL) came and ministered unto us. Bro. Paul Gasser and Sis. Joyce (Akron, OH) blessed us with their presence on October 30. The next Sunday, November 6, Bro. Jed Rocke (Sis. Marsha, Goodfield, IL) along with many other Goodfield visitors came to remind us how blest that tie truly is that binds us together. We enjoyed Bro. Don Gudeman (Sis. Mary, LaCrosse, IN) on November 13.

We continue to lift up Will Olar in prayer as he persists in his academic endeavors. We gathered as a church family at Bro. John and Sis. Mary Brewer's for a bonfire on October 30. It was truly a warm expe-

rience. The first week of November we put a new roof on the church. It was a blessed time to work with our brethren as we grow closer together. All of us here in Atlanta want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE

Doreen Moser

Sheila McCoy

“Rejoice evermore.”

I Thess. 5:16

Our souls had many reasons to rejoice this month as we held our invite a friend weekend. Among those invited were two precious ministers and their families, Bro. James Knapp (Congerville, IL) and Bro. Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL). We were certainly blessed by all who shared the day with us. Bro. Gary Anliker was also a visiting minister this month and we always rejoice when they spend a Sunday with our Belvidere congregation.

“Pray without ceasing.”

I Thess. 5:17

Our High School Sunday school classes traveled to Gridley, IL, for ACYF this month. Although we as parents and Sunday School teachers hear the grumblings of the children why they need to spend all day in church, we were all blessed. The songs that were sung by the children touched many of those in the congregation and as one mother commented, “I couldn’t help but sing along.” There is such joy in singing praises to the Lord as a believer. If we continue to pray without ceasing for the salvation of our

children, surely they will someday feel the separation from the Lord and long for and attain that joy and peace in their hearts.

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God...”

I Thess. 5:18

We give thanks for the fellowship of other believers and are thankful we could gather together in Madison this month for our Bible Study. We are also thankful for Bro. Art Mueller who faithfully leads the group.

As this month is Thanksgiving and next month we will be celebrating the birth of our Saviour, may we find the time to practice these three simple verses.

ILLINOIS BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

Ann Nussbaum

Jen Heiniger

It has been a busy month for our congregation. As Thanksgiving has just passed and Christmas approaches, we are reminded to thank God for both the good and the bad as well as for the loving church family that shares in our trials and triumphs.

We welcomed Bro. Matt Kaufmann (Sis. Rebekah) to the ministry. We are thankful the Lord provided us with a faithful brother. We lift the Kaufmann family up in prayer as they take on this new duty.

Visiting ministers this month included Bros. Ron Bollier (Indianapolis), Brad Eisenmann (Chicago), Jim Meiss (Phoenix), David Obergfel (Peoria), and Howard Plattner (Alto). Thank you to each of you for allowing yourselves to be

used. We also wish to thank Bro. Bob Pflederer (Morton) for sharing a two part Bible study on how to study the Bible.

We rejoice with the angels over our two new converts. Finding God’s grace to repent are Will Nussbaum (Bro. Jay and Sis. Ann) and Kimberly Brosman (Deborah). Our prayers continue with you as you commit yourselves to the Lord.

Six babies brought us much excitement this month. Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary Masters welcomed two grandchildren. Henry James was born to Nathan and Sarah Masters on October 14. He joins older sister Anna. Grace DeeAnn was born to Bro. Jeremy and Sis. Amy Masters on October 19. She is welcomed by Jacob, Courtney, Audrey, and Elise, as well as grandmother, Judy Custer. Bro. Ron and Sis. Donna Hodel welcomed grandson Noah Ryan, born to Nate and Robin McElveen on October 23. First-time parents, Bro. Darin and Sis. Jessica Leman, welcomed Ethan Scott into their hearts on November 1. His grandparents are Mary and Charlie Slickner, Fred and Cynthia Basham, and Bro. Howard and Sis. Gloria Leman (Morton). Matt and Kirsten Hany welcomed their first child, Grace Ann Noel, on November 8. Her grandparents are Bro. Rick and Sis. Carol Hany, and Dick and Carol Schertz of Metamora. Bro. Matt and Sis. Janelle Steidinger, along with big sisters, Mariah and Jaelah, welcomed their first son, Luke Lehmann. His grandparents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Jane Steidinger (Fairbury), and Art and Janna Lehmann of Strawn.

Our sympathies go to Bro. Dave Zeller (Sis. Christine) on the death of his brother, Bro. Eric Zeller, of

Indianapolis. We also extend sympathy to Bro. Joe Beer (Sis. Jan) and his family on the death of his father, Levi Beer. Finally, Sis. Jen Heiniger (Bro. Brett) lost her grandfather, Bro. Bob Hohulin, of Roanoke. Our prayers go out to these three families in their loss.

We are also praying for Stephen Kupferschmid (Bro. Larry and Sis. Sandy) as he has spent time in Comer Children's Hospital. We are glad to have you back home with us again.

On October 16, we celebrated the wedding of our Sis. Alesa Knapp (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Dixie) to Bro. Clint Bahler (Bro. Ed and Sis. Annette) of West Lafayette. On October 30, our Sis. Bethany Wiegand (Bro. John and Sis. Mary, Roanoke) married Bro. Jeff Knobloch (Bro. William and Sis. Eleanor, Lester, IA) in Taylor, MO, where they will make their home. On November 11, Suzanne Kieser (Bro. Bob and Sis. Laura) married Erik Wilcox (Jeff and Pam Wilcox). We wish these couples God's blessings as they establish their homes.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD **Steve Endress**

We enjoyed having several visiting ministers with us this month. Elder Bro. Lawrence Luthi (Lamar, MO) assisted Bro. Wayne with provings and baptisms. Also, Bros. Glen Braker (Princeville, IL), Rex Frieden (Lamar, MO), Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL), Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL), and Ted Hirstein (Morton, IL) ministered unto us.

We rejoice that two young men were received into the church and became our Brothers in the Lord. Brandon Baer (Ron and Sis. Deanne) and Daniel Ehnle (Bro.

Donn and Sis. Tracy) testified of what the Lord has done in their hearts and lives and were baptized with the baptism of faith. We pray that God will continue to help them grow day by day.

We enjoyed hosting a Sunday evening singing in which brethren from Oakville and Burlington, IA, joined us. We often take the fellowship we enjoy for granted. We trust they felt as blest as we.

As the Winter season is upon us once again, may it help us to slow down, take a little extra time to relax, and remind ourselves that reading the Word of Life, praying to Almighty God, and examining our own heart and life are the best ways to spend a snowy evening. Let us give the Lord the first fruits of our time and energy.

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

"I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving."

Psalm 69:30

We have so much to be thankful for and we were once again reminded of this recently with the Thanksgiving holiday. The Sunday School collected shoe boxes this month filled with gifts for needy children as part of the organization, Operation Christmas Child. They also filled baskets with food for those in the area who are not as fortunate.

Sis. Carissa Schlipf has followed the Lord's calling and is moving soon to Magdalena, Mexico, to work in the orphanage there. She has been living in Champaign with her

sister, Sis. Janelle, for a little over a year and we will miss her dearly. She has been working for Head Start here in Champaign and has always had a gift in working with children.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO **Rachel Meyer**

Greetings from Chicago. As we enter the Thanksgiving season, we have the opportunity to once again thank God for His blessings and protection. Sometimes we may feel that things have not been going so well in our lives, but I have found there is always at least one thing for which I can be thankful.

We are thankful for the blessing of partaking of Communion as a congregation. Special thanks to Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Leo, IN) who assisted Bro. Dale in this special evening. We extend a sincere thank you to Bro. Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL) who presented a topical Bible study regarding "Reaching out to Others," and to Bros. Warren Zahner (Rockville, CT) and Scott Wegman (Taylor, MO) who also ministered to us. May God richly bless all of these brothers for their willingness to take the time out of their schedules to share God's Word.

A special blessing arrived in the home of Bro. Kim and Sis. Diane Steffen. Asher Reid Steffen was enthusiastically welcomed by his two brothers and two sisters. May God richly bless this dear family.

We were recently privileged to be able to listen to the Conference tapes. We thank the Elder brothers for their encouragement and concern for our spiritual welfare. May we remember to keep them in our prayers.

Sis. Gloria Stahl (Bro. Norm) recently had surgery on her second knee. We know this can be a painful surgery and we pray for God's healing for Sis. Gloria. She is truly appreciated and loved.

Recently my husband and I had the honor to visit a couple we have not seen in many years. It was a joy to meet their children, visit and "catch up" on each other's lives. The fellowship was so sweet and I was truly touched. As we were leaving a thought came to me. We all have times in our lives where we feel overwhelmed and ready to give up. Because of the love of Christ and His protection, He is always faithful to see us through – no matter how difficult the circumstances. I realized that in past times of despair and heartache, I could not see down the corridor of time to future joys God had in store for me. That is the heart of trusting. Trusting that God has a plan to give us a future and a hope – because He says so in His word. When I thought that I could have missed out on blessings such as reuniting with old friends, worshipping with them and sharing God's love...I felt overwhelmed with thankfulness. May God bless each one this holiday season.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK
Pam Walder
Andrea Walder

We extend our sympathy to those in our midst who have lost loved ones. Bro. Bob Hohulin (Sis. Marie) of Roanoke passed away. He was a brother-in-law to our Sis. Marj Rinkenberger (Bro. Bill), Sis. Carol Waldbeser (Bro. John), Sis. Dort Walder (late Bro. Dale) and Pete Bauer. Bro. Lyle Young (Francis) passed from this life into eter-

nity. We're grateful and thankful for Bro. Lyle's recent conversion, and trust this can be a comfort to his family.

We're thankful for the safe arrival of another dear baby. Cypress Gooden Eisenmann was born October 20 to Tim and Lenore of Lenoir City, TN. He is the grandson of Bro. Ken and Sis. Sharon Eisenmann.

Two dear souls have been taken into the fold in our congregation. They are Sis. Belinda Frank (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Bonita) and Sis. Teresa Kaeb (Bro. Eric and Sis. LouAnn). We could feel God's nearness and blessings the weekend of the provings and baptisms, November 12-13. Visiting ministers who labored among us that weekend were Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Oakville, IA), Bros. Dale Frank (Oakville, IA), Trent Meiss (Eureka, IL), Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA), Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL), Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), Don Sinn (Silverton, OR), and Jim Kaeb (Bern, KS). We appreciate the efforts of each one who came for this blessed weekend.

Other visiting ministers this month were Bros. Erik Givens (Princeville, IL), Dan Beer (Milford, IN), Paul Kilgus (Fairbury, IL), Brian Huber (Francesville, IN) and Dean Steffen (Belvidere, IL). May God bless His Word these brothers brought forth.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE
Rachel Schrock

Count your blessings,
 Name them one by one;
 Count your blessings,
 See what God hath done...

Hymns of Zion #116, chorus

As we enter the holiday season, let us stay focused on our blessings and be willing to help others who are in greater need than ourselves.

Bro. Duane and Sis. Jill Gudeman received a blessing in the form of baby Emily Renae on October 13. She is welcomed home by her big brothers, Daniel and Brandon, and her big sister, Kendra.

We welcome the family of Bro. Dale and Sis. Missy Banwart into our congregation. They have moved back from Wolcott, IN, and are now enjoying the blessings of close family ties and modern communication as they keep in contact with their family and friends in Indiana and as they settle in with their family and friends here once again.

The blessings of unity and love was felt the weekend of October 29-30 as three dear souls gave their testimonies and were baptized. We welcome our new Bro. Ryan Schrock (Bro. Ken and Sis. Janet) and Sisters Audrey Ruegsegger (Bro. Lee and Sis. Alice) and Elizabeth Virkler (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Gayle).

Many of our congregation enjoyed the blessings of travel and fellowship the weekend of November 5-6 as they attended the wedding of our Bro. Ben Craig (Bro. Kim and Sis. Carol) to Sis. Kristan Keever (Clair and Sis. Bev) in Mansfield, OH. We are delighted to have this young couple as a part of our church family.

We are thankful for the blessings of teaching and admonition that we have received from both our own ministers and our visiting brethren. May God's blessings rest on these brothers, which included Elder Bros. Ervin Knecht (Sis.

Sandy, Eureka, IL), Charles Sauder (Sis. Miriam, Tremont, IL), Dennis Warner (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA), Ken Indermuhle (Sis. Linda, Sardis, OH), Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN), Mike Leman (Sis. Deb, Denver, CO), and Bros. Dan Moser (Sis. Anne, Elgin, IL), Victor Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH), John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL) and Dan Goric (Sis. MaryLou, Rockville, CT).

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

**Amy Gasser
Miriam Gasser**

“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.... For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end...”

Isaiah 9:2,6-7

With joy, we anticipate the commemoration of our Lord's first coming to this earth; yet one wonders how close mankind is to His second return—a time when wars shall cease and kings and rulers will truly be subject unto Him.

On October 30, we were grateful for the faithful service of three visiting ministers who brought us the Word of Life. They were Bros. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH), Dan Koch (Tremont, IL) and Todd Stoller (Latty, OH).

Our concern and prayers have included Bro. Todd Schambach

(Sis. Paula), Bro. Georg Schumacher (Sis. Hilde) and Sis. Marge Wewetzer (Bro. Bill), all of whom were hospitalized within the past month. It is encouraging to see that each appears to be on the road to recovery. He who knows the sparrow's fall will surely care for His own.

We sympathize with Bro. George Eason (Carole) in the sudden loss of his father, George Sr. May the Comforter be especially near during this time of grief.

Note of Thanks:

We wish to thank everyone for their cards, pictures, and gifts given to us for our 50th anniversary, which was October 9. All are appreciated, and we pray God blesses you.

Love, Bro. Norm and Sis. Ginny Schock

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

**Cindy Stoller
Lisa Metzger**

There were two weddings in our congregation in the last month. Sam Wettstein (Bro. Gary and Sis. Elna) married Emily Frank (Bro. Scott and Sis. Elaine) on November 12. Also, on November 20, Bro. Jonathan Wiegand (Bro. Don and Sis. Jane) and Sis. Marla Schmidgall (Bro. Mike and Sis. Dianne) were united in holy matrimony. We pray for God's peace and blessings to be ever present in their new homes and lives together.

Bro. Dale and Sis. Lavonne Schumacher's home has been blessed by a new little addition. Callie Renee is joyfully welcomed home by siblings, Seth, Brooke, Larae, Lane and Olivia. Grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Charlene

Schumacher and Bro. Larry and Sis. Becky Endress (Bradford, IL). We hope all continues to go well for their family.

Our thoughts are with Bro. Marvin Schmidgall (Sis. Dorothy) who has recently spent time in the hospital. Also, we pray for June Fehr (Bro. Dan and Sis. Diane) who is recovering from a car accident. We hope for God's healing in their lives.

We enjoyed hearing the Memorandum read on November 5. Elder Bro. Art Metz (Silverton, OR) was present for this occasion, and we thank him for his labors on our behalf. Other visiting ministers this month included Bros. Beirne Messner (Morris, MN) and Ed Fritz (Washington, IL). May God bless them for their willingness to serve.

Note of Thanks:

We would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, gifts, meals and visits after my accident. It is during times like these we realize how precious our faith is. God is faithful.

Bro. Wayne and Sis. Mary Getz and family

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY

**Anna Schmidgall
Lila Fehr**

We were blessed with an abundance of visiting ministers this month and are thankful for their willingness to feed us the Bread of Life: Bros. Dan Stoller and Al Schambach (Remington, IN), Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN), Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL), Ralph Garber (Morton, IL), Gary Brown (Forrest, IL), Dan Beer (Milford, IN), Paul Schmidgall (Morris, MN).

God has the blessed the homes of three families with new life. Little Heidi Rose is the first child of Bro. Jeff and Sis. Janelle Stoller. Grandparents are Bro. Dale and Sis. Sandy Stoller and Bro. John and Sis. Rosemary Hartman. Bro. Mark and Sis. Kari Edelman, along with Chase and Tori, welcomed home Gracie Marie. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Walt and Sis. Rosie Edelman and Bro. John and Sis. Eunice Stork. Jarod Wayne is the new son of Bro. Martin and Sis. Trish Steidinger. Grandparents of this little boy are Maurice Steidinger and Bro. Earl and Sis. Esther Gerber.

There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. We here on earth are also rejoicing with Paul Hoffman who has found grace enough to begin a new life with Christ. Likewise, we were blessed to hear the testimony of faith of our dear Sis. Bertha Honegger.

Even as we rejoice, we lift those in prayer who have heavy burdens to carry. Our hospital patients this month were Paul Hoffman, Bro. William Streib, Bro. Duane Kilgus, Sis. Jennifer Kaisner and Sis. Natasha Knapp.

ILLINOIS, FORREST

**Jill Wenger
Lori Leman**

We'll now depart, ye faithful
friends;
And from this place we'll go;
The Lord in whom our spirits
blend,
Will lead us on the road.
Zion's Harp #143

We bid our fond farewell to Bro. Brian and Sis. Marie Ricketts and family as they have relocated to

Magdalena, Mexico, to serve at the orphanage there.

Our thanks and appreciation goes to our two visiting ministers this month that came to willingly preach the glad tidings of salvation to us. They were Bro. Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL) and Bro. Robert Beebe (South Bend, IN).

We rejoice with three couples who welcome a new baby into their family circles. Bro. Nathan and Sis. Paula Kelson welcome their first-born child, Heidi Kay, into their hearts and home. Excited grandparents are Bro. Paul and Sis. Sherri Kelson and Bro. Marvin and Sis. Mary Bachtold. Bro. Stan and Sis. Kristen Mueller were blessed with a baby boy named Jacob Harrison. Waiting at home to hold this little bundle are siblings: Allison, Nicole and Lincoln, Stanton, Wade and Erin. Thankful grandparents of Jacob are Bro. Ron Sr. and Sis. Loida Mueller and Bro. Al and Sis. Wanda Kupferschmid. Bro. Michael, Sis. Jodi, Collin and Kyle Stoller, along with grandparents, Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill Stoller and Bro. Chris and Sis. Kay Steffen (Fairbury, IL), welcome Kelsey Ruth as she becomes a special part of their family.

Our hospital patient for this month was Sis. Edna Wiegand (Bro. Paul). We pray that God's healing hand be felt upon her at this time.

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

**Rita Bauman
Amber Grimm**

At the time of this Thanksgiving season we can truly be thankful for our faith and hope of salvation. We appreciate our visiting ministers so much who continue to bring forth God's true message. Special thanks

to Bro. Gene Metzger (Sis. Dolores, Lester, IA), Bro. Trent Meiss (Sis. Lucille, Eureka, IL), Bro. Ed Knecht (Sis. Judith, Silverton, OR), Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest, IL), and Bro. James Knapp (Sis. Lisa, Congerville IL).

