

The Silver Lining

*Hasst thou perceived the breadth of the earth?
declare if thou knowest it all.*

Job 38:18

February 2006

Sermon by Bro. Matthew Rassi, Chicago, IL

I Samuel 24 and I Corinthians 6

That is the conclusion of that chapter that Paul wrote to the Corinthians but certainly not the conclusion of the book, is it, as he would have much instruction for this church that was struggling.

Fascinating, dear ones, these two chapters that opened up unto us. The one of David. What nobleness! What honor! It is almost a lost emotion in this world today. I guess I would think of it more, since I don't deal day by day with the president or those that are in authority directly above me other than my boss at work, but to see the interactions of men with those that have authority over them, do we see this same respect that David had? He had the opportunity, dear ones, to take vengeance into his own hand. He had been chased around the countryside for years by Saul. He had to live as a nomad. He could not have a home. He could not enjoy his family. He was not in peace and safety because this man was trying to take his life. But this man was the king.

David recognized and he shared with his men, he taught them, what a lesson he taught his men. What a lesson he teaches us today. That Saul was the Lord's anointed. And to recognize that those that are in authority have been placed there by God's hand. (I Samuel 24:6) And whether we agree with them, whether we like them or not is of no account. It does not matter. Now if they would ask us to do something that is against the Word of God, we can say no. Because we submit to a higher authority. But otherwise, dear ones, we are to submit to those that are over us.

That is what submission is, isn't it? It's to do something when we don't want to but we should according to God's law of order. He is the One that placed everyone where they are at, in terms of power. In terms of as the world would think, whether it would be with our families, with church, with the nation, at work. All of those things. Now if we

don't believe in God fully, if we think it is just circumstances, it just happens, it would cause our faith to waver, wouldn't it? To doubt when things would go wrong. Isn't it interesting, dear ones, when things are going well, we just consider it that we are in the right place at the right time. We are doing well. But when things go wrong, we hardly ever say we are in the right place at the right time. We say we ended up in the wrong place at the wrong time. Yet we turn to Corinthians and we read about the reason that these things happen to us. Things that don't necessarily go the way that we would anticipate, that we would desire.

When we would think about our will, have you thought about, what is your will for your life? What would you like to see happen? Maybe you are young, looking at the future, career, a family, a spouse. All those kinds of things might run across your mind. Then we consider God's will and we know that each one of us want God's will to be done. We say it in our prayers, don't we? Not my will but thine be done, we are taught by Jesus to pray. Do we recognize what that pertains to? What does God's will for your life consist of? See, that is the portion that we don't know. We have to take it on faith. Yet the assurance is there, the promise is there, dear ones, that to take life on faith, to just trust in God that He will lead and direct, who better to trust in than our God? The One who created all things. We can go outside and we can just marvel at the creation. We can look at one another and marvel at the differences! We are all the same and yet we are all different. Every one of us created by God. And He knows us to the innermost depths.

He speaks about brotherly love here in Corinthians. He says, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" I Corinthians 6:1. I would like to just con-

clude that verse after the first few words. Dare any of you having a matter against another, go to law? Aren't we just all so sick of law suits? I think about it as a parent with the children.

Sermon continued on page 44

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

Light From The Word



Writings based
on God's Word

February 2006

Appreciating the Value of Standards - I

Standards are the parameters that are established as rules or measurements by a power to which we are subject. Governments, businesses, schools, civic organizations, churches and all other "groups" of people have standards that enable the members of the organization to function in a way that helps the organization achieve its mission. Could we live without them?

Governments establish standards (laws) that citizens must follow. We are commanded to "...be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Ro. 13:1). We sometimes question how it is possible that some of the terrible rulers throughout history could be ordained of God, but it is not for us to question God. We do understand, however, that even "bad" governments are better than no government at all. When there is no government, the result is anarchy. There is no one in control. People tend to do what they think they can get away with. The lawless environment results in confusion, violence and in many cases, death. Rarely are conditions worse than in periods of anarchy.

Most businesses have a policy handbook that helps employees know what is expected of them. Those who manage the business establish these guidelines to make the day to day operation of the company more pleasant for all concerned.

Guidelines in business are also necessary to control the quality of the product. While manufacturing parts that are interchangeable from one piece of equipment to a similar piece of equipment, precise standards must be met or the parts will not fit. Therefore, standards of tolerance are set and must be strictly followed. If the standards are ignored, the company will lose its customers.

We would not consider sending our children to a school that had no standards of conduct because we would fear for their safety. We would be concerned that they would not be prepared for adult life if they were not required to

meet reasonable standards of academic achievement.

Families without a well defined structure and without clearly explained and enforced expectations often are families in disarray. Without standards, parents have difficulty being consistent. When parents are not consistent, children are often confused.