Sis. Amy Knobloch (Bro. Dean and Sis. Jackie) and Bro. Tyler Kuenzi (Bro. Terry and Sis. Ann, Silverton, OR) shared a special Thanksgiving weekend with family and friends as they were united in marriage on November 27. Our prayers continue to be with them and their families.

Sis. Vi Hohulin and Sis. Connie Allen (Bro. Gary) were also in our thoughts and prayers this month as they were hospitalized. May God continue to heal and comfort them.

Sis. Inga Zimmerman (late Bro. Dean) lost her brother - in - law, Jerry Zimmerman, this month. Prayers are with her and her family that they can feel the nearness of God in this time of loss.

With all that may come our way, may we all strive to "In every thing give thanks..." (I Thessalonians 5:18).

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY Perry A. Klopfenstein

We can surely rejoice over the many wonderful, positive influences that help to guide us each day, both from the Bible and from the beloved church in which we dwell as members one of another. A minister recently referenced a meaningful verse from Ephesians 4:27, "Neither give place to the devil." In this, we are not to give needless opportunity to the devil so he can make us harbor evil thoughts, do wrong things, offend the brethren

or displease the Saviour.

In this same chapter the instructions given to the believer are many, and very worthy for happy, Godly living:

1. "And that ye put on the new man." (Ephesians 4:24)

2. "Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor." (Ephesians 4:25)

3. "Let him that stole, steal no more." (Ephesians 4:28)

4. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." (Ephesians 4:29)

5. "And grieve not the Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:30)

These are examples of the wonderful advice give to the sincere, converted believer in Christ Jesus. If we as believers are humble of heart, and meek, we can feast on these teachings and find strength to overcome the wiles of the devil, and live in righteousness, as we are taught.

November 20 was the wedding date of Sis. Sarah Funk who was married to Bro. Larry Gerber of Bluffton North, IN. Her parents are Bro. Virgil and Sis. Shirley Funk of Congerville. His parents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Marge Gerber of Latty, OH. We wish this couple much happiness in the days and years ahead. May they be of much help and encouragement to each other in their pilgrim walk of life.

Visiting ministers have been Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton, IN) and Bros. Steve and Doyle Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN), John Steiner (Oakville, IA), Todd Stoller (Latty, OH) and Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL). We appreciate their labors. Even a cup of water given in the Lord's name is not forgotten.

On November 20, a baby boy was born to Bro. Grant and Sis. Debbie (Martin) Descarpentrie, their first-born child. He was named Samuel Martin. His grandparents are Byron and Sis. Katie Martin, Gridley, and Bro. Stan and Sis. Jane Decarpentrie (Washington, IL). Great-grandparents are Sis. Lois Descarpentrie and Bro. Russell and Sis. Marjorie Plattner, all of Roanoke. We surely wish them the Lord's rich blessings as they attempt to nurture this dear child in the ways of the Lord.

ILLINOIS, MORTON

**Julie Bahr
Christie Zeller**

Our Family Worship was held Wednesday, November 2, by our Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr. (Sis. Donna). His topic was "Friendships". We were encouraged to be a friendly church and reach out to others in Christian friendship and fellowship as our Bible characters of old.

Our Bible Class Benefit Dinner and choral program was held November 5-6. Many enjoyed a delicious meal and beautiful singing.

Three new babies were born this month. Bro. Jeff and Sis. Stacey Stoller were blessed with a baby boy, Gage Martin, born October 19. He is welcomed home by three big sisters, Madison, Hallie and Mya.

Bro. Tate and Sis. Melissa Kaiser are thankful for their first baby, a girl, Lola Mae, born November 3.

Bro. Bob and Sis. Holly Salter were blessed with a baby girl, Autumn Lynn, born November 9. Big sister, Alexis, welcomed her home. May God bless these dear families.

Bro. Eric Zeller (Sis. Ginny, Indianapolis, IN) went Home to be with the Lord on October 22. He is

the son of our Sis. Norma Zeller and a brother to our Bro. Jon (Sis. Christie) and Bro. Will (Sis. Dannelle) Zeller. May God comfort this dear family.

Bro. Doyle Frauhiger (Sis. Jane, Bluffton North, IN) was our visiting minister. May God continue to bless him for his labors of love.

Notes of Thanks:

Ben and I wish to especially thank everyone for the many thoughtful cards and gifts we received for our 65th wedding anniversary on October 12. We covet God's continued patience with us as He has done in the past.

*Ben and Betty Rassi
Joyce, Jim and Janis*

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks for all the prayers and acts of kindness during the years of illness and the death of our son and brother, Eric. May our Lord richly bless each of you.

Sis. Norma Zeller and family

ILLINOIS, PEORIA Lou and Marjean Lonteen

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6

Four souls were baptized on November 13 after sharing their testimony of faith the prior evening. They are: Sis. Rebekah Davidovics (Bro. Fedi and Sis. Ruth), Bro. Sandor Davidovics (brother of Bro. Fedi), Sis. Sarah Sceggel (Bro.

Mark and Sis. Judy), and Bro. Brandon Stickling (Bro. Scott and Sis. Jan).

Guest ministers recently include: Bro. John Bradle (Roanoke) and Bro. Paul Messner (Winthrop, MN). "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)

In honor of the years of service of our retired Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer (Sis. Marian), a singing was held at the fellowship hall on November 6. The entire Peoria congregation has been blessed by their love and service. We trust our Lord to bless and reward them more than we can express.

Bro. Ben Baurer would appreciate prayer due to his health challenges.

Congratulations to Bro. Trent and Sis. Kary (Hoerr) Scholl with the birth of their baby girl, Tea Liese, on September 30.

Congratulations to Bro. Dick and Sis. Gladys Binkele on their 60th wedding anniversary. Dick Binkele and Gladys Martin were married in Roanoke, Illinois, on December 16, 1945. They are the parents of two children, four grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. They will observe this special occasion with a family dinner at Weaver Ridge. We surely wish them the Lord's continued blessings.

Officials from the Romanian Prison System visiting recently were the Warden and the Director of Education (and their wives). They toured the Peoria and Tazewell County jails and the women's prison in Lincoln, IL. They attended Sunday services at the jail, and afternoon services in our church. They expressed their

appreciation for the recent visits by Bro. Fedi Davidovics and ministering Bro. Ken Hoerr who visited their jail system. The Romanian prison officials are setting up a Bible Study program similar to the one our church uses in this country and in Russia.

Your prayers were appreciated for the safe return of Bro. Paul (Spark) Meister, and Bro. Kent Steffen along with Bro. Hod Getz (Morton). They visited the Russian prisons to review their Bible Study project (based on the local project). Special thanks to all those who work with the Bible Study program through the Berean Prison Ministries in our area.

Welcome to our congregation: Craig Janssen, Angie and Luke Luginbuhl, and Will Moser.

Prayers of sympathy have been prayed for:

Bro. Bruce and Sis. Lila Witzig in the death of Bruce's mother, Sis. Lillian Witzig.

Bro. Grant and Sis. Mabelle Rauhaus in the death of Sis. Mabelle's sister, Sis. Ann Pfister (Roanoke).

Bro. Francis Meier and his family in the death of Sis. Dorothy Meier, wife of Bro. Francis.

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."

Isaiah 9:7

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

Vera Baer

Kara Blunier

We extend congratulations to two couples who have recently exchanged wedding vows. Lisa Eberle (Marvin and Sharon) and Aaron Robbins, both of Wyoming, IL, became one November 5. Brent and Jessica (LaFranz) Wieland united as one on November 11. Brent's parents are Bro. John and Sis. Elizabeth Wieland. This couple plans to reside in the Chicago area.

What a blessing it is to welcome visiting ministers into our midst. Bro. Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI) served our congregation on October 23. Attending our Invite-A-Guest day on November 6 was Bro. Randy Mogler (Washington, IL) and Elder Bro. Tom Stock (Cissna Park, IL). Bro. Greg Stoller (Forrest, IL) visited on November 13. We appreciate their willingness to come!

We spent a stirring evening together November 12, when the Memorandum was read. Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) kindly came to assist our own Elder Bro. Jim. We appreciate both their efforts. May our hearts be tender and open to the message we heard.

Our thoughts and prayers are with two sisters who have recently experienced trials in their lives. Sis. Elsie Mueller spent time in the hospital and Sis. Bertie Kieser's brother, Ellis Sauder (King George, Virginia), recently passed away.

Sis. Mary Lou Streitmatter (the late Bro. Don) is rejoicing with her daughter, Anne, and Craig Thistlethwaite (Lake Zurich, IL), as they have welcomed Ellie Nicole into their lives. May God bless them as they begin along the path of parenthood.

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

**Dee Fehr
Doris Fischer**

Bro. Matt Leman and Sis. Heather Mellin, knowing God's will has directed them together, made their engagement known on October 23. Bro. Matt's parents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Shirley Leman and Sis. Heather's parents are Bob and Cindy Rippon (Benson) and Lee and Marlene Mellin (Metamora). We heard another engagement in November, that of Bro. Steven Bertschi and Sis. Susan Leman. Their parents are Bro. Rich and Sis. Bev Bertschi and Bro. Clark and Sis. Lisa Leman. We rejoice with these couples and wish them peace and happiness as they prepare for their marriages.

The angels in heaven rejoice and we give thanks for a soul who has come in repentance. Rebekah Hoffman, daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Nancy Hoffman, has made known her desire to repent and be converted. We pray God's grace and nearness for this precious lamb.

On October 26, Ross and Jamie Ahrens became first-time parents when their daughter, Elise Kathryn, was born. Elise's grandparents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Kathy Hodel and Mike and Janet Ahrens. Bro. Steve and Sis. Colleen Byrd are thankful for the arrival of a new baby boy, Benjamin Steven, on November 2. His sister, Karen, and brothers, Craig, Joshua, Jesse and Ryan, welcomed little Benjamin home. His grandparents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Leota Byrd and Sis. Clara and the late Bro. Wilmer Fischer.

We are mindful of Sis. Edna

(Bro. Harold) Roth and Bro. Dick (Sis. Ann) Hoffman and continue to pray for their improved health. We also recognize the caregivers' burden, and are remembering to pray for their families too.

Our congregation was blessed to have Bro. Ted Hirstein (Morton) share God's Word with us in October. We also appreciated having Elder Bro. Earl Ringger with us for Family Night in November, when he shared Scripture and spoke about knowing God's will. We're grateful to these brothers and their families for their willingness to visit and be used by God for our edification.

So now, redeemed one, sleep and rest!

Homeward we turn to do our best,
That we in joy and trembling be
Made ready for eternity.

Zion's Harp #248

On October 25, Sis. Ann Pfister passed from this finite life into eternity. She is survived by five sisters and one brother: Sis. Pearl (Bro. Robert) Miller, Sis. Mabelle (Bro. Grant) Rauhaus, Sis. Irma Luginbuhl, Sis. Lois Pfister, Sis. Dorothy Pfister, and Bro. Marvin (Sis. Ila) Pfister.

Our loving sympathy is extended to the family of Bro. Bob Hohulin, who passed away on October 26. He is survived by his wife, Sis. Marie; four sons: Keith (Connie) Hohulin, Bro. Mike (Sis. Faye) Hohulin, Bro. Tim (Sis. Cathy) Hohulin, Eldon (Sue) Hohulin; and daughter, Sis. Eileen (Bro. Duane) Blunier.

Sis. Elsie Zimmerman went home to her reward on October 29. She is survived by two brothers, Eugene Zimmerman and Ray

Zimmerman, and a sister, Frances Zimmerman.

Our condolences are also extended to the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Bro. Wilmer Leman (Eureka), who passed away on October 29. Bro. Wilmer had been active in our community for many years.

On November 8, Micah Gerber went home to rest in the arms of Jesus. Micah was the 6-month-old son of Bro. Byron and Sis. Lisa Gerber and grandson of Bro. Rick and Sis. Shirley Gerber and Bro. Don and Sis. Colleen Leman. Though he was here for a short time, Micah touched the hearts of many with his eyes and his smile.

These souls' lives represent a combined 352 years of life on this earth, but their influences will last long after their passing. Family and friends will relive times spent with their loved one - "My dad used to say," or "remember when..." As a body of believers who "weeps with those who weep", we sorrow with the bereaved, and find joy in the happy memories they shared.

Notes of Thanks:

We are thankful to God for permitting us to enjoy and celebrate our 60th wedding anniversary. We also thank you for your love and good wishes on this happy occasion. May God bless you.

*Bro. Dick and Sis. Mardell
Bowald*

We want to thank all our family and friends for the outpouring of love and support shown to our family at the time of Bob's death and since.

Sis. Marie Hohulin and family

ILLINOIS, TREMONT
Teresa Rowell
Sheri Allen

As the weather turns colder and we turn the thermostats up and get out our winter clothes and coats, do we really thank God for the ability to do this? There are so many who do not have these privileges. Yes, they are privileges, granted to us from our Heavenly Father. As the Thanksgiving season comes and goes this year, may we stop and really count our blessings.

We were blessed to have a number of visiting Elders and ministers with us on October 22-23 as Dean Rocke (Sis. Kathy and the late Bro. Nelson) and Wayne Miller (Ruby) became our brothers in Christ. We rejoice with them and their families. Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Sis. Joann, Winthrop, MN) and Elder Bro. Jim Plattner (Sis. Marlene, Princeville, IL) labored in our midst Saturday night and Sunday. Bros. Vern Wettstein (Sis. Judy, Congerville, IL), Don Miller (Sis. Bernadine) and Duane Rocke (Sis. Bonnie), both from Minneapolis, MN, and John Steiner (Sis. Carol, Oakville, IA) were with us on Sunday and taught us from the Word.

On Sunday, October 30, we were blessed to have Bros. Ed Sauder (Sis. Bonnie, Roanoke, IL) and Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton, IL) in our midst. We thank these brothers for lending themselves on our behalf.

The blessings continue in the form of new little ones that have been born. Rejoicing over their newest grandchild are Bro. Darel and Sis. Mary Alice Hofsess. Kaleb Mikkell arrived safely to Jake and Julie Ista. Bro. John and Sis. Heather Rassi have a new son, Silas

David. Jacob, Grace and Elizabeth welcome him home.

Spending some time in the hospital was Sis. Sally Koch (Bro. Roger). She is well on her way to recovery and is assembling with us again.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON
Nancy Knepp
Barb Banwart

We thank Thee, then, O Father,
 For all things bright and good,
 The seedtime and the harvest,
 Our life, our health, our food.

Accept the gifts we offer,
 For all Thy love imparts;
 And what Thou most desirest,
 Our humble, thankful hearts.

— *Matthias Claudius,*
 1740-1815

We appreciated so much the recent visit from retired Elder Bro. Don Sauder (Roanoke, IL) who spoke to us about the goodness and faithfulness of God and the blessing of a thankful heart. Also visiting us recently were ministers, Bro. Erik Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL) and Bro. Trent Schrock (Sis. Heidi, Leo, IN). We thank them for their service to us.

Sis. Tammy Herrmann, Bro. Kim Huber and Bro. Carl Wyss spent a few days in the hospital recently. May our Father provide His watchful care for them. We continue to miss Sis. Delores Kiefer as she recovered from her mishap.

Our sincere sympathy goes to our Elder Bro. Ron and Sis. Pam Messner and their family in the loss of Bro. Ron's father, Bro. Leo Messner of Winthrop, MN. We always enjoyed the visits of Bro. Leo and his wife, Sis. Georgia, to whom

special sympathy is also extended. It is a comfort to remember that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalm 116:15)

INDIANA, BLUFFTON
Amber Steffen
Elizabeth Frauhiger

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."

Job 42:2

The angels in Heaven are rejoicing because Holly Walburn (Bro. Jim and Sis. Lora), Spencer Lewis (Randy and Laura), Sadie Steffen (Bro. Duane and Sis. Karen), Sarah Reinhard (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Shelly) and Dan Kaehr (Bro. Sam and Sis. Connie) have heeded the call of the Saviour. We pray that God's grace and strength will be with them as they begin their repentance.

October 22-23 was the weekend we welcomed Bros. Andrew Baumgartner (Bro. Craig and Sis. Beth), Lance Fiechter (Bro. Rick and Sis. Beth) and Derrick Kipfer (Bro. Richard and Sis. Rosie) into the fold as they gave their testimonies and were baptized.

Bro. Tyler Scott has felt called by the Lord to move to Prescott, AZ. We will miss Bro. Tyler, as we have been so blessed to have him assemble with us. We know that our brethren in Prescott will appreciate him.

We were blessed this month by the messages from two visiting ministers. Thank you, Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Ruth, Wolcott, IN) and Bro. John Baumgartner (Sis. Tammy, Bluffton North, IN) for

your willingness to share with us.

Our prayers are with Sis. Brenda Kipfer (Bro. Troy) and Jimmy VandenTop (Rhonda) as they continue to face medical uncertainties.

Jacob Nathan Isch is the newest member of Bro. Nathan and Sis. Leslie Isch's family. Jacob was born on November 3. His excited sisters are Cora and Abigail and thankful grandparents are Bro. Barry and Sis. Imogene Isch and Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy Stoller (Bluffton North).

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Sis. Anna Isch in the death of her son, Bro. Don Isch (Sis. Judy, Bluffton North). Bro. Don's brothers are Bro. Stan Isch (Sis. Genny) and Bro. Barry Isch (Sis. Imogene). Many prayers continue to be offered on their behalf.

We regret that we failed to mention the wedding of Bro. Austin Smith (Dave and Loretta) and Sis. Rachel Reinhard (Bro. Larry and Sis. Deb) on August 21. We wish them the Lord's blessings as they begin their life together.

**INDIANA
BLUFFTON NORTH
Darren Drayer
Tiffani Schladenhauffen**

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever."

Psalms 107:1

We had four souls that testified of the Lord's goodness and were baptized this month. They were Bro. Logan Aschliman (Bro. Kelly and Sis. Lisa), Bro. Chandler Gerber (Bro. Todd and Sis. Michelle), Bro. Kyle Mueller (Bro. Dave and Sis. Terri) and Sis. Cecily

Kaehr (Bro. Doug and Sis. Tami). It is always encouraging to hear how the Lord is working in our young people.

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin (Sis. Charlene, Goodfield, IL) here to assist in the testimonies and baptisms. We appreciate his willingness to be used by the Lord.

We rejoice with Bro. Vince Francesi (Bro. Lynn and Sis. Mary) at the announcement of his engagement to Sis. Brooke Huber of Sabetha, KS (Bro. Gordon and Sis. Charlene). We are prayerful for them as they grow closer together in the Lord.

Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy Stoller became grandparents again at the birth of their grandson, Jacob Nathan Isch. Jacob Nathan's parents are Bro. Nathan and Sis. Leslie Isch (Bluffton, IN).

Bro. Don Isch is now resting at Home in Heaven. We are prayerful for his wife, Sis. Judy; his mother, Sis. Anna (Bluffton, IN); as well as his brothers, Charles (Linda), Bro. Stan (Sis. Genny, Bluffton, IN) and Bro. Barry (Sis. Imogene, Bluffton, IN). We pray each will feel the Lord's hand in their time of grieving and take comfort in knowing that Bro. Don is now free of pain and suffering.

We are prayerful this month for Sis. Delores Shady (Bill) and Sis. Rochelle Gerber (Bro. Rod) as they spent some time in the hospital. We pray that God would be with them and their families during this difficult time in their lives.

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19

**INDIANA
FRANCESVILLE
Barb Huber
Jessica Murray**

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

Isaiah 9:6

With these wonderful words from Scripture, we greet you with love and wish you a Christmas filled with His joy and peace!

Bro. Lance and Sis. Erica (Koebcke) Gutwein welcomed their newborn son, Landon Charles, into their home on October 21. He is their second child and joins big sister Kelsey. Happy grandparents are Bro. Harvey and Sis. Ellen Gutwein. As we are blessed with many young people in our congregation, we pray for the generational blessing given in Psalm 100:5, "For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

We were blessed with the special joy of receiving six converts into our fellowship. Following Jesus' command to repent and be baptized were: Kayla Eberhardt (ministering Bro. Fred and Sis. Kathy, Burlington, IA), Andrew Huber (Bro. John and Sis. Beverly), Joel Putt (Bro. Brian and Sis. Tami), Jim and Barbara Rayburn, and Ryan Zeltwanger (Bro. David and Sis. Kelly). It was truly a weekend of rejoicing for us.

Assisting Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein with the testimonies and

baptisms were Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Oakville, IA) and our retired Elder Bro. Wendell Gudeman.

The blessed weekend of the baptisms brought visiting ministers into our midst.

Joining in the services were Bro. Fred Eberhardt (Sis. Kathy, Burlington, IA), Bro. James Emch (Sis. Gina) and Bro. Herb Knochel (Sis. Laurie), both of Phoenix, AZ. Their willingness to serve is another witness to the blessing of our fellowship where all work together for the common cause of serving God.

We offer prayers of healing for our friend, John Wuethrich (Vi), who has spent some time in the hospital and is now convalescing. Also still recovering from her surgery is our friend, Wilma (Paul) Clauss. We look forward to seeing them in church again soon.

Bro. Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, Lacrosse, IN) blessed us with a topical Bible Study on "Resisting the Devil." It was an insightful evening with many scriptural texts referenced by Bro. Chris through which we can be enabled to resist the adversary of our soul and grow in grace if we submit ourselves to the infilling of the Holy Spirit. We again can be thankful that we have willing ministers who share God's promises so faithfully.

We enjoyed a Thanksgiving program on November 16. Many thoughtful readings and special songs made the evening very special. May we never lose the virtue of thankfulness for the many blessings God has given us as a nation, church and families.

The holiday of Thanksgiving is getting more unnoticed for its true meaning each year and as Christians we must strive to keep it im-

portant.

As we look forward to Christmas with our families, may this little poem be an enhancement to the true meaning of the holiday.

Only Five Miles

Only five miles beyond Bethlehem,
Jerusalem waits with its tree;
Only five miles from the manger
birth
To the grove of Gethsemane.
Only five miles from where the
Star shone
To mark where the Christ Child
lay -
Only five miles to Golgotha's hill
Up that cruel and bitter way.
Only five miles and thirty-three
years
In the life of one gentle Man,
Yet all of life's meaning, the depth
of all love,
Are compassed in that small span.

**INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS
Debbie Anliker
Sandy Lichtle**

We sincerely welcome Sis. Emily Blunier (Leo, IN) and Bro. Darl and Sis. Cindy Schieler (Bloomington, IL) and their son, Bro. Matt, to our congregation. We also welcome Bro. Matt as a new Brother in the Lord as he gave his testimony and was baptized October 8-9 in Bloomington, IL.

We rejoice with Bro. Nate and Sis. Sara Huber on the birth of their son, Finley Jonathan, born on October 5. Finley is welcomed home by his big brother, Avery, and his grandparents, Bro. John and Sis. Bev Huber (Francesville, IN) and Elder Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda Gutwein (Francesville, IN). Bro. Ken and Sis. Lyn Wuethrich are thankful for their new grandson.

Holden Thomas was born on October 17 to Michael and Heather Rowe. On October 30, Molly Kate was born to Bro. Scott and Sis. Abby Klopfenstein. Molly's big brothers are Drew and Jack, and her grandparents are Bro. Lynn and Sis. Chris Klopfenstein (Leo, IN) and Bro. Lynn and Sis. Valerie Kipfer (Bluffton North, IN).

We were blessed to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of Bro. Kent Levy (Bro. Roger and Sis. Sue) on October 22-23. We pray for God's blessings and wisdom to be with Bro. Kent as he serves the Lord.

Ten years after the diagnosis of a brain tumor, our dear Bro. Eric Zeller passed from this life into eternity to be with the Lord on October 22. Our heartfelt sympathy and prayers continue to be with his wife, Sis. Ginny; his children, Sis. Andrea (Bro. Stan) Gutwein, Bro. Aaron (Sis. Julie), Bro. Joel (Sis. Tricia), Bro. Mark, Bro. Michael, Sis. Suzanne, and Sis. Katy, and his seven grandchildren. May they feel the Lord's peace and comfort during this time. Bro. Eric's gentle and humble spirit will be greatly missed.

On October 29-30, we had "Outreach Weekend". Many young people joyfully gave of their time and efforts to help those in need in our community. We thank all of those who participated in this weekend, and we appreciate your servant hearts.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Stan and Sis. Andrea Gutwein and their three children as they have returned to the mission field in India. It was a blessing to have them home for six months.

We were blessed to hear the Word brought forth by the visiting

ministers this month. We appreciate the labors of love of our Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL), Elder Bro. Tom Klotzle (Sis. Jody, Altadena, CA), Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Sis. Frances, Wolcott, IN), Bro. Ed Sauder (Sis. Bonnie, Roanoke, IL), and Bro. Steve Ringger (Sis. Myra, Bluffton North, IN).

INDIANA, LACROSSE
Shirley Frank
Cathy Nuest

Oh, think of the home over there,
 By the side of the river of light.
 Where the saints, all immortal and
 fair,
 Are robed in their garments of
 white...

Gospel Hymns #54

Our hearts are saddened by the passing of our dear Sis. Erma Moser, who passed from this life on October 19. Our thoughts and prayers are with her sister, Sis. Lorene Moser, with whom she made her home, and her brother, Wayne (Rosie) Moser. Her presence will be greatly missed by her family, friends and brothers and sisters in faith.

We recently gathered together on a Sunday evening to hear the conclusions of the Memorandum. We thank Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Bloomfield, IA) for coming and sharing the weekend with us. May we be willing to walk the narrow pathway that the Lord has set before us. It is such a blessing to have a heavenly Father who has given us directives that will help us stay close to Him.

This month we had Bro. Lucas Frank (Detroit, MI) and Bro. Steve Stieglitz (Leo, IN) come and minis-

ter to us. We appreciate them and their families for sharing a Sunday with us.

Sis. Pearl and Sis. Lucille Nuest have again returned to their home. We are thankful that they are able to assemble with us again. May the Lord grant them daily strength and continued healing.

We rejoice with Bro. Josh Johnson and Sis. Bethany Gerber as they were joined together in holy matrimony on November 20. We pray for God's constant presence with them as they walk life's pathway together.

We plow the fields and scatter the
 good seed on the land,
 But it is fed and watered by God's
 almighty hand.

He sends the snow in winter, the
 warmth to swell the grain,
 The breezes and the sunshine, and
 some refreshing rain.

He only is the Maker of all things
 near and far;
 He paints the wayside flower, He
 lights the evening star;
 The winds and waves obey Him, by
 Him the birds are fed;
 Much more to us, His children, He
 gives our daily bread.

We thank Thee then, O Father, for
 all things bright and good,
 The seedtime and the harvest, our
 life, our health, our food.

Accept the gifts we offer for all
 Thy love imparts,
 And what Thou most desirest –
 our humble, thankful hearts.

—*Matthias Claudius*

The holidays are quickly coming upon us. May we be a truly thankful people, thankful for the many blessings we share, especially the gift of God's love.

INDIANA, LEO
Ethelyn Schlatter

We were blessed by a message from Bro. Justin Koch (Washington, IL). He and his family, Sis. Marcia, Ben and Logan, stayed for our evening singing. We had group participation along with their special numbers.

The engagement of Bro. Shane Beer and Sis. Stephanie Schwab (West Lafayette, IN) was announced October 30. His parents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie Beer and her parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Shari Schwab (Wolcott, IN). May they be blessed as they prepare for their wedding.

The newest member at Gateway Woods west house is Nemion Jaquan, born October 30 to Cameal.

We were prepared by Elder Bro. Lynn's exhortation on November 6 for a blessing as we gathered for the Lord's Supper the evening of November 19. Elder Bro. Tom Stock (Sis. Karol, Cissna Park, IL) was here to assist Elder Bro. Lynn. We appreciated that Elder Bro. Tom and Sis. Karol stayed over for Sunday, November 20. We were drawn into mediation of God's great love and sacrifice of His Son for us. We were created by God to do His will and He shows His power in our lives by grace.

Our sympathy is extended to Sis. Karen (Dan) Pfister in the passing of her stepfather, Virgil Rowe.

May joy and peace fill your hearts as we remember the birth of our Saviour. He is alive and coming again at His Father's time. Be watchful.

The coming of Christ from Heaven

to earth
 All Christians may see with joy
 and mirth.
 In clouds of Heaven each eye shall
 see
 The Prince of Peace, in majesty.
 —Henry Kipfer

INDIANA, MILFORD
Carlton Beer
Carol Haab

Thank you to Bro. Bob Beebe (Sis. Sue, South Bend, IN) and Bro. Bob Meyer (Sis. Anne, Bluffton North, IN) for lending themselves in the service of the Lord as they visited us. We appreciated their messages.

We wish the Lord's blessings to Bro. Shane Beer (Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie, Leo, IN) and Sis. Stephanie Schwab (Bro. Mark and Sis. Shari, Wolcott, IN) on their engagement and upcoming marriage. May they feel God's guidance as they plan their future together. Bro. Shane is the grandson of Bro. Cap and Sis. MaryAnn Beer.

The Memorandum was read and pondered on recently. Our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH) was assisted by Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Sis. Leonda, Leo, IN). May we continually lift up our Elders in prayer as they have many difficult decisions to make each year.

There is joy in the hearts of Bro. Fred and Sis. Pat Beer and their family as they welcomed a new granddaughter. Sierra Dale was born on November 9 to Bro. Micah and Sis. Holly Zeltwanger (Morris, MN). May the Lord bless these new parents as they raise this precious little girl He has given them.

It was heartwarming to listen to the children recite their Bible verses and poems at the

Thanksgiving Program. The little ones' enthusiasm when singing is always a joy to see and hear. We should remember to be thankful every day of the year, not just during the Thanksgiving season. And now, as we look to Christmas, may we always keep in mind how Jesus came to earth in a humble manger to die for our sins on the cross at Calvary. May you each have a blessed holiday season.

INDIANA, REMINGTON
Beth Virkler
Tammy Waibel

We greet you in the Lord's name!
 On October 22-23 we heard the testimonies and witnessed the baptisms of three souls. Sis. Valerie Bahler (Bro. Mark and Sis. Benita) and Bro. Loren (Bro. Lloyd and Joyce) and Sis. Jenny Honegger (Kirk and Jeanne Johnson) are now part of the fold. We welcome them with open arms.

The visiting ministers that came to help on this wonderful celebration of new life were: Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Sis. Jeannine, Mansfield, OH), Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH), Bro. Brian Waibel (Sis. Wendy, Champaign, IL) and Bro. Wayne Wiegand (Sis. Rosemary, Goodfield, IL) who were here for the testimonies. Thank you all for your willingness to come and join us on a very wonderful weekend.

Other visiting ministers for the month were: Elder Bro. John Laukhuf (Sis. Marcia, Latty, OH), Bro. Garry Bucher (Sis. Lois, Valparaiso, IN), Bro. Gary Anliker (Sis. Edith, Elgin, IL), Bro. Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, LaCrosse, IN) and Bro. Todd Stoller (Sis. Pamela, Latty, OH). Elder Bro.

Tom Hoffman (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL) and retired Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Sis. Frances, Wolcott, IN) were here to assist our own Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna) with the reading of the Memorandum on November 5. Also, thank you to Bro. Tom for ministering the Word to us the following day. We thank all of the ministers and families that helped out our local ministering Brothers.

The Nativity

The blessed Child so meek and
 mild
 At Bethlehem they found,
 In manger low where cattle low
 And sheep did gather round,
 In swaddling clothes there to re-
 pose
 And lying on the hay
 What glorious sight in that dark
 night
 Where Christ the Savior lay!
 — *Hymns of Zion*

May you all have a blessed and safe Christmas this year.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND
Melissa Gerst
Stacey Feller

This fall, we appreciated the messages brought forth by Bro. Wayne Lemman (Sis. Julie, Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Walt Rager (Sis. Sharon, Toledo, OH). We are thankful for Bro. Walt's recovery and are glad to have him back in the ministry.

Bro. Craig and Sis. Rachel Langhofer spent time helping out in Mexico, and we are thankful for their safe return.

A blessed Christmas to our church family across the land!

INDIANA, VALPARAISO**Ed Lester**

Greetings once again to all!

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:”

I Peter 2:21

Lately, I have been hearing a lot of discussion about gasoline and the price we have to pay for it. I was thinking a little bit about this and also the refining process itself. I wonder how much work goes into refining a barrel of gasoline? Is gasoline a volume business? There sure are a lot of Americans consuming gasoline. What if salvation were a volume business? The word tells us that God doesn't work on volume, and if one soul cries God's name, all of heaven will rejoice. What a blessing it is to know that we were called to the fold. I am really grateful that I heard His voice and have hope of salvation in heaven.

Often though, I think about those days when I was not a believer. The worthless things I put value in were a big waste of my time. I try not to look negatively on this, but I believe that the Spirit is reminding me of how far I have progressed in my faith. The college kids out there could take note of my experience. Do not give in to those temptations; find relief in a clear conscience. God's commandments are manifest in us through the Holy Spirit. That's why we are so eager to obey His Word.

This past month Valparaiso enjoyed their annual Harvest Program and dinner. We want to thank Bro. Dave and Sis. Vicki Zehr for being with us, and sharing God's Word with us. Also, we want to

thank Living Waters for lending their voices to God's praise. Thank you to everyone at Valparaiso who gave of their time in making the program and dinner a wonderful occasion. We would also like to thank Bro. Gene and Sis. Verna Lehman for visiting and letting God use him for our benefit. Pray everyone who visited had a blessed day with us.

Latoya Thomas (Bro. Mike and Sis. Claudia Thomas) has been undergoing some treatments and we would appreciate it if you could remember her in your prayers. Bro. Brady Moser (Bro. Andy and Sis. Diane Moser) has been very faithful this past month. We still need to be diligent in praying for him as his disease is very serious. Please continue to pray continually for both of our loved ones.

**INDIANA
WEST LAFAYETTE**

**Nettie Haab
Diana Norman**

“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.”

Psalms 127:3

A little blessing, Maryn Shea, was welcomed at the home of Rob and Kristin Meister. After a difficult pregnancy, we pray that all is well now.

Our prayers go out to Sis. Erika Gerber (Bro. Corey) as she has been put on bed rest through her pregnancy.

We were sorry to hear of the death of Catherine Koch, sister of Bro. Sam Hollinger. She had been ill for sometime.

Our prayers go out to Bro. Sam

and his wife, Laura, during this time of grieving for a loved one. Please keep Maggie Getz's (Jason) mother in prayer as she battles with the end stages of cancer.

It was a joy to meet Laura Ridge, a Purdue student who has recently turned to the Lord in repentance. Please keep her in prayer as she continues to seek Jesus.

Thankful to have Bro. Shane Beer, Sis. Beth Tonner, Sis. Hope Clough with us again as they all have re-located to the area for employment.

A joyful announcement to report as Sis. Stefanie Schwab and Bro. Shane Beer are engaged. Parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Shari Schwab (Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie Beer (Leo, IN).

With thanks to Elder Bros. Doug Schock (Sis. Clara, Bloomfield, IA) and Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN), we were encouraged and blessed as we heard the Conference report. Other visiting ministers this past month have been Bro. Kevin Knapp (Sis. Dixie, Bloomington, IL), Bro. Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Herbert Knochel, Jr. (Sis. Laurie, Phoenix, AZ), Bro. Andy Moser (Sis. Diane, Valparaiso, IN), Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi, South Bend, IN), and Elder Bro. Alfred Bahler (Sis. Francis, Wolcott, IN).

INDIANA, WOLCOTT
Elaine Bahler
Lisa Furrer

“This charge I commit unto thee ... that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;”

I Timothy 1:18

We were again charged through the reading of the Memorandum to put on the whole armour of God. How thankful we are for faithful brothers who sound the warning and care for our souls. May God richly bless Elder Bros. Tom Hoffman (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL) and Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN) for sharing His Word with us.

What a blessing to have visitors who are willing to be used of God for our edification. We thank Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH) and Bro. Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL) for their labors of love through the ministry.

Beginning their journey of faith towards holy matrimony is Sis. Stefanie Schwab (Bro. Mark and Sis. Shari) and Bro. Shane Beer (Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie, Leo, IN), both of West Lafayette, IN. May God continue to guide and direct them throughout their engagement.

Submitting themselves to God's direction, November 20 was the day Sis. Bethany Gerber (Bro. Bob and Sis. Luann) and Bro. Joshua Johnson (LaCrosse, IN) became husband and wife. Sharing in this special day were Elder Bros. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN) and Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN), as well as ministering Bros. Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, LaCrosse, IN) and Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA). Although we shall miss Sis. Bethany as she makes her home in LaCrosse, we celebrate this holy union and pray that God who brought them both together will bless their married life forever.