Children who grow up in a family mired in confusion frequently have a difficult time adapting to situations that require structure – such as school, work or as a member of some organization. They often have trouble submitting to authority at any level. This, of course, can have serious consequences in their performance in almost everything they try later in life. It is especially difficult for them to function well in their family and, as a result, the cycle often repeats itself in succeeding generations. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). On the other hand, "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." (James 3:16).

This discussion could be continued to include social and civic organizations as well. We can readily see that every organization that has a purpose must have a structure for making decisions. Also, every organization with a purpose must have someone, or a relatively small group of people, who is charged with the responsibility of making decisions for the organization. Those who have this responsibility must also be accountable for the decisions that they make. We simply cannot function unless we have a reasonably clear understanding of what is expected of us.

We may ask what all of this has to do with our faith and living according to the "standards" of the church. Is salvation a matter of faith? It is true that "...by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). It is very important that we understand the grace of God and that we are saved by faith in "... the precious blood of Christ..." (I Peter 1:19).

It is also important that we understand that Jesus said "Go ye therefore, and teach

all nations, ... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Mt. 28:19-20). We are also taught "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another" (I Cor. 12:25), that "... all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility..." (I Peter 5:5) and "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief..." (Heb. 13:17). The apostle Paul carefully explained in I Cor. 12 that all parts of the body are important, all must function together but different parts have different responsibilities. His analogy of the human body with the church helps us understand that the church cannot operate effectively if we do not all function within our role.

We would like to believe that we would all remain faithful without guidelines or without someone having the authority to enforce the guidelines. History teaches us that such is not the case. There was a time when "... there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Ju. 17:6). We can see how this soon led to idolatry and the destruction of Israel.

The church was given the authority to uphold the principles (or standards) that were taught by Jesus Christ. The church was given the power to bind and loose (Mt. 16:19; 18:18) and to remit or retain sins (Jn. 20:23). The church was also to deliver the decrees throughout the cities that were to be kept by God's people (Acts 16:4). When there were disagreements about positions that the church should uphold, a method for settling these questions need to be developed. Acts 15 explains how this was done: "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter (v. 6). They prayerfully considered the matter, reached a conclusion, and sent a letter to the brethren to explain the decision (v. 7-25).

This topic will be continued in the next "Light from the Word".



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

Mission Policy and Guidelines

The Mission Committee wishes to share the steps by which brothers and sisters can pursue a Spirit-directed calling to serve in various aspects of Church supported mission work. These steps are also outlined in Mission Committee brochures available in our churches.

Christ taught: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" and "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you (Jn 14:15; Mt 28:19-20).

The first of the four pillars of our church mission is to present the Gospel to the lost. This pillar also represents the purpose of our Church Mission Policy. We believe the Scripture calls us to do this in harmony with the other three pillars of our church mission: to nurture the believer, to preserve and promote true doctrine, and to serve in humility and love. The church prospers when all four pillars are functioning together and in accordance with Scripture, all by the grace of God (Acts 11: 19-30).

As we create proper balance among these four pillars, we can further God's plan for "all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim 2:4). Our Mission Policy prioritizes four objectives to accomplish this.

1. **Sharing the Word** – expressing our eternal hope, teaching, preaching, being an example. The word provides illumination. (Psalm 119:105)
2. **Inviting others to worship with us.** (Rom 10:14)

3. **Supporting small churches.** (I Thes 3:12-13)

4. **Establishing churches within and outside the USA** – according to the Word of God and its directives as outlined in our Statement of Faith (Acts 11:22-26); and with the discretion, gentleness and leading of the Holy Spirit (I Cor 9:19-23).

Guidelines for Sending Brethren on Mission Projects

1. **Prayerful discernment of calling** – a time of fervent prayer with a surrendered, humble heart; wanting only the will of God to be revealed (Acts 16:9-10, Ps 139:23-24).

2. **Initial counsel** – establish open, candid, respectful communication and accountability with your local elder, enabling him to understand your heart and to confirm his consent and blessing with what you believe the Lord is calling you to do (Pr 15:22).

3. **Mission Committee assessment** – interview by the Mission Committee or its designated sub-committee. A time of listening, counseling, learning and seeking the Lord's will together (Philemon 14).

4. **Confirmation of steadfastness** – upholding the Word and being sound in faith, grace, doctrine and example (I Thes 1:7-8); so that the church can "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

5. **Responsive placement** – following the biblical pattern for brethren being sent with the authority and accountability of the church. Effort is made to align the individual's gifts and calling with the current needs of our various mission projects (Acts 11:22).

6. **Accountability** – sending brethren on mission work is sobering as well as inspiring, and it calls for loving and wise accountability among the elder, the church and the brethren being sent (He 13:17). Each assignment is carefully reviewed in order to avoid ecumenical doctrinal intermingling and deception (Rev 17).