IOWA, BLOOMFIELD Barbara Schock

My soul in sad exile was out on
life's sea,
So burdened with sin and dis-
tressed,
Till I heard a sweet voice saying,
"Make me your choice,"
And I entered the "Haven of Rest!"
Tabernacle Hymns #143, vs. 1

On October 22-23, we were blessed to listen to the testimony and witness the baptism of our new Sis. Jenny Schock (Bro. Dale and Sis. Teresa). We pray that she will continue to grow in the faith and to be a light and example to those around her. We thank Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Sis. Judy, Chicago) for assisting with this special weekend and Bro. Dean Steffen (Sis. Carol, Belvidere) for letting themselves be used in the service of the Lord.

We also rejoice with Angie Wuthrich (Bro. Roger and Sis. DeAnn) as she has made a beginning in the Lord. We pray that she will grow in faith, and for grace as she continues in her repentance.

On October 30, Bro. Tim Roecker (Sis. Diane, Peoria) came out with the Peoria Choir. Bro. Brad Funk (Sis. Laura, Garden Grove) was also here for the weekend. We thank these two brothers for their willingness to be used on our behalf. We would also like to thank Bro. Kent Getz (Sis. Betty, Elgin, IA) who was here November 6. May God bless each of these brothers.

Last but not least, we would like to welcome Bro. Joe and Sis. Rose Dotterer and their family, Tim, Bro. Craig, Kurt, and Rachel, to our congregation from the Smithville,

OH, congregation. May God be with this family as they adjust to the many changes in their lives.

The Returning Christ
At Christmastime when every
heart
with special rapture fills,
Each soul becomes a Bethlehem
among Judean hills,
And Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
in His own lowly way
Comes seeking room in human
hearts
to share the Christmas Day.
May He not find the crowded inn
too full for Him again,
Or Christmas gifts and Christmas
trees
without the Christ of men.
But may there be the humble
heart
with room prepared and blessed,
And heart reborn to greet anew
the long expected guest.
At Christmas when He seeks His
place
supreme in human wills
Each heart becomes a Bethlehem
among Judean hills.

—Betty W. Stoffel

IOWA, BURLINGTON Brenda Schulz Laurie Schulz

Our sympathy and prayers go out to Sis. Dixie Messner and her daughter, Mayone, at the passing of Dixie's father, Bro. Leo Messner (Sis. Georgia, Winthrop, MN). We also think of grandson, Bro. Michael and Sis. Rachel Messner, and their family. May God be their Comforter in their time of loss.

We thank our ministering Bro. John Steiner (Oakville) who willingly served us this past month. May God continue to bless him for his service.

IOWA, ELGIN
Gloria Frieden
Heidi Butikofer

He came in humble modesty
 and brought to us all blessings.
 There in a manger slumbered He,
 eternal gifts possessing.
 Arrayed in feeble flesh and blood
 Appeared the gracious Son of God
 To bring us all redemption.

Zion's Harp #107, vs. 2

Bro. Dale and Sis. Cheryl Moore
 welcomed their 8th grandchild into
 their family circle when little
 Zachary Lloyd Kramer (Kurt and
 Danette) arrived on October 26.
 Zachary is also welcomed by his big
 brother, Grant, and his paternal
 grandparents, Lloyd and Marlene.

Visiting ministers who have
 served us this month include Elder
 Bro. Wayne Grimm (Sis. Rose, West
 Bend, IA), Bro. Duane Rocke (Sis.
 Bonnie, Minneapolis, MN) and Bro.
 Steve Sauder (Sis. Mary, Tremont,
 IL). May God ever be with our min-
 istering brethren as they faithfully
 and submissively allow themselves
 to be used in God's service trusting
 completely in Him to provide the
 words that come forth.

'Twas the Night Before Jesus
 'Twas the night before Jesus came,
 and all through the house
 Not a creature was praying, not
 one in the house.
 The Bibles were lain on the shelf
 without care,
 In hopes that Jesus would not
 come there.
 The children were dressing to
 crawl into bed,
 Not once ever kneeling or bowing
 their head.
 And mom in the rocker, with the
 baby on her lap,
 Was watching the Late Show,

while I took a nap.
 When out of the east there arose
 such a clatter,
 I sprang to my feet to see what was
 the matter.
 Away to the window I flew like a
 flash
 Tore open the shutters and threw
 up the sash.
 When what to my wondering eyes
 should appear?
 But angels proclaiming that Jesus
 was here!
 Like a light, like the sun, sending
 forth a bright ray
 I knew in a moment, this must be
 the Day.
 The light of His face, made me
 cover my head.
 It was Jesus! Returning just like
 He had said.
 And though I possessed worldly
 wisdom and wealth,
 I cried when I saw Him, in spite of
 myself.
 In the Book of Life, which He held
 in His hand,
 Was written the name of every
 saved man.
 He spoke not a word as He
 searched for my name;
 When He said "It's not here" my
 head hung in shame
 The people whose name had been
 written in love
 He gathered to take to His Father
 above.
 With those who were ready He
 rose without a sound,
 While all of the rest were left
 standing around.
 I fell to my knees, but it was too
 late!
 I waited too long, and thus sealed
 my fate.
 I stood and I cried as they rose out
 of sight;
 Oh, if only we had been ready to-
 night!
 In the words of this poem the
 meaning is clear,
 The coming of Jesus is drawing

near.

There's only one life, and when co-
 mes the last call
 We'll find that the Bible was true
 after all!

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE
Willa Clark

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

Prov. 3:5,6

Is there any better way to begin
 the year 2006, than to commit our
 entire lives to the Lord, who came to
 earth as an innocent babe? He grew
 in wisdom and stature, showed by
 His work and Word the way we
 should live and then became the ul-
 timate sacrifice, rose from the
 tomb, and ascended to Heaven, that
 we might have eternal life. Let us
 trust the Lord for our direction in
 every moment, every decision in
 the new year, letting Him direct our
 paths.

We have been blessed with visit-
 ing brothers during the past
 month, including Elder Bros. Den-
 nis Warner (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA)
 and Doug Schock (Sis. Clara,
 Bloomfield, IA), Bros. Ed Strahm
 (Sis. Ramona, Bern, KS) and Paul
 Eisenmann (Sis. Elaine,
 Burlington, IA).

We are also thankful for the
 weekend of fellowship and music
 shared with us by members of the
 Psalm 100 quartet from Bluffton
 and Bluffton North. "Make a joyful
 noise unto the Lord, all ye lands ...
 For the Lord is Good; his mercy is
 everlasting; and his truth endureth
 to all generations."

IOWA, IOWA CITY
Diana Butikofer

We appreciate Bro. Floyd Frieden (Sis. Jan, Elgin, IA) and Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Diane, Rockville, CT) assisting on the pulpit this month. May the Lord bless them for their efforts.

IOWA, LESTER
Dawn Knobloch
Dawn Metzger

As our beautiful Fall draws to a close and we look forward to the Christmas season, may we be reminded to always give thanks to God for Jesus Christ and the gift of salvation through Him.

Little Zachary Gherian (Bro. Micah and Sis. Marcy) and Sis. Charlotte Metzger (Bro. Bill) were recent surgical patients. We trust all will go well for them and they will soon be fully recovered. Stan Metzger (Bro. Bill and Sis. Charlotte) and Sis. Naomi Knobloch were hospitalized also, and our thoughts and prayers will be with Sis. Naomi in the coming months as she undergoes treatments.

Bro. Pat Zaugg (West Bend, IA) and Elder Bro. Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL) visited and shared the Word with our congregation this past month. We trust God will bless and direct our ministering brethren for their work on our behalf.

Two weddings took place this past month in our congregation. Matt Anderson and Rosalee Mogler were married on November 5. Bro. Kent Mogler assisted our Elder Bro. Dennis Warner in this endeavor. Our prayer for them is that God's grace and direction will be

with them as they begin their walk together for the Lord. Bro. Brian and Sis. Bev Mogler are Rosalee's parents. November 12 was the day chosen by Darin Knobloch and Stacy Kroon for their wedding day. Our congratulations and best regards are with them also as they embark upon their married life together. Bro. Larry and Sis. Sheryl Knobloch are Darin's parents.

IOWA, OAKVILLE
Rosalie Wiegand
Sharla Wiegand

We would like to thank our visiting ministers, Bro. Rod Bajema (Lester, IA) and Bro. Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT), for sharing the Word with us.

The engagement of Bro. Dan Lanz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Janet) and Sis. Autumn Fehr of West Bend, IA (Bro. Dan and Sis. Eunice) was made known. We surely wish the Lord's richest blessings upon this couple.

A precious baby girl, Larae Adayre, was welcomed into the family of Bro. Randy and Sis. Shayla (Marti) Steiner on November 4. Thankful grandparents are Sis. Teresa (late Bro. Erv) Marti and Bro. Tom and Sis. JoAnn Steiner. Also welcoming her are great-grandparents, Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Marian Schmidgall.

IOWA, WEST BEND
Sue Schneider
Lori Skoglund

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

Matthew 1:23

What thankful people we should be as we reflect on the gift of salvation that began with the birth of His own Son.

We are thankful Bro. Leland Plattner (Sis. Mary, Zapata, TX) was willing to minister unto us while here visiting family recently.

Baby Noah Gerber (Bro. Carl and Sis. Sara) was hospitalized with sickness and little Aaron Massner (Bro. Darin and Sis. Twila) for surgery. Both are home and doing well. Lucille Wirtz also spent time in the hospital and is now residing in an extended care facility nearby.

Believing it is the Lord's will for their lives, Sis. Autumn Fehr (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Judy) and Bro. Dan Lanz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Janet) of Oakville, IA, have announced their engagement. May they feel God's continuing guidance in their lives as they prepare for marriage.

The blessed story of the Christ
The Babe of Bethlehem,
Is worthy of our song and praise,
And stirs the hearts of man.
The fullness of God's love divine
Surrounds the Christ so mild
Alas, how many only know,
The Saviour as a child.
... 'Tis not the manger but the
cross

That sets the spirit free.

Hymns of Zion #36

JAPAN, SHIODA
Willis Ehnlé

Satoe Nozawa died on November 6 and her funeral was held at the Ichinomiya Funeral Home. She was 89 years of age and she was among the first to attend our Shioda Church after it was built in 1956, forty-nine years ago. She was

a member of the Katsunuma Church but attended ours because it was closer. Although she never became a member of our church because she did not want to be re-baptized, she was a strong supporter of our church traditions during the early years.

Elder Bro. Charles and Sis. Miriam Sauder, and Bro. Akihiro and Sis. Carrie Ito, from our Tremont, Illinois, church, visited us on Sunday, November 6. We thank them warmly for their visit.

Sis. Lois Ehnle went to America on November 17 for her brother Marion's funeral. He lived in Denver, Colorado. Marion was nearly 78 years of age at the time of his death, and Lois turned 79 years of age in September. They were close to each other in age and did many things together in their youth. One by one, our bodies are falling asleep and our spirits are flying away to be with God, providing we have Christ on our side.

JAPAN, TOKYO

Jana Klaus

We had some very special guests this past month — newlyweds Bro. Akihiro and Sis. Carrie Itoh and her parents, Elder Bro. Charles and Sis. Miriam Sauder (all of Tremont, IL), came for a couple weeks to get a preview of what life will be like living in Japan. Lord willing, the Itoh's will be back next year to set up a home here and become a part of our church family. The wonderful working of the Lord is very evident in bringing the two of them together and we just cannot praise Him enough! Our church had a reception for them after church on Sunday, October 30, and we all enjoyed celebrating with the couple

and hearing how the Lord has worked in their lives through a presentation that Bro. Akihiro diligently put together. It was extra special, too, to have Carrie's parents worship and fellowship with us. We thank them so much for their support and love and for Bro. Charles' giving of himself in preaching about trusting in God and not in man, and about Jesus' deep love for us.

On that same Sunday, we were glad to have Bro. Jason Sanders (Eureka, IL) worship with us once again as he was back on business with CAT. He picked a good Sunday to be with us as services were in both English and Japanese.

Then, on November 3, a national holiday (Culture Day), we again had blessed worship and fellowship, with both churches involved, for our annual fall "Shuyokai" or Fellowship Meeting. Shioda Church hosted (a big thank you to them!) and it was held at "Budono-oka" (Hill of Grapes) in Yamanashi-ken. What beauty we could behold from up on that hill—vineyard after vineyard rolling through the valley and up the mountain sides.

And, our cups were filled to overflowing with Bro. Charles' messages and discussion on our relationship with our dear Savior and God, and our relationship with our fellow brother and sister. A couple points that were brought out and discussed were "In what ways is it evident (to others) that Jesus is with you?" and "What are the 'Ebenzers' in your life?" thinking on 1 Samuel 7:12 where it speaks of Samuel setting up a stone, calling it "Ebenezer" or "stone of help", to remember how God had helped them up to that point and would

surely continue — these are faith strengthening times and worthy to be remembered over and over to help us on our rugged way.

And one more point I'd like to mention (there was so much more!) is "How can we stimulate each other to be spiritual?" A good Bible reference is Colossians 3:16-17. Many wonderful points to ponder. Thank you again, Bro. Charles!

We are very thankful to report that Bro. Yoshio Yamazaki was back in church this month after a long absence after his fall last winter. He is still receiving rehabilitation, but is in good spirits and can get back home from church on his own in his wheel chair. He comes by taxi in the morning as it is uphill. Thank you to all for prayers for him.

Elderly Sis. Utsuki Okaasan is on IV now constantly, but still at home being lovingly and devotedly cared for by her daughters. Please pray for that family. And, Sis. Haruyo Onoda's husband is scheduled to have heart valve surgery on December 26. She would also appreciate prayers.

We had our annual November "Salvation Army" collection. As usual, many people gave, including several ladies who attend the monthly ladies meeting, and we are thankful.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to our dear Sis. Lois Ehnle (Bro. Willis, Shioda) at the loss of her brother, Bro. Marion Beer (Denver, CO). We pray for comfort for her whole family and for her safe return from the States.

Bro. Andrew Klaus recently took on a new job and has to work the first 6 months in San Jose, CA. The whole family plans to join him from December through March. Our ad-

dress for that time will be: Andrew and Jana Klaus and family, 2205 Corktree Ln, San Jose, CA 95132. We would appreciate prayers for a blessed stay there and for our dear church family here while we are apart.

KANSAS, BERN
Sheri Edelman
Rita Menold

We are happy and thankful to announce that Jason Kaeb (Bro. Paul and Sis. Joan) and Scott Strahm (Bro. Richard and Sis. Edie) have found that wonderful peace in their hearts! Lord willing, we looking forward to their proving and baptism the first part of January!

Bro. Jason and Sis. Kendra Rokey are happy first-time parents of little Jadon Christopher. Jadon's grandparents are Bro. Galen and Sis. Nancy Rokey, and Earl and Sis. Darlene Meyer.

Our young three-year-old son has been very inquisitive lately with lots of questions about God and Jesus. Does God live in Heaven? Does Jesus live in my heart? Does it make Jesus sad when I'm not nice? Is Jesus in my heart when I'm bad? Sometimes I have to remind myself not to tire of him asking so many questions, as this is how they learn! As parents we need to pray that we can teach our children of His truth and righteousness! May all our young parents enjoy the joys and blessings that children bring us!

We thank Bro. Rex Frieden (Sis. Vera, Lamar, MO) for bringing God's Word to us on October 13. We appreciate all our ministers who so willingly proclaim God's Word Sunday after Sunday!

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Mavis Meyer, Sis. Pearl Miller and Bro. Eldon Plattner. We pray that God would heal as He sees fit!

The Bern and Sabetha congregations have heard many wonderful teachings and exhortations, as we have been privileged to sit and listen to the tapes from the Elder Brother Conference. We pray that our Elders may continue to feel God's guidance and direction as they lead the flocks!

Our Elder Bro. John Lehman recently challenged us to ask ourselves "Is my name written there?" What a powerful question. May we continue to help each other along the way, so when our life is over, we can say. "Yes - my name's written there."

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT
Ethel Smith

Grace and peace to all, a gift from our Redeemer, Lord Jesus Christ.

The weekend of October 23 was a very special weekend here in Ft. Scott, as we listened to the testimonies of two converts, Robin Braker and Justin Banwart, who testified of their redemption through the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The provings and baptisms were conducted by Elder Bros. Ted Witzig, Sr. (Sis. Cindy, Morton, IL), Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor, MO), and John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS). It was a beautiful, joyous weekend. The angels in heaven surely rejoiced with us.

On Thursday, November 17, Elder Bros. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS) and Jay Luthi (Sis. Jane, Lamont, KS) read the Conference letter. We appreciated the exhortation reminding us to be

always clothed in the full armor of God and to use our time wisely serving our Lord by doing what we can for others. Other visiting ministers this past month were Bro. Jeff Bahr (Sis. Janice, Kiowa, KS), Bro. Greg Braker (Sis. Wendy, Lamar, MO) and Elder Bro. Marvin Leman (Sis. Jane, Bradford, IL). May God bless them for their love, support and concerns for all of us.

O wondrous thought - the resurrected Christ still lives,
 He lives all glorious in the realms above!
 He sheds abroad His spirit into hearts of men.
 'Tis He who lives, and reigns, and intercedes and loves.

— *Garden of Verse*

KANSAS, KIOWA
Jenny Stewart
Laura Wagenbach

Give thanks unto the Lord for He is good. Not only during this holiday season, but also, every day of the year we need to give thanks to our Heavenly Father for all things.

We had our fall invite-a-friend weekend. Everyone enjoyed soup, singing, and especially the fellowship.

Bro. Jerry Meeks (Sabetha) and his wife, Sis. Christy, joined us. We appreciated his message and the encouraging words he gave to us.

Sis. Marie Tucker had an outpatient eye surgery this past month. She is doing well. Sis. Helen Farney had an outpatient hand surgery. Our prayers are with both of these sisters for a full recovery.

Elder Bro. John Lehman (Bern) and Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Denver) were here to share the Memorandum with us. We want to thank these brothers for their time spent

with us and the words they shared.

**KANSAS
LAMONT-GRIDLEY**

Eileen Bahr

On October 22, Bro. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS) brought forth these questions: If Christ is living in us, how do we show it? Are we dressed with the right garment? What's the wedding garment? What do we need to be wearing today? Are we baptized in Christ? There is an accountability.

On October 29, Bro. Brandon Emch's (Kansas City, MO) message from Matthew 22 was summed up by Jesus' two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And the second, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

While we were in Wichita for Bro. Rudy Bahr's aortic valve heart transplant, Bros. Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL) and Ken Eisenmann (Cissna Park, IL) were with a group of visitors. We appreciate any and all of the visiting ministers and pray that God will reward them for their efforts.

Several years ago in Kansas City they made a study on the effects of prayer on heart surgery patients. They had people pray for patients they did not know and the recovery time was shortened. We do believe that all the prayers we received aided in Rudy's surgery and we thank you for these blessed petitions and cards.

We benefited by Bro. Cory Metzger's (Wichita, KS) coming to visit his mother November 13. He asked this question: "Are we encouraging each other?"

KANSAS, SABETHA

Dawn Strahm

Rebekah Beyler

We were blessed to have visiting Bro. Don Sinn (Silverton, OR) minister to us from God's Word this past month.

The Sabetha and Bern congregations have been gathering together on Friday evenings to listen to the Conference tapes from our Annual Brotherhood Conference. How thankful we are for the words of encouragement and admonition from our dear Elder brethren as they watch for our souls.

Bro. Kurt and Sis. Hannah Grimm have been blessed with another daughter, Marissa Ann. Big sister, Addison, along with grandparents, Bro. Doug and Sis. Jeryl Grimm and Bro. Guy and Sis. Lynette Koehl (Morris, MN), welcome her into their family circle.

A delicious Thanksgiving dinner was enjoyed by all as we came together for food and fellowship on Sunday evening, November 6. Many thanks for the service of our Sunday school students and those that planned and prepared the meal.

Our prayers are with Sis. Ellen Hertzell (Elder Bro. Gerry) and her family as they mourn the loss of Ellen's father, Walter Plattner.

Sis. Brooke Huber (Bro. Gordon and Sis. Sharlyn) has been announced to Bro. Vince Francesi (Bro. Len and Sis. Mary) of Bluffton North, IN. We pray for them God's blessings and nearness as they plan for their upcoming wedding on March 19.

KANSAS, WICHITA

Emma Miller

We heard Anna Sauder give her testimony of faith the evening of October 29 and the following day we witnessed her baptism. Anna was surrounded by a host of relatives who came from Iowa and Illinois. Visiting ministers were Elder Bros. Dennis Warner (Lester, IA) and Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, KS) and Bro. Matthew Rassi (Chicago, IL). It was a pleasure to observe the spirit of cooperation from everyone concerned as the events of the weekend unfolded. Our church was filled and as it is said in the Bible, "and yet there was room."

November was definitely grandparent's month for two of our families in Wichita. On November 2, Patrick and Joanne Funk of DeSota became parents to twins, Liam James and Olivia Valerie. Little Olivia is the first girl in the Bro. Glen and Sis. Sally Funk family of grandchildren. Olivia and Liam are the second set of twins in the same group.

Two days later, Sis. Kathleen Gallatin became grandmother to Mac Charles McDonald. Mac's parents are Laurie and Mark who live in Golden, CO. I find it interesting that Sis. Kathleen and her late husband, Joe, had two daughters. The grandchildren are all boys.

Our prayer is that God will bless these births, both the spiritual and the natural, that they may develop their potential in His service.

MEXICO, MAGDALENA

Joy Huber

Greetings of love from Magdalena!

Having put their confidence in our Master, two dear families, Bro.

Joe and Sis. Denise Maller from Bluffton, IN, and Bro. Brian and Sis. Marie Ricketts and their six children from Forrest, IL, moved to Magdalena November 1st and 4th. We welcome these brethren and appreciate their help in the Lord's work here (Colossians 3:23,24).

We want to express our thanks and love to Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Francesville, IN) and Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix, AZ) for their willingness to share God's Word here in Magdalena the weekend of November 6.

To remember the day of prayer for the persecuted church (November 13), we had a special Sunday evening service. There is a secluded spot on our property near the river where bamboo grows tall. Previously the boys had made a secret club house there. We met there and pretended as if we were in a country where Christians are persecuted for their faith. Two of the older boys guarded the door as we sang quietly and shared a reading from an old burnt Bible. When they signaled that someone was passing by, we got quiet and turned off the flashlights. The children also shared Bible verses from memory. It made us all realize what it would be like to have to meet in secret and fear being overheard. Afterwards we prayed for those who really do need to gather in dark caves or other secret places to worship because they don't have the religious freedom that we have in northern Mexico. May we not take this freedom for granted.

MEXICO, IXTLAN
Rosario & Claudia Gonzalez

"Neither pray I for these alone,

but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;"

John 17:20

The Lord has again answered prayers as three more souls have answered His call. October 22-23 were testimonies and baptisms for our new brothers and sister in Christ. We welcome Bro. Francisco Angel Herrera (Francisco and Carmen Herrera) and Bro. Samuel and Sis. Maria Gutierrez to the family of God! We appreciate the time and willingness of Elder Bros. Tom Hoffman and Charles Hemmer in coming to share God's Word with us.

Meet Sis. Esthela Saucedo:

I am 50 years old and the mother of six children. At first I thought I was a good and obedient wife. I grew up in the Catholic church thinking I was a good person because I recited prayers a lot. But then something happened with my husband who was a drunk and treated me badly as well as my children. I wondered why bad things happened to me if I was doing good things. I tried to take my life but my daughters took me to the hospital and I recovered. I argued a lot with my husband and it was during this period of time that my son died. It was a tragedy and I blamed my husband for what had happened. At this point, I left Mexico City and came to live in my home town, Plaza del Limon. I continued to attend the Catholic church but my brother, who was attending the Bible studies that the brothers had here, also invited me to attend. I did attend and at that time, I was again hospitalized for cancer. After returning home, I realized I needed to attend church as well as the Bible studies. My first visit to the church was so full of emotion that I could

not even read or sing and upon returning to my home, the neighbors asked me if I just came from a celebration because I was so full of joy. I told them, "Yes, it was a celebration of the Lord."

After attending the church in Ixtlan for some time, I recognized that I was a sinner in need of repentance. I returned to Mexico City and asked my husband for forgiveness and also my children for all that I had done. I told my husband that I was going to give my life to the Lord and no longer carried hatred and bitterness in my heart.

I am thankful to the Lord that He has blessed me so much and I have been able to speak to other people about the Gospel wherever I go. Now I am able to share Bible stories with the neighbor children because when they are small, they absorb so much more than when they are older. (Proverbios 22:6)

MICHIGAN, ALTO
Rose Watson
Terri Huber

Autumn is a busy time filled with activities and preparations for the coming holidays, and we find our minds filled with thanksgiving for many wonderful blessings. Of course, we have spent the day formally titled Thanksgiving with our family and friends, and in church worshipping and thanking the Giver of hope and life.

How fitting to mention a new life at this time: the family of Bro. Tom and Sis. Michelle Oesch thankfully welcomes the birth of their first grandchild, Jonas Andrew, to Luke and Ruthanne Grummet. A new life with whom to share God's love and gifts!

We are thankful for our visitors.

We had young groups from several churches join us for an "acts of service" weekend in October, and were also blessed to have visiting ministering Bro. Frank Sauder (Roanoke, IL) and his wife and family join us and teach us that weekend. Fellowship with visiting ministering Bro. Dennis Kaufmann (Sis. Bonnie, Bloomington, IL) was enjoyed in November.

We are also thankful for our material blessings. At times we feel unworthy, and our hearts ache for those who must do without. In our own small way, we tried to share of our abundance by scheduling World Relief Family Nights in October and November. There we can work on projects ranging from comforters and blankets to school kits to filling shoeboxes with toys and health items to be shipped to children in less fortunate countries in time for Christmas.

We are thankful for fellowship and friends. The annual Sunday School leaf-raking was held at Bro. Lyman and Sis. Vivian Feldman's home. They have plenty of leaves to share! Another annual treat was the Secret Pal Luncheon. It is heartwarming to see bonds of friendship and caring woven and strengthened with cards, gifts and thoughtfulness.

There can be sadness in our thanks. We will miss Sis. Helen Steffen as she has moved to Phoenix for the winter. We are glad she can spend quality time with family members in Arizona, and aren't we thankful for the blessing of easy travel in this day and age!

We are always thankful for God's healing powers and we lift Sis. Bertha Wingeier up to Him in prayer as she is hospitalized with

pneumonia at this time. We can report that our prayers for healing were answered and our Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen is again able to join his co-laborers on the pulpit after a brief absence due to a very serious and frightening brain surgery last month.

In closing, let us forever be thankful to our Father in Heaven, especially as our thoughts turn to the season of Christmas, representing the most precious gift and blessing of all: Christ Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, who is coming again to take us home to live with Him forever!

Note of Thanks:

I wish to express my deep appreciation for all the prayers, cards and gifts of love given to me during and following my recent surgery. Words can never convey how thankful I am for your love and support.

Aaron Steffen

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY
Sarah Knochel
Janelle Ramseyer

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

Zion's Harp #236

Our congregation felt the blessing of the Lord on Sunday, October 23, as we witnessed the ordination of Bro. John Jackson (Sis. Peggy) as an ordained deacon for the Bay City congregation. We had many visitors with us for the weekend and it has been a blessing to see how the

Lord has worked in the hearts of our brethren. Our thoughts, prayers, and support are with Bro. John as he assumes these responsibilities and for Sis. Peggy as she supports him in his duties.

For the ordination weekend, we were blessed to have many visiting ministers with us. Special thanks to Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen (Sis. Loretta, Alto, MI), Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Beverly, Detroit, MI), and Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH) for their willingness to take part in the ordination service. Also visiting that day were Bro. Jesse Bedolla (Sis. Bonnie, Detroit, MI), Bro. Nathan Wieland (Sis. Suzanne, Goodfield, IL), and Bro. Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandra, Alto, MI). We thank each of these brothers for coming to share with us.

Also visiting in the past month was Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Sis. Sandra, Morris, MN) and Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI). Special thanks to each of these brothers for their willingness to share the Gospel with us.

We want to remember our loved ones who have undergone surgery in the past month. Gerald Meier (Sis. Edie) and Bro. Neil Ramseyer (Sis. Sharon) are each recuperating from surgical procedures and we pray that they both will make a speedy recovery. We also are mindful of our Elder Bro. Aaron Steffen as he has spent time in the hospital in the past month. We pray that our dear Heavenly Father will bring each one a reasonable measure of health and strength.

May God's blessings and peace be yours during this Christmas season.

"Glory to God in the highest, and

on earth peace; good will toward men.”

Luke 2:14

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

Tiffany Wieland

Mary Weigele

We were reminded of the song “Christian Friendship” from our Hymns of Zion songbook when we hosted Detroit’s first “invite a friend” weekend on October 29-30. There truly are “friendships that we cherish in our daily walk of life”, but those that are especially meaningful are our friends who “live by truth and goodness and who live in Him anew”. We thank all those who were instrumental in planning this special weekend!

We appreciated having ministering Bro. Ted Steffen and his wife, Sis. Sandy, bring a message of hope to our Woodhaven residents on November 1. Their baby daughter Anna accompanied them and this was a special treat for the residents – they love interacting with children. Bro. Ted and his family are from the Alto, MI, congregation and we thank them for their service to us.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Sabados family on the death of their brother, Michel. He is survived by his sisters, Sis. Suzanne, Sis. Anna, Pauline, Maria Kobal and her husband Mario, and his brother, Joseph. We also express our condolences to Paxton and Denise Williams in the death of her grandfather, William David Saltz. May God bring peace and comfort to their hearts as we uplift them in prayer.

It is with great sadness, yet with peace in our hearts, that we bid farewell to Bro. Keith, Sis. Alisa,

Auburn, Braden, Brecken, Addison, and Brynne Beyer as they relocate from our area to central Illinois. Bro. Keith has faithfully served us in the ministry for 7 years and we will certainly feel this void. In our farewell gathering for the family, we sang “Near to the Heart of God”, and took comfort knowing that it is our wonderful faith in God that will keep us connected to each other. We wish them God’s blessings as Bro. Keith begins his new job and the family settles into their home. They plan to worship with the Washington congregation.

Note: It appears that a ladies tan coat with a Liz Claiborne label was mistakenly taken from the coat rack. A similar coat was left in its place. Please contact Sis. Martha Szilagyi at 734-762-7789 if you can be of help with this matter. Thanks!

MINNESOTA MINNEAPOLIS

LaRae Dill

Prayer of Thanksgiving
We gather together to ask the
Lord’s blessing,
He chastens and hastens His will
to make known;
The wicked oppressing cease them
from distressing,
Sing praises to His name, He for-
gets not His own.

Beside us to guide us, our God
with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His king-
dom divine,
So from the beginning the fight we
were winning;
Thou, Lord wast at our side, all
glory be Thine.

We all do extol thee, Thou Leader
in battle,
And pray that Thou still our De-
fender wilt be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribu-
lation:
Thy name be ever praised! O
Lord, make us free!
(folksong of the Netherlands)

The Thanksgiving season allows us to reflect on God’s blessings and provisions in the year past. Thinking of present situations in our congregation we also give thanks....

.....with Bro. Don and Sis. Bernadine Miller in the recent baptism of Don’s brother, Wayne, in Tremont.

.....to Elder Bros. Lawrence Luthi (Lamar, MO) and Art Nohl (Morris, MN) for their ministry November 12 and 13. Both brothers were present for the Memorandum; we certainly enjoyed and appreciated their visits.

.....to God for His protecting hand on Chelsey Messner (Bro. Doug and Sis. Sue). Chelsey was hit by a drunk driver while driving home one night, and has multiple injuries as a result. Our church family aches for Doug, Sue, Alissa and Chelsey as they deal with the uncertainties of life.

.....for the miracle of conversion as seen in the life of Chris Williams, who was baptized in Winthrop, MN, on November 20. Many from Minneapolis were present to hear Chris’ inspiring testimony of God’s work in his life. Chris and his wife, Nancy, attended the Minneapolis church for a time when they were living in Chanhassan, MN. This couple is very dear to us and we rejoice with them!

.....for healing and regained strength to those in our congrega-

tion who have recently experienced illness or surgeries. Sis. Vera Schmidt had surgery on her shoulder, is healing, and back in church.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

**Heidi Nohl
Katie Koehl**

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Lawrence Luthi (Lamar, MO) minister God's Word to us. May God bless him for his labors.

Thy spirit, Lord, renews our fainting souls;
It's help we do implore.
Zion's Harp #122

Our prayers have been with those who have been hospitalized this month. They are: Sis. Mary Koehl (Bro. Jake), Joe Koehl (Angie), Bernice Luthi (Harold), Bro. Otto Schaefer, Bro. Karl Koehl (Sis. Marilyn), Bro. Dennis Schmidgall (Sis. Ruby), Sis. Esther Koehl, Tyler Slutten (Bro. Randy and Sis. Lori Fehr) and Sis. Sophie Nohl. We trust God will heal and provide for them, where it is His will.

The engagement of Curtis Koehl (Bro. Roy and Sis. Jenell) to Crystal Rinkenberger (Robert and Mary) was made known. And on November 30, the engagement of Bro. Brent Wulf (Bro. Davis and Sis. Nancy) to Sis. Susie Nohl (Bro. DeWayne and Sis. Janice) was announced. We wish both couples God's blessings as they plan for their wedding and married life together.

This month there were three new babies born to all first-time parents. On November 4, Sonia Rose was born to Bro. Joshua and Sis. Heidi Schmidgall. Excited

grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. June Schmidgall and Bro. Verle and Sis. Christa Sauder. On November 9, Sierra Dale was born to Bro. Micah and Sis. Holly Zeltwanger. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Dale and Sis. Rachel Zeltwanger and Bro. Fred and Sis. Pat Beer (Milford, IN). On November 13, Titus James was born to Bro. Adam and Sis. Rachel Bjerketvedt. Excited grandparents are Ted and Gloria Bjerketvedt and Bro. Aldean and Sis. Charlotte Luthi. May the Lord grant Godly wisdom as these parents raise their families.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Jerel and Sis. Linda Schmidgall and family with the passing of Sis. Linda's dad, Bro. Wilmer Leman (Eureka, IL). Also to Bro. Tony and Sis. Nancy Messner and family with the passing of Bro. Tony's dad, Bro. Leo Messner (Winthrop, MN).

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

**Ginny Stoll
Rachel Steiner**

We would like to thank Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Sis. Rachel, Morris, MN) for sharing God's Holy Word with us this past month.

The Sunday School children hosted the 55 and Over Supper. What a privilege to listen as our older brothers and sisters share precious memories of the past.

Sis. Victoria, Trey, Stephanie, Michael, Thomas and David are excited to announce the birth of Catherine Jean, born on November 2. Thankful parents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Ginny Stoll.

Bro. Leo Messner passed away on November 4. We extend our sympathy and prayers to Sis. Georgia and the entire family. We pray

that the family will feel God's love and grace.

Marie Messerli passed away October 26 in the Fairfield, CA, convalescent home. She was born May 5, 1912, to Fred and Hannah at Lester, IA. She was baptized July 4, 1934, in the Winthrop Apostolic Christian Church. Marie was preceded in death by her parents; sisters, Emma Martin, Margaret Larson; brothers, Howard and Cornelius. Leaving to mourn are her brothers, Dan and Roy; and sisters, Lillian Schrieber and Elizabeth Patterson. She had many nieces and nephews.

Note of Thanks:

We would like to thank you for the phone calls, cards, gifts, and visits that were made to Leo and us through the four months of Leo's illness. Thanks also, for your continued thoughtfulness and kind deeds shown to us during the time of Dad's passing. We were gratified by all of you that came to be with us and the miles that many of you traveled to be there. A special thank you to the Winthrop church for all they have done for Leo and us.

The family of Leo Messner

MISSOURI, LAMAR

**Wendy Braker
Mindy Braker**

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."

Ephesians 5:31

Many from our congregation traveled to Bern, KS, on October 16 to witness the wedding vows of Sis. Diane Strahm (Bro. Curt and Sis.

Ellen, Bern, KS) and Bro. Bruce Stoller (Bro. Darrell and Sis. Gloria, Bern, KS). May the Lord be near them as they begin their lives together. Sis. Diane will certainly be missed in our congregation.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

Krista Banwart

We are thankful for God's provision and healing for our ministering Bro. Loren Schrenk who recently was hospitalized for tongue cancer surgery. Many thanks for the love and prayers offered and being offered up on his behalf, and for the peace of God through it all.

Visiting ministers this past month included Bro. Kenny Dietz (Sis. Mardell, Bradford, IL), Bro. Paul Zimmerman (Sis. Loretta, Forrest, IL), Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla) and Bro. Lenny Meyer (Sis. Charlotte) both of Chicago, IL, Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr. (Sis. Donna, Morton, IL), Bro. John Reinhard (Sis. Pam, Bluffton, IN), and Bro. Gary Anliker (Sis. Edith, Elgin, IL).

May Jesus be the one true focus of our Christmas season.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for he hath visited and redeemed his people,"

Luke 1:68

One little child in a manger, one
world full of sin
One sinless lamb sufficient, one
battle for to win
One star shone extra brightly, one
town it hovered o'er
One purpose that one mother
knew her child had come for
One death out on mount Calvary,
one resurrection morn
One hope brought down from
Heaven, one chance to be re-

born

One who could pay the debt, that
no one can afford

One little child in a manger, One
Savior and One Lord.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR

Sally Haerr

THANKSGIVING ... I've spent some time thinking about this word, and it's meaning. Is it just the name of a set-aside holiday in November to us ... or do we take it a little more to heart? I believe thanksgiving and contentment go hand in hand. So then I ask myself, "Do my actions or behavior radiate a thankful person?" I don't always like the honest answer that comes back to me. Let's all challenge ourselves to let thankfulness show through in peace and contentment.

On October 30, many of us had the privilege of witnessing the marriage of Bro. Jeff Knobloch (Bro. Bill and Sis. Ellie, Lester, IA) and Sis. Bethany Wiegand (Bro. John and Sis. Mary, Roanoke, IL). We wish them many blessings as they build their marriage on a Godly foundation. Ministering Bro. Ron Heiniger (Sis. Kayleen, Bloomington, IL) came for this special occasion and served us spiritually, for which we want to thank him. We still claim them in our hearts, although it has been many years since they made their home here in Taylor.

On November 2, Bro. Steve Baner (Sis. Donnalou, Gridley, IL) came to present a topical Bible study. He chose an interesting topic, "Moderation". Especially interesting since the Biblical study of the word moderation interprets it to mean "sweetly reasonable". Now that is a challenge for all of us. Not

impossible, but certainly a goal for most of us to work on. Thank you, Bro. Steve.

The sick and/or hospitalized this past month were: Taylor Gerst (John and Julie), Bro. Steve Sutter (Sis. Deb), Bro. Paul Haab (Sis. Kathy) and Bro. Kenny Knapp (Sis. Phyllis).

Let's all take some extra time to count our blessings (Hymns of Zion #116).

NEW YORK CROGHAN-NAUMBURG

Hope Graves

We have been blessed with two visiting ministers this month. A potluck and singing was held Saturday evening, November 12, when ministering Bro. Sam Schlatter (Junction, OH) and his wife were here. The next weekend we were blessed to have ministering Bro. Duane Reutter (Rockville, CT) and his family here with us. A special thanks to these brothers for sharing the Word with us.

We have started getting our first snows of the winter and realize that traveling takes a little more precaution this time of year! We even had to cancel Wednesday evening services on November 9 due to the weather. We were thankful that Elder Bro. Duane Farney and his wife had a safe trip to and from the Conference in Philadelphia, PA. May the Lord watch over each one as they travel over the snowy roads this winter.

Our prayers are with Jay Virkler and Shannon Hellinger as they were married on November 3. May they feel the presence and love of Christ in their lives.

We rejoice with Bob and Tessa Millard in the birth of their new lit-

tle son, Tanner Michael, on October 28. Tanner joins big brothers, Brent and Jordan, at home. Thankful grandparents are Elder Bro. Duane and Sis. Karen Farney. May they be blessed with this new addition to their household! We love seeing a little baby in church again!

Our prayers go out to Linette Bush after her recent surgery. We are thankful she is now home recovering.

OHIO, AKRON **Joyce Gasser**

Elder Bro. Gerry Hertzell (Sis. Ellen, Sabetha, KS) was with us October 29-30 and assisted our Elder Bro. Dave Graf with blessing our congregation with the Memorandum. We are grateful for our heritage we have in our church.

Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marian, San Diego, CA) was with us November 19-20 and assisted our Elder Bro. Dave Graf with testimonies of Tim and Angie Zarkovacki. We welcome the Zarkovacki's as members into our church.

We appreciate that our visiting Elder Bros. Hertzell and Petrovic, who, in addition to their Elder duties on Saturday evening, also served our congregation in the ministry on the respective Sundays.

Several in our congregation have lost loved ones due to death. Sis. Esther and Sis. Helen Boleratz's sister, Annie Fetzer, passed away. Her husband, Christian, passed away some time ago and Annie had been in our Nursing Home. Sis. Michelle Hrubik's grandfather, Carl Hrubik, age 91, passed away. Our sympathy goes to these Sisters-in-faith and their families.

Bro. Richard Baumgartner and

Bro. Dan Reljin had been hospitalized and have been released to go home. May the Lord be with them, bless them, and heal them.

OHIO, COLUMBUS **Nancy Banks**

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

There is so much to be thankful for here in our little congregation. We are thankful for the many visiting brethren who travel across the miles to share God's precious Word with us. This month we were pleased to meet and greet Elder Bros. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) and Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH), Bros. Jesse Bedolla (Detroit, MI), Gary Brown (Forrest, IL) and Ted Luginbuhl (Smithville, OH). We appreciate so much the efforts put forth by those who visit.

We are also thankful that little Julia Grimm (Bro. John and Sis. Julie) is recovering from her recent surgery to have her tonsils removed.

The annual fall clean-up was held at the church and we are thankful for the willing and eager helpers who worked that day to ready the church for the coming winter.

OHIO, JUNCTION **Cindy Schlatter**

Wyatt Mitchel was born October 21 to bless the home of Bro. Corbin and Sis. Audrey Schlatter. His big

sisters, Natalie, Nicole and Allison, are pleased with their little baby brother. Bro. Ralph and Sis. Sheila Schlatter and Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty Baltic (Indianapolis, IN) are his grandparents. Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz welcome a little granddaughter, Courtney Anne, into their family circle. Her parents are Bro. Chad and Sis. Cindy Indermuhle (Rittman, OH). Please forgive me for omitting the birth of Bro. Ben and Sis. Carolyn Manz's grandson, Jayden Michael, who was born on June 28. Jayden's parents are Mike and Kim Manz. We pray for much wisdom and grace to these families as they raise their dear children.

We recently gathered together to hear the reading of the Memorandum. Our thanks goes to Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) for spending this weekend with us. We would also like to thank Bro. Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH) for his work in the ministry. May we all have tender hearts that are able to be shaped and molded according to God's good and perfect will.

Our hearts were saddened to hear of the passing of John Manz's wife, Elaine. John and their children, Brandon and Briana, will certainly continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

Bro. Ken Gasser (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Ellen, Rittman) moved to our area in August as he accepted a local employment opportunity. We certainly welcome him to our congregation and enjoy having him among us.

OHIO, LATTY
Bonny Wenninger
Amanda Steffen

We had two weddings this month. On October 16, Bro. Bill McClure and Sis. Brenda Wenninger were united in marriage. Parents are Rose McClure of Van Wert, OH, and Bro. Don and Sis. Josephine Wenninger. Bro. Ralph Stoller and Sis. Esther Stoller were married on October 26. We wish these couples God's blessings as they now serve Him together.

On October 23, four more souls were baptized and promised to be true and faithful to their God and Savior: Darren Eisenmann (Bro. Bill and Sis. Carol), Shannon Schlatter (Bro. Gus and Sis. LeAnn), and Chad and Jennifer Keysor (Bro. George and Sis. Sharon and Jack and Joy Landskroener of Ayersville, OH).

We had many visiting ministers this month, and we want to thank each of them for blessing us with the Word of Truth. They were: Bro. Earl Beery (Rittman, OH), Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL), Bro. Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL), Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Leo, IN), Bro. Doug Harmon (Toledo, OH), Bro. Justin Koch (Washington, IL), Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL), Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH), Bro. Warren Schlatter (Junction, OH), and Bro. Dan Stoller (Remington, IN).

Sis. Esther Schlatter was laid to rest on October 20. Our prayers are with her family: Bro. Don and Sis. Josephine Wenninger, Bro. Dick and Sis. Viola Schlatter, and Sis. Elizabeth Wieland. Our thoughts and prayers are also with Bro. Dwain and Sis. Wanita Laukhuf, as

Wanita's mother, Sis. Anna Frauhiger (Bluffton, IN), passed away and was laid to rest on October 17. We are thankful that these sisters are now free from pain and are resting in their Savior's arms.

The angels in heaven rejoice as Jordan Miller recognized his need for a Savior and has begun his repentance. Thankful parents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Kay Miller.

Our prayers are with our hospital patients. This month includes Bro. Ray Stoller (Sis. Carol), Sis. Iva Stoller (Bro. Darl), Brooks Laukhuf (Bro. Chris and Sis. Rachel), and Bro. Charles Dunham. We pray that God will comfort, bless, and heal according to His perfect will.

We enjoyed a blessed weekend on November 5-6. Memorandum was read to us on Saturday evening, and on Sunday we dedicated our church building to the Lord. Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann was here to assist Elder Bro. John. We are so thankful that our addition has been completed, and we look forward to the many blessings that we will share in it. Thanks to each one that worked on our church project. We pray that you will feel God's blessings.

OHIO, MANSFIELD
Esther Baumann

We rejoiced with Sis. Kristan Keever (Clair and Sis. Bev) and Bro. Ben Craig (Bro. Kim and Sis. Carol, Congerville, IL) as they were united in Holy Matrimony on November 6. We were thankful for the many visitors present. Special thanks to Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Sis. Gloria, Congerville, IL) and Bro. Mike Rinkenberger (Sis. Pat, Congerville, IL) who served us in

the ministry on this special weekend.

We also thank Elder Bro. Ted Witzig (Sis. Cindy, Morton, IL) who came to assist in the reading of the Memorandum on November 12.

On October 30, we learned Bro. Mike Baumann Jr. (Sis. Lilly) has been called into the ministry. We uplift Bro. Mike and his family in prayer as they undertake this new responsibility.

A warm welcome to Bro. Jeremy and Sis. Melissa Miller and their children, David, Jonathan and Steven, who have moved into our area from Sarasota, FL.

Bro. Tim and Sis. Jenny Sauder and Sis. Jenny Rufener (Leo, IN) joined us on October 23 to share with us the work that is being accomplished at Gateway Woods Children's Home. May God continue to bless this important work.

Please pray for our recently hospitalized patients: Elmer "Bud" Sauder and Courtney Sauder (Greg and Sis. Missy).

Our sympathy and prayers to Sis. Marcella Sauder (Bro. Charles) at the passing of her brother, Luther Steffen.

This Christmas Season, may we pause at the manger, but then continue on to the cross.

OHIO, RITTMAN
Anne Gasser
Hannah Beery

Now thank we all our God
 With hearts and hands and voices,
 Who wondrous things has done
 In whom the world rejoices.

Hymns of Zion #236

As a large congregation, with lots of people who have lots of fam-

ily, we still rejoice with those who have the blessing of children coming to know the Lord. We are thankful that God continues to call loved ones to the fold. We are thankful when souls accept God's grace and answer His call. This month, Isaac Steiner (Bro. Dave and Sis. Lynn), Stacy Bauman (Sis. Nancy), Jared Bauman (Sis. Nancy), Myles Rufener (Bro. Dan and Sis. Karen), and Anna Bauman (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Martha) have answered God's call. We pray that they will dig deep on the foundation of Christ Jesus and make a true repentance. We are thankful for each one that God has blessed them with good guidance at home.

After repentance, we are thankful when souls make it to the next step, find peace with God and are ready to be baptized. This month, David Christian (Bro. Ron and Sis. Joann), Jami Calame (Bro. John and Sis. Jody) and Todd Rufener (Bro. Jim and Sis. Pat) were baptized into the body of Christ. May they feel the blessings of Christ every day that they live true and faithful to Him.

Then, after being taken into the fold, we rejoice with those that seek God's will in their life for a helpmate. We are happy to write that Bro. Ethan Schar (Bro. Rowen and Sis. Judy) and Sis. Trudie Hartzler (Bro. Tom and Sis. Diane) are engaged to be married. May God grant them much love and grace in their marriage.

Then, moving onto the next step in life, it is such a blessing when God sends children into the lives of His children. Bro. Chad and Sis. Cindy Indermuhle announced the birth of their second little girl. Courtney Anne was born November 4. No doubt little Carmen will

welcome her new little sister with welcome hands. Courtney is the granddaughter of Bro. Dwaine and Sis. Joan and Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz (Junction, OH). Also, Eli Thomas was born June 29 to Bro. Milan and Sis. Amy Baltic. Eli is the little brother of Mollie, Megan, Adam and Madalyn and the grandson of Bro. Art and Sis. Bonnie Ingold and Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty Baltic (Indianapolis, IN).

This month has brought some heartache to our congregation as well. We have had three funerals this last month. Art Hafely, the brother of Doretta Kaufman, Sis. Neva Gasser (children, Sis. Jane Hartzler, Gerald, Wanda Perry, Bro. Fred, and Elsie Maibach) and Sis. Ruth E. Beery have all reached their eternal destination. We are thankful for those who have left us a faith to continue to carry on to the next generation. We pray that God will give us the help to be faithful to Him.

This month we have been privileged to have many visiting brethren. We are glad to have brethren come to our congregation who are willing to share the beautiful Word of God. We send our thanks to Bros. John Reinhard (Bluffton, IN), Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN), Nelson Beer (Milford, IN), Ron Palitto (Akron, OH), Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI) and Elder Bros. Ron Messner (Washington, IL), Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) and Ken Indermuhle (Sardis, OH).

When our loved ones are hospitalized, we often wonder what God has in store for them. But, we are always thankful when He carries them through with His presence. This month Sis. Marge Weber, Bro. Dave Emch (Sis. Eileen), Sis. Martha Zollinger (Carl), Sis. Betz

Bauman, Sis. Martha Walder, Lloyd Emch, Bro. Bill Saylor (Sis. Mary Ellen) and Sis. Marge Boltz (Bro. Bob) all spent some time in the hospital. We are praying that God will continue to heal them as only He can do.

With the Christmas season approaching, may God grant each one a blessed Thanksgiving. And may we all remember that because of Christ we have so very much to be thankful for.

OHIO, SARDIS

Eric and Jami Hartzler

In sorrow and pain Thy trust do retain

In Jesus the merciful Saviour.

He'll shield and defend

His child to the end;

No suffering or death shall appall thee.

Zion's Harp #46

Our prayers and sympathy are with those who have lost loved ones this month. Marie Rigggenbach, Bro. Dale and Sis. Virginia Rigggenbach are grieving the passing of Dick Roth, who had been ill for some time now. Also, Sis. Janet Indermuhle (Bro. Allen) is mourning the loss of her great aunt. May the Lord provide each one with comfort and peace during these difficult times.

We are thankful that the Great Physician has provided healing for those who had surgery this month. Sis. Terry Zollinger (Bro. Gary) and Bro. Denny Miller (Sis. Doris) are both recovering very well.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

The Children's Harp #1

Rejoicing over the safe arrival of their first child, Emma Sue, are John and Amanda Weslow (Maumee, OH). First-time grandparents are John and Brenda Weslow of the Toledo area and Bro. Allen and Sis. Janet Indermuhle. May the Lord grant wisdom and grace to this young family.

As Christmas nears, may we be ever mindful of the most precious Gift of all, Jesus Christ.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE

**Ruth Gasser
Edith Miller**

Call and cry, ye watchmen, boldly;
Call aloud and spare them not!
Jesus wants a faithful witness;
Teachers not confessing Jesus
Have stern judgment as their lot.
Call and cry, ye watchmen, boldly;
Call aloud and spare them not.

Zion's Harp #112

We appreciate the efforts of our shepherds watching for our souls. On November 5, Elder Bros. Gerry Hertzler (Sabetha, KS) and Merle Hartzler (Rittman, OH) assisted our own Elder Bro. Andy Stoller in reading and expounding upon the Conference Memorandum. May we all heed the warnings which are brought forth for our soul's welfare. Bro. Gerry was with us on the following day, and we thank him for bringing us the Word of Life. We also thank Bro. Bill Waibel (Bay City, MI) for visiting us on another Sunday, as they were passing through the area. May God's blessings be upon each one who ministers the truth of the Gospel.

We are happy to report we have another convert in our congregation. Brittany Indermuhle (Bro.

Brian and Sis. Beverly) has acknowledged her need of salvation. We surely wish her much grace as she begins her journey on the narrow pathway of life.

Our best wishes go to Bro. Corban Riegenbach and Sis. Jessica Dotterer, as their engagement was recently announced. Their parents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Anita Riegenbach (Rittman, OH) and Bro. Dave and Sis. Luanna Dotterer. May God be with them and guide them while making plans for a January wedding.

At home recovering from surgery at this time is Sis. Lou Riegenbach (Bro. Glenn). May she experience a good recovery, looking to the Great Physician for healing.

We welcome to our congregation Bro. Dan and Sis. Diane Wuthrich from Morton, IL, as they have come to this area for a time. We wish them the Lord's blessings as they assemble with us.

We extend sympathy to Sis. Jane Hartzler (Bro. Ken) as her mother, Sis. Neva Gasser (Rittman, OH), recently passed away. We likewise sympathize with Sis. Emily Rufener (Bro. John), Sis. Becky Zollinger (Bro. Ken) and Sis. Millie Stoller (Bro. Jeff) as their sister – in – law, Elaine Manz (John), from Junction, OH, passed from this life after a lengthy battle with cancer. May God comfort those who grieve.

OHIO, TOLEDO

**Teresa Rywalski
Rebecca Beard**

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:19

Once again God has supplied our needs. Providing help on the pulpit this month were: Bro. Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction, OH), Bro. Lynn Fiechter (Sis. Ronda, Bluffton, IN), Bro. Art Ingold (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman, OH), and Bro. Dwight Stoller (Sis. Lori, Latty, OH). May God bless these dear brothers and their families as only He can.

OREGON, PORTLAND

Brianna Strahm

Greetings in our Lord's name from Portland. We rejoice to report that one of our dear friends has turned to the Lord in humble repentance. Elisheba Folia has our loving support and prayers as she begins upon the way of salvation.

When sounds the hour,
Oh when will I be there?
Home, O sweet home!
Home, O sweet home!
Saviour to meet Thee
In Heaven so fair?
Home, O sweet home!
Home, O sweet home!

Hymns of Zion #238

Our sympathy and prayers are once again extended to Bro. Robert and Sis. Pearl in the passing of Sis. Pearl's sister, Sis. Ann Pfister, of Roanoke, IL. Sis. Ann would be the third sibling in the Pfister family to be called home in less than a year. May the Lord comfort and strengthen our loved ones in their time of grief and sorrow.

On October 30, a memorial service was held in memory of our Sis. Golda Ditch who passed away on October 6. We appreciate those from Silverton who joined us in remembering such a faithful sister.

"Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me... This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

I Corinthians 11:24-25

We were blessed in this past month to share Holy Communion in remembrance of the Lord's death and suffering. We thank Elder Bro. Wayne Grimm (Sis. Rose, West Bend, IA) for coming to assist our Elder Bro. Art with this duty. Our congregation then enjoyed an all-church supper and time of fellowship following Communion services.

Other visiting ministers this month were Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL) and Bros. Todd Zollinger (Sis. Michele) and Ed Knecht (Sis. Judie), both of Silverton. We thank these brothers for their labors in the Lord's vineyard.

OREGON, SILVERTON

**Cindy Metzger
Melissa Kuenzi**

We are happy our convert Laura Sinn (Bro. Tom and Sis. Edith) has found peace and is ready for baptism.

We appreciate Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL) traveling here to assist our Elder Bro. Art Metz in serving Holy Communion on October 22.

Bro. Todd Kuenzi (Sis. Melissa) is recovering well from his recent knee surgery.

Bros. Wayne Fehr (Sis. Kathy) and Ron Jones (Sis. Liz) of Portland ministered to us this past month. We appreciate their willingness.

TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE

Mike and Monica Fritz

We have been greatly blessed by the ministry so capably brought to us through our visiting ministers. God's Word was provided to us by Bros. Paul Gasser (Sis. Joyce, Akron, OH), Galen Rokey (Bern, KS), Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL), Scott Wegman (Sis. Dawn, Taylor, MO), and Jerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie, Oakville, IA). We have also appreciated the fellowship of brethren and friends visiting from Forrest and Roanoke, IL; Oakville, IA; Bern, KS; Taylor, MO; and Akron and Mansfield, OH.

If you are traveling in or through the Nashville area, please plan to worship with us. The following churches are scheduled for services in the near future: Rockville, CT (1/8); Wolcott, IN (1/15); Bay City, MI (1/22); Bloomington-Normal, IL (1/29). We do not have a minister scheduled for Christmas (12/25), or New Years (1/1), but if any local brethren are in the area, we will meet at church for a tape service. 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 mid-week 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) 356-5755.

TEXAS, SAN MARCOS

**Amy Ringger
Serenity Ringger**

Oh Thou Holy One, great and merciful!
Lord of all and Creator!
Thee we are nearing, blessings de-

siring,
Help us, Help us, Jehovah!
Zion's Harp #131

We are thankful that Jasmine Ringger (Bro. Dale and Sis. Amy) desires to draw near to God in repentance.

The following ministers and their wives served us: Elder Bros. Jon Kokanovich (Sis. Nancy, Phoenix), Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington), Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Fairbury), Bros. Edwin Strahm (Sis. Ramona, Bern) and Dale Moore (Sis. Cheryl, Elgin, IA). We are also thankful for the visitors from Detroit, Elgin, IL, Bluffton, and Smithville.

Upcoming churches serving us in December are these: West Bend (4), Roanoke(11), and Akron (18). No services are scheduled for December 25th, but please call if you are in the area.

We extend a warm welcome to anyone who may be in the area to worship with us. Please call ahead to help us plan for serving lunch. Also, because visitors add much to our local fellowship times, it helps if we know about your visit well in advance so that we can accommodate you more readily in our weekend gatherings. See the ministers' book for local 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 Sandy Leman

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Thesame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

John 1:1-5, 14

May God use this season to impress upon us the awesome fact that He who was with God from the beginning, He who made all things, left His throne of glory to become a helpless baby and grew up to become the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. "He became like us, that we might become like Him."

Joyously sound ye His praises,
men whom to His choice He raises,
Triumph to a high estate.
We are bought by love so great.
Hallelujah!

We welcome back our returning Brothers and Sisters who spent the summer and fall in the North. It is so good to renew friendships and fellowship together. We were saddened to hear of the death of our Bro. Leo Messner and to think that we will not be able to see him again on this earth. We look forward to a glad reunion some day. We extend our sympathy to Sis. Georgia and the rest of his family.

We are glad for the return of Bro. Tom Schrenk for the winter and for his service in the ministry in Zapata, and for Bro. Gary Tonner's (Bluffton) service as the visiting minister in McAllen on November 13.

VERMONT, NORWICH Areli Reutter

Greetings dear ones in Christ!

We appreciate the ministering Brothers who travel many miles to serve the small flock of Norwich. This month we were blessed to have Bro. Tim Gerber (Mansfield, OH) and Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan, Bros. Everett Gerber and Dan Goric from Rockville, CT. We also appreciate the many other Brothers who visit us. Please come back soon!

If you also have plans to visit northern New England this fall or

winter, please worship with us! Due to heavy snow fall throughout the winter season, we are currently holding services only on the second Sunday of each month. (This year we had our first major snow storm in October.) As always, we appreciate a call in advance to help us plan for your attendance.

Services start promptly at 10:15 in the morning and 12:15 in the afternoon. To arrive at our meeting place, please take exit 13 from Interstate 91 and proceed to 344 Main Street, Norwich, VT 05055. Look for the two-story Grange building (painted gray) on the right side of the road. There is a fire house to the rear of the building. Please park along the street.

For more information or directions, please contact Bro. Kirby Reutter at (802) 776 - 5293.

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APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS BOOK STORE

Apostolic Christian Publications now has CD sets and cassette tape sets of the Children's Harp Hymn book. These are recordings of children from the Apostolic Christian Churches singing all of the Hymns from the Children's Harp. It would be a great gift idea for Christmas, birthday etc. These are available at the book store in Eureka for \$18.50 per set.

To order this or other material, either stop by the book store between the hours of 8:30am to 11:30am Monday thru Friday or Call 309-467-3611 during those hours to order by phone. If you call after hours you may leave your order on the answering machine or fax your order to the same number.

Zion's Melodies - Available December 1, 2005 - \$6.70

This hymnal contains sixty-seven (67) historic hymns that have been a source of spiritual comfort to Brothers and Sisters of the Apostolic Christian faith for many years. These songs are published with a hope that, with their reintroduction into our brotherhood, they would again become a source of comfort and inspiration as they are sung in praise and honor to God.

The sixty-seven hymns were translated from the following hymnals: *Alte Lieder* - 43; *Heft* -16; *Zion's Perlenchore* - 6; and 2 from other sources.

The *Alte Lieder* is a hymnal of 43 songs. Approximately twenty percent of the *Alte Lieder* hymns are linked to the *Zion's Harp* or *Hymns of Zion*. They are associated either by melody or verse or both melody and verse as in *Alte Lieder* #5 "The Heavens Are Praising" and in *Alte Lieder* #17 "Anticipation".

The German speaking churches in Europe, associated with the Apostolic Christian faith, have preserved the *Alte Lieder* hymns by publishing them as an integral part and continuation of their *Zion's Harp*.

The *Heft*, also known as the Long Book because of its size and shape, was first published in Bern, Switzerland. It was compiled by Johann Meister. Publications are as follows:

- 1st edition Late 1860's hymns ... 1-54
- 2nd edition Year 1910 added hymns ... 55-78
- 3rd edition Prior to 1939 added hymns 79-104

An English-language *Heft* was copyrighted in 1931 by the Apostolic Christian Church of America. This hymnal

was titled *Songs of Praise and Worship* and has a total of 75 songs. The first 54 were translated by Elder Ernest Graf. This translation was identical to the German *Heft* with the exception of hymns #3 and #4 in which the songs "What a Friend We Have In Jesus" and "He Leadeth Me" were substituted for the two *Heft* hymns. These two original *Heft* hymns were later added to the *Hymns of Zion* as numbers 298 and 299. The remaining 21 hymns to #75 are not *Heft* hymns. There were selected from other sources.

The *Hymns of Zion* was published in 1958. Sixty-two (62) of the 301 melodies were selected from the second edition 78-hymn *Heft*. The sixteen (16) remaining *Heft* hymns which were not translated are now included in this hymnal. The 3rd edition of *Heft* hymns numbered 79-104 are not included in this hymnal.

The Apostolic Christian Church (Nazarene) English translation of *Heft* verses is used in this hymnal. Each hymn was reviewed using the German-language *Heft*. This was to verify the accuracy of translation and to ensure that the meter of each verse would also match the original text. The poetry was reviewed for its ability to communicate its message. Some wording was changed as a result of this process.

The European churches associated with the Apostolic Christian Church have used the *Heft* continuously from its inception. The churches in Hungary are using the 104-song *Heft* as a continuation of their *Zion's Harp* which also includes 11 *Alte Lieder* hymns. The churches in Germany have chosen to continue the Long Book format, containing 104 *Heft* songs, as a separate hymnal.

The *Zion's Perlenchore* was published in Germany circa 1870. Some *Heft* songs are included in this hymnal. As a note of interest, the *Zion's Perlenchore* hymn #90 "The Twenty-Third Psalm" is the identical rendition of our *Zion's Harp* #212.

The last two songs of this hymnal are "Unity" and "Come To The Homeland". "Unity" is sung to a melody which has been in use for over 100 years. This hymn is also published in the Hungarian *HANGOLJATOK SZIVETEKET* - the Green Book - number 137. The source of "Come To The Homeland" is a small hymnal titled "Komm".

These songs of praise and worship are in numerical sequence, relative to their source, as noted under each title. Two-page songs are exposed on opposing panels, eliminating the need to turn pages while singing. To accommodate this format, scriptural quotations are inserted where blank pages would have appeared.

One of the most precious gifts given to mankind by our Heavenly Father is the human voice. It is an instrument that cannot be duplicated by man. When the Holy Spirit is in control and peace and contentment rule the heart, this musical instrument can express love and appreciation of our Heavenly Father by its ability to blend and harmonize beautiful sounds into songs of praise and honor to God.

"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live. I will sing praise to my God while I have my being."

Psalm 104:33

Heft Ale Lieder Committee

Sermon continued from page 2

as a baby. That is the method in which God chose to bring this whole wonderful plan of salvation into being.

So the Lord Jesus Christ knew and He understood that when He said, yes I will go to redeem this creation, what He was facing. Before He ever left heaven and became conceived in the womb in the miracle that we cannot hardly comprehend. Nicodemus wrapped it up real well. He said, can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born again (St. John 3:4)? The Lord, we know, was talking to him spiritually at that point. But here was the Lord who had done just that, if you will. He was an adult and then He was conceived. Our minds can't comprehend all of these things, but He was born then to a woman.

We understand and we know some of those circumstances. He had every right to be born into the best luxury that could be afforded at the time. But in His infinite wisdom, He chose something far more humble than any of us would have imagined. Many of us maybe have some background in our life, that we can understand a little bit and we can kind of picture the scene from some personal experience. Maybe we have a tendency to almost think of maybe our barn or Dad's barn or Grandpa's barn or something like that. But the point is it was the most humble of circumstances and the Lord knew before He came, how this thing was going to come about. We have a reason tonight to be thankful and to praise Him for what He has done for you and I.

When He came in that way, there is no one who could say, well a king wouldn't pay any attention to me. I think, dear ones, that we assume that the Lord will listen to us when we pray. We just make that assumption. But there are some who say, why would He listen to me? You know why? Because He chooses to, that is why. That is why. He proves

that willingness in the way He came. He demonstrated it when He came there and His mother laid Him in a manger. At home we called it the feed bunk. That is what it was. It wasn't a nice soft bed as we often think of it. But it was in a way that would demonstrate to all of mankind, it doesn't matter what background we are. How good or bad we think we are. He came for everyone. The angels revealed that.

"...Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." St. Luke 2:10. All people. I wonder how many tonight are hearing this message. Or how many will gather tomorrow or Sunday and hear this message. As we drive around the area, there are a lot of churches, dear ones. But if every church in this state were filled to capacity, I don't think we would be at all wrong to say that there would be no room to take everyone in. I don't know that from statistics. But I would imagine that if we would take the capacity of every church and we add that all up and then we find the state population, we would find there is not enough room. I don't know that for a fact. But the point simply is, you and I have a special reason tonight to thank God. Because He has revealed to you and I His great gift. Who am I that a king should bleed and die for? We should ask ourselves questions like that often. That we would not be puffed up but rather that we would be thankful and appreciative that God reached down and He revealed Himself to you and I. I believe our appreciation for the Lord would grow when we realize, but by the grace of God, we would be out there somewhere in the cold tonight. Maybe not literally in the cold. Though we know there probably are some. But in the cold spiritually. Still in darkness. Not knowing that there is a great light and it leads home.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." St. Luke 2:11.

Dear ones, that was put as plainly as it could be put. There was no mystery in it. There was no figuring it out. So often we read of how the Lord spoke to mankind and we sometimes maybe wonder, why didn't He just say, I am the Son of God? I am the Christ. I am here to redeem you. I am here to help you, I am here to save you. But it seemed like He spoke in parables and in mysteries. But here the angels proclaimed it plainly. God wanted no mistake about it. This wasn't a great prophet. This was His only begotten Son. Greatly beloved of God. Sent to this earth. This was the promised One. The angels wanted there to be no mistake.

Bethlehem wasn't a big town. But I don't know, was there another baby born that night? Could have been. Could have been. Was there a baby born a few days before? Could have been. The angel wanted the shepherds to have no mistake so he explained to them, "...this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." St. Luke 2:12. Now even to shepherds, this was an important message. Because had they gone to Bethlehem, even as shepherds, they maybe wouldn't have looked for Him there. Because this was Christ the Lord. This was the only begotten Son of God. Why would they look in the stable, in a manger, for a baby wrapped in old rags? Why would they have looked? Maybe they would have ducked into there finally, maybe just because they didn't know where else to look and they would have seen this baby and they would have said, well this just can't be the Lord. Somehow we are missing.

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Isaiah 53:1 Then it goes on to say, "...and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from

him..." Isaiah 53:2,3. The angels warned the shepherds. Not only told them, he warned them. This is what you are going to find. Be prepared.

Have you ever went to visit someone in the hospital and somebody, maybe a nurse or a doctor or a family member stops you at the door and says, now you need to be prepared when you walk into this room. This person you are going to see is not going to look like he did, she did, a few days ago. Be prepared. We probably have all had that experience.

I believe part of this message was a little bit that way though we don't often think of it that way. They were told the wondrous news but they were also kind of prepared, now this is what you are going to find. The prophet Isaiah had already said, as people we are going to say, this doesn't look like a Savior. Aren't we so inclined that way?

We have in mind the way a certain person ought to look and maybe we meet them finally and we go, this can hardly be that person. They are too short or too tall or too thin or too heavy and they don't really look... We tend to look at them from a *very* human perspective. I don't know what the Lord looked like. But I do know that He wasn't One that when we would look upon Him we would say, what a handsome person. That kind of goes against the human nature but we read it in God's Word.

It says, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." St. Luke 2:13,14. Tonight, dear ones, that is the same thing that we want to embrace in our hearts and lives. Glory to God in the highest. We maybe don't have the angels in this room singing those praises so that we can hear them, but we can sing them so that God can hear them. So when we sing our hymns of praise during this season of the year, we can do it a couple of ways. Most of them are familiar

hymns and they are kind of just nice hymns too. They have a pleasing ring to them and we can just kind of slide through them and while we are doing that we can think about the day. Or we can praise God. We can praise God. We can bring glory to God in the highest.

Sometimes as we sing these hymns, I will say this dear ones to my shame, because I have sang them for many, many years. All of a sudden, some verse that we sang maybe hundreds of times, stands out as it never did before. I will just tell you, one of those little experiences happened last time we were together in Iowa City and it happened again tonight.

I will confess, dear ones, it is always easier for me to come to the pulpit when I know I am just going to open the Word of God, not going to choose a chapter, not going to choose anything. Just let God take care of it all. I find that the hardest services are the ones that we are kind of expected to bring forth a certain message. As we were sitting here singing before we came to the pulpit, I'll admit I was trying to think of good reasons why I could get Brother Scott or Brother Bob to take tonight. Not because I was unwilling but because these are sometimes the hardest services. About that time it says, *this story sweet I would repeat and praise Him with my voice* (The Nativity, Hymns of Zion, #35). And I thought, why? Why is it hard to stand up and to speak of the most wonderful gift that has ever been given to mankind? Why, Joe, is it hard to stand and to speak of the Son of God coming to the earth as a little baby? Why do you even think of it as a hard service? And I felt very ashamed. But encouraged. Then Brother Bob leaned over and said, this story is so sweet. He didn't know what was going through my mind at that moment. But God put it in his mind to say those words and then to repeat them here.

God has a wonderful way with

man and dear ones, this story sweet may we all repeat and praise Him with our voice. Because we have a wonderful privilege to do so! Not just those who stand here. I don't meet the people you work with. I don't meet the people you go to school with. I don't meet your neighbors and I probably never will. But you do. This story sweet I would repeat and praise Him with my voice.

God has a wonderful plan. We sing it. *God's plan fulfilled as He had willed...* The Nativity, Hymns of Zion # 35. Isn't it a wonderful thing that He has included you and I within that plan? Shouldn't that make us thankful to the point of reducing our human fears and concerns? Our inhibitions and all those things, whatever we want to call it. To the point that we just simply say, I want to repeat this story so sweet and I want to praise Him with my voice. Not from an arrogant and a proud state. But with humility and appreciation.

We have the first example of people doing that. First of all, maybe we should back up and just approach one other subject just quickly. "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste..." St. Luke 2:15,16. That is a question, when I was in Sunday School, I often, I or someone else would ask, well when is the age of accountability? You know what we were really asking? When should I repent? That is really what we were asking. That is a question that goes on for generations. When should I repent?

Well the shepherds knew when they were to answer the Lord's call. They didn't say, well you know what? Tomorrow morning it will be nice and light and we can go down to the village and we'll check it out. Then in the morning, you know

Sermon continued from page 45

what? The sheep were lost and so they had to gather the sheep around and then it got busy. And you know what? It got night again. You can't hardly find anybody in the dark so another day goes by. Finally at the end of their life they go, you know what? We missed. We never did get down to Bethlehem. That is kind of too bad. I wonder what went on down there that night.

That isn't the way they approached it at all. God had said, go down to Bethlehem. Go down to Bethlehem. There wasn't street lights then. I don't know how they got there and how they got around and all of those sorts of things but they went. And you know what? They went with haste. So when is it time to answer God's call? Now.

"...and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." St. Luke 2:16. Isn't that the wonderful part of answering the call of God now? Is we will find, we will find Him. We'll find Him.

"And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child." St. Luke 2:17. That was their answer to all the human fears. They just started telling everybody! Now I don't know what time it was when they got to the town of Bethlehem. We can believe it was probably night. I don't know when it was that they started telling everyone. But I believe it was probably as they left town. They were probably singing and praising God as they went back to their sheep. I would imagine some neighbors were woke up and

wondered what this group of men was doing walking and praising God and singing and talking about this Savior which they had seen. It probably seemed to those people as, they maybe got up the next morning and wondered if they really heard that or did they dream that? So often it seems that's the way the message is received in this world. It is too bad that not all hear it and receive it as the shepherds who immediately took hold of it and found Him and then immediately spread the good news.

"And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds." St. Luke 2:18. Had we lived then - and I like so much in my mind to try to put myself back then just to get that perspective. I hope it doesn't sidetrack us too much from the real message. Sometimes I like to think of myself as one of the shepherds and sometimes any one of these figures that we read about. What would it really have been like to have been one of those people? Would I really have done what they did? But had we been one of the town's people who heard from the shepherds, how would we have received it? Would we have wondered, why did God send a shepherd? They were considered about the lowliest of occupations. That wasn't the highest rung on the occupational ladder. That was one of the lower ones. Why would a shepherd, why wouldn't a priest be saying it? Why wouldn't a prince be saying it? But a shepherd? Saying that they had seen the Son of God and that He was

lying in a manger? How would we have received that message into our life and heart? Would we not have maybe wondered as they did about this message?

"But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart." St. Luke 2:19. Dear ones, let's take the sayings of God's Word, not only these few words that we have read this evening, not just the message that we have heard this evening. Not just the thoughts that God has prompted in each one of your minds this evening. Let's take His whole council. Let's keep these things. Keep them. Because the world tries to take them out as quickly as it can. Satan doesn't want us to keep these things. He wants us to forget them. But let's keep them and let's ponder them in our hearts.

If we ponder in our heart the miracle of God sending His Son for me and we get really personal about this thing for a while, that He sent His Son for me, then we'll too ask the question, who am I? And we will realize, only because God loved us. If we are the subject of such a great love, don't we want to return it? Simply in the thing that the Lord wants and that is our obedience to Him. He doesn't really ask great gifts in return. He doesn't ask us to give up our children or our houses or everything we own or our life in a physical sense to be nailed to a cross as He was. He just wants our love and affection and appreciation. Our obedience in return. May we keep these things and ponder them in our hearts.



Zion's Melody Music CD

An a cappella singing CD of hymns from the Zion's Melodies recently was recorded with the intention of helping the brethren become more familiar with the Zion's Melodies. The CD consists of 17 hymns and the title of the CD is "The Homeward Journey". Anyone who is interested in purchasing CDs can order from the Homeward Journey, PO Box 20, Fairbury, IL 61739; or e-mail fairview@Route24.net or call: (815) 692-2572 (days) and ask for Sally. The cost is \$12.00 per CD plus shipping (media mail, unless first-class is requested). All proceeds of the CD, beyond expenses, will be contributed to The Good Samaritan Fund of Fairview Haven Nursing Home, Fairbury.

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CARIBBEAN BOARD PROJECTS - 2005/2006

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 309-263-4036 or E-mail kjs@a5.com.

HAITI					
ORG.	DATE	AREA	COORDINATOR	PROJECT	CAPACITY
MEBSH	January 6-13, 2006	Les Cayes	Ron Palitto	Grade School	11
MEBSH	Jan. 27 - Feb. 3, 2006	Les Cayes	Dean Pashak	Grade School	11
SEED	February 10-17, 2006	Les Cayes	Art Mueller	Agriculture Aid	11
Palm Grove	February 10-17, 2006	Puit Sales	Stan DesCarpentrie	Grade School	11
SEED	March 10-17, 2006	Les Cayes	Bob Beebe	Agriculture Aid	11
AWA-T	March 17-24, 2006	Les Cayes	Troy Struber	Water Aid	5
AWA-FRW	March 17-24, 2006	Les Cayes	Rick Wuethrich	Vocational School	4
AWA-B	March 17-24, 2006	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Vocational School	2
MEBSH	March 24-31, 2006	Les Cayes	Rich Bertschi	Grade School	9
Palm Grove	TBD	Puit Sales	Tom Hitz	Grade School	11
MEBSH	April 21-28, 2006	Les Cayes	Jon Zeller	Construction/Maintenance	11
MEBSH	April 29-May 6, 2006	Haiti	Tom Hitz	Caribbean Evaluation	Invitation
MEBSH	June 3-10, 2006	Haiti	Tom Hitz	Elder Evaluation	Invitation
AWA-T	June 16-23, 2006	Les Cayes	Troy Struber	Water Aid	5
AWA-FRW	June 16-23, 2006	Les Cayes	Rick Wuethrich	Vocational School	4
AWA-B	June 16-23, 2006	Les Cayes	Bill Rager	Vocational School	2
JAMAICA					
CCCD	March 18-26, 2006	Deaf Village	Wolcott SS/Jon Schwab	Work Place	40/50
CCCD	March 24-April 1, 2006	Kingston	Work/Project/Terry Miller	Deaf School	40/50
CCCD	May 19-27, 2006	Deaf Village	Work Project/Ted Hirstein	Work Place	40/50
CCCD	June 3-10, 2006	Deaf Village	Taylor SS/Rusty Adrian	Work Place	40/50
CCCD	July 1-8, 2006	Knockpatrick	Mansfield SS/Pete Webel	Deaf School	40

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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

Mexico Work Teams 2005-2006

If anyone is interested in leading a team to Mexico, contact Bro. Mike Fiechter at 260-597-7330 or mfiechter@adamswells.com

Location	Date	Project	Coordinator	Phone	E-mail
Agua Prieta	Dec. 26 - Jan. 2, 2006	Construction	Keith Stoller	330-715-3085	keithstoller@hotmail.com
Magdalena	Dec. 26 - Jan. 2, 2006	Construction	Kirk Schambach	630-377-5271	klyndon@comcast.net
Magdalena	Dec. 31 - Jan. 7, 2005	Construction	Carlo Soto	765-490-6115	los315@hotmail.com
Magdalena	February 11-18, 2006	Construction	Dennis Zimmerman	815-657-8810	zimmerman@characterlink.net
Magdalena	February 18-25, 2006	Construction	Norm Rechkemmer	309-231-0098	jannorm67@earthlink.net
Magdalena	Feb. 25 - Mar. 4, 2006	Construction	Marvin Hodel	309-263-0050	dove@dpc.net
Juarez	March 4-11, 2006	Construction	Kurt Ifer	260-824-2829	k.ifer@mchsi.com
Agua Prieta	March 4-11, 2006	Construction	Gerald Fiechter	260-597-7494	fiechter@adamswells.com
Agua Prieta	March 11-18, 2006	Construction	Bob Meyer	260-824-3236	bobmeyer@adamswells.com
Magdalena	March 11-18, 2006	Construction	Arlan Miller	309-747-2683	seek_truth@yahoo.com
Agua Prieta	March 18-25, 2006	Construction	Denis Fry	260-824-3055	fry.d@mchsi.com
Magdalena	March 18-25, 2006	Construction	Nic Rassi	217-367-1427	rassi@uiuc.edu
Rio Bravo	March 25 - April 1, 2006	Construction	Dean Fiechter	260-565-3439	dfiechter@adamswells.com
Juarez	March 25-April 1, 2006	Construction	Jay Grube	260-565-3402	grube@adamswells.com
Agua Prieta	March 25-April 1, 2006	Construction	Jim Fiechter	260-565-3248	jimfiechter@adamswells.com
Magdalena	March 25-April 1, 2006	Construction	Courtney Pfister	260-824-5161	fizz@parlorcity.com
Juarez	March 30-April 6, 2006	Medical	Cheryl Herrmann	309-385-1082	cheryl@mtco.com
Magdalena	April 8-15, 2006	Construction	Kevin Fischer	309-923-7684	kafischer80@msn.com
Magdalena	June 3-10, 2006	Construction	Roger Herrmann	309-446-2502	rdkidz@juno.com
Magdalena	July 8-15, 2006	Construction	Rick Kaisner	847-942-1174	rick@kaisner.org
Magdalena	July 15-22, 2006	Construction	Duane Meyer	785-336-3385	
Magdalena	July 22-29, 2006	Construction	Tyler Banwart	620-223-1362	tybanwart@hotmail.com
Juarez	September 20-27, 2006	Medical	Cheryl Herrmann	309-385-1082	cherylh@mtco.com

U.S.A. BOARD WORK PROJECTS

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

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 E-mail: paulkaeb@ksiconveyors.com

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 Phone/Fax: 515-379-1693
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Indiana: Gerry Waibel
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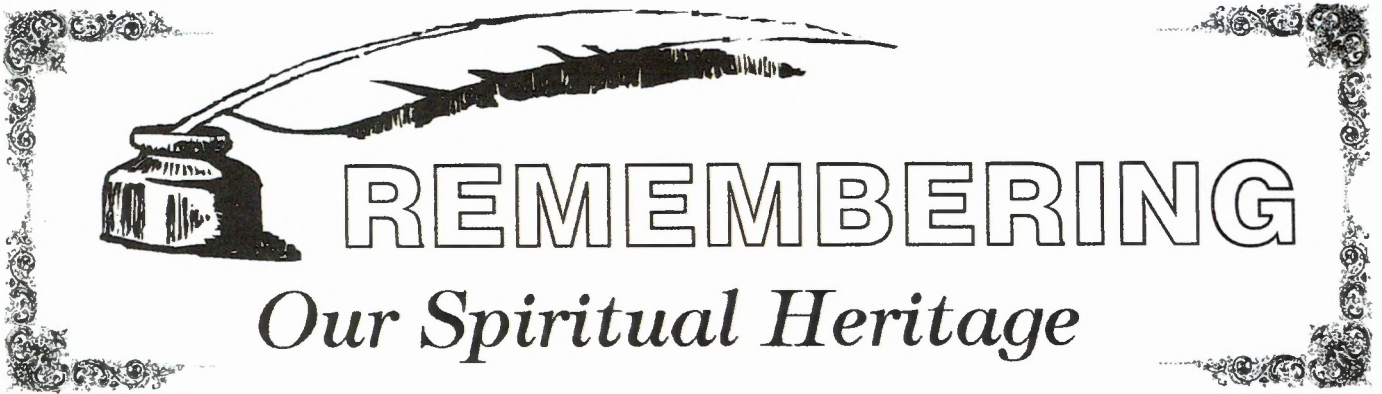
Ohio: Ken Zollinger
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REMEMBERING

Our Spiritual Heritage

This is another installment of the ongoing series of "The Ties That Bind." This is the next-to-last segment of the series.

Probing Candidates For Baptism - A Tie That Binds

Bringing converts before a closed session of the church to hear of the experience of repentance and conversion helps to insure that all members are satisfied with the convert's testimony, experiences and general attitude. This constitutes a wonderful tie among the brethren, both locally and from congregation to congregation. It assures that we as members in the church (and of Christ's body) have the same faith, the same motivation and the same intent to follow Christ and the Apostles in a mutually understood way. This binds us more closely together.

As a soul pours out his/her experience in hearing the call of God, in turning helplessly to Him in repentance and then struggling to pull away from sin and temptation — and eventually finding grace to overcome sin and evil — it refreshes the entire congregation and draws all the members closer to the convert. Each member then joins with the Elders in expressing

a satisfaction that a true conversion has occurred. This is heartening to the convert, and is something remembered for a lifetime. These times of proving are very uplifting.

The procedure of testimonies and proving finds a historical root, not only in early church history, but also during the initial stages of the Froehlich churches. The Apostolic Christian Church was founded in the early nineteenth century, and the proving of converts prior to baptism has always been practiced. In *My Father's Conversion*, S. J. Braun tells of his father's conversion and baptism: "In the course of about six months he was proved and baptized by Bro. S. H. Froehlich in the congregation at Strassburg where he gave a good testimony of his firm belief in Christ Jesus as Saviour."

In Reugger's *Apostolic Christian Church History, Volume I*, comments are made under a section entitled, "Reception of the Congregation." "Before baptism and reception into the congregation, the one desiring baptism, in the presence of the circle of brothers and sisters, gives expression of God's grace, i.e., of his rebirth. God's Spirit shall bear witness in the congregation if the one desiring baptism is prepared for baptism. When the congregation is satisfied with the testimony of the one desir-

ing baptism, an elder administers baptism by immersion."

Centuries prior to the beginning of the Apostolic Christian Church, history yields a wide array of references — both from the first century and subsequently — indicating that souls were brought before congregations to testify of their faith, and of their experiences in overcoming the devil. One such example cites where one proposing to join a specific denomination "had to prove to the satisfaction of the members that he was no longer in need of conversion."

Our church denomination, in keeping with the Biblical directives of keeping Christ's church pure, holy and unspotted from the world, has wisely exercised great care in who is taken into the church body. Attitude, not perfection, expresses one's readiness for alignment with the body of Christ. As such, the practice of "proving" a soul's sincere testimony constitutes a wonderful tie that binds us together, and we are then yoked together with everyone pulling forward in the same direction.

By Perry A. Klopfenstein

Next Issue:

The final installment of "The Ties That Bind."

The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

希望の光

“God Walks Among Us”

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

We are all aware that God is with us when we worship and whenever we need His protection. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, “God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24. Therefore, I usually think of God being among us as a Spirit.

In Leviticus 26:12, a different thought is portrayed. God is speaking and He says, “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” The idea that God walks among us, paints a picture of God walking among us as a human being, stopping to visit with each of us to ask how we are getting along in our spiritual life as well as our physical life. Then we think that God did indeed, walk among us in the person of Jesus Christ. “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” II Corinthians 5:19.

In Leviticus 26:3, we read the requirements for having God walk among us. “If ye walk in

my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them.”

One of Christ’s names is Emmanuel. “And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” Matthew 1:23.

After considering all these scriptures, we return to the vision of God walking among us in a visible form, not just flying around the room in an invisible spiritual form. With our spiritual eyes we can picture it, either as the human form of Jesus Christ walking among us, or as a very bright and shining figure moving around among us, walking, so God, in this case, must have legs. I’m thinking out loud. I do not mean to be disrespectful to God, the Creator of the universe, and our Saviour in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, let’s think of God still walking among us. He is only a breath away. “The breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” Job:33:4.

The idea that God walks among us, adds a personal note to our relationship with Him. I naturally think of Him being in heaven, some distance away, somewhere beyond the stars and other planets. It will help me, and I hope it helps you, to think of God as being very near, touching us and conversing with us, in a Godly manner, consoling us and comforting us. If He is constantly beside us, then we don’t have to pray through the ceiling of our rooms to reach Him in Heaven. We can speak softly and sincerely because He is right by our side. It is important, though, that there be no distractions which prevent us from communicating with Him.

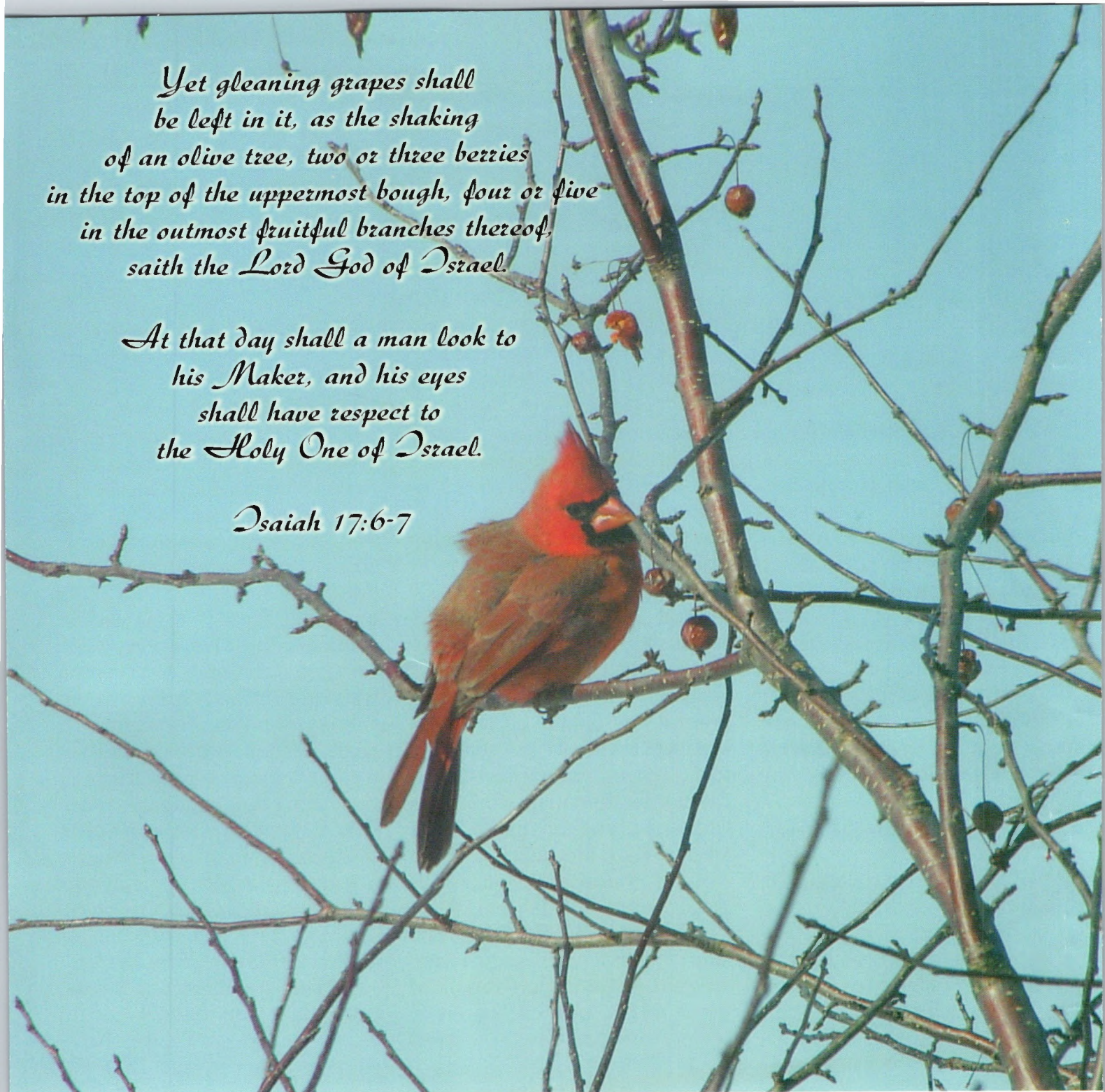
If God is walking among us, listening to and observing what we say and do, then we surely want to take the path that will bring Him the most glory, regardless of personal will or desire in the matter.

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*Yet gleaning grapes shall
be left in it, as the shaking
of an olive tree, two or three berries
in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five
in the outmost fruitful branches thereof,
saith the Lord God of Israel.*

*At that day shall a man look to
his Maker, and his eyes
shall have respect to
the Holy One of Israel.*

Isaiah 17:6-7



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