7. **Counting the cost** – directed by God so that individuals may be sufficiently prepared for the work: sufficient in terms of spiritual health, humility, faith, grace and sanctification; having a love for the brotherhood and for the lost; and addressing the various logistical issues (Lu 14:28).

8. **Ongoing oversight and support** – from the chief shepherd Jesus Christ, from the Holy Spirit to lead us in truth and to moderate any tendency toward individualistic decision making, from our over-seeing elder and from our brethren. We are our brother's keeper. Therefore we want to understand the needs of those on mission assignments – the struggles within their families and within the work. We desire to communicate and fellowship with them appropriately so that we can weep and rejoice together and be fervently and responsively prayerful for them (I Thes 2:11-12).

We sincerely entreat your cooperation and your Holy Spirit-inspired submission to the spirit and the letter of this Mission Policy and Guidelines. May we as a church work together in singleness of spirit, mind, faith and judgment (Ph 1:27; I Cor 1:10), and may God grant us grace to fulfill His commission to spread the Gospel in a manner which will have His full blessing (Mt 28:19-20).



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

Expansion of Work Projects

Good works are a vital part of the Christian life. The theme of Apostolic Christian World Relief, Galatians 6:10, "*do good unto all men.*" is a present and constant reminder of our responsibility to assist our Brethren, friends, and neighbors.

As our Brotherhood seeks to be obedient to the Scripture, the Spirit has urged us to become neighbors, as is related in Luke 10:36-37. As travel became more affordable, our Brethren found desperate needs in areas not familiar to many of us. The late 1970's and early 1980's was the beginning of many years of assistance to poor people in Haiti. This effort expanded to include Jamaica, during a time when the political climate in Haiti did not allow our Brethren to travel or send work teams there.

In the mid 1980's, the earthquake damage and human suffering in Mexico City opened the opportunity to send humanitarian assistance and work teams to help build shelter for the victims. With the exception of our support to our Brethren in Eastern Europe, this was the first time funding and work teams were sent outside our country in that magnitude.

Work projects in the U.S.

The first major work project in the United States was near Charleston, South Carolina, to help the victims of Hurricane Hugo in 1989-90. We were able to provide funds and volunteers to help the poor and needy, a successful and blessed project.

Early in the 1990's, the World Relief Board found it advantageous to establish the USA Committee,

similar to other areas with work projects, such as Caribbean and Mexico. The USA Committee was given the responsibility to seek out work project opportunities in the continental United States. During the 1990's, the larger work projects were efforts with Christian Aid Ministries. CAM furnished funds, project management, and volunteers. We furnished funds and volunteers. By the late 1990's, CAM had increased in size and support from their own constituency, and there were fewer opportunities for us to participate in their projects.

Disaster work projects

In early 1999, the World Relief Board approved the USA Committee's recommendation to acquire and equip tool trailers to assist with work projects. A new sub-committee, "Disaster Work Projects", was selected. Disaster Work Projects has two types of projects: 1st Response, for assessment and cleanup after disasters, and long term Work Projects, for repair, rebuilding, or new construction following disasters.

The initial 1st Response project was April 1999 in Hoisington, KS and the first Disaster Work Project was in the summer of 2000, in Camilla, GA., both in response to devastation caused by tornados. Additional projects were in Pontotoc, MS, during the summer of 2001, due to a tornado, and in Wauchula, FL, during January thru March 2005, due to a series of hurricanes. A total of twelve new houses have been built and many repaired during these efforts, with the help of hundreds of Brethren and friends.

Katrina hurricane

The Katrina Hurricane Project, in the Biloxi, MS area, is now in pro-

cess. A total of 500 volunteers are expected to take part in the building of houses and rehabilitation of the structures that can be restored. Only a few openings for volunteers remain. If you are interested, contact Bro. Jerome Witzig. Cell phone # 309-303-7934.

Local summer projects

With the combined effort of World Relief and Gateway Woods Illinois, local summer projects were started, to give occasion for the churches in Illinois to have opportunities for volunteers that did not require a specific number of day's commitment, nor long travel time and miles. An effort was made for each congregation to suggest and organize a project of approximate one week in length. This proved so successful that the effort was extended to include Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Indiana, and Ohio. There are five representatives on the Disaster Work Projects sub-committee that cover the various geographic areas.

While the greatest effort is in the "disaster" area, building projects are also being accomplished for organizations such as the Navajo Nation, Galilean Children's Home, Esther House, and the International Services of Hope (ISOH). When any of our congregations construct or repair church or fellowship buildings, the USA Board stands ready to support these efforts by loaning them tool trailers and notifying our volunteers of these opportunities.

May the Lord continue to give the wisdom and discernment to continue with this work for His glory, praise and honor. Anyone wishing to make contributions may do so by sending funds through their local World Relief Representative.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.”

Revelation 21:4

What a wonderful promise to reflect on after the death of a loved one. We were saddened by the deaths of four Timber Ridge residents in recent months, but can rejoice that they no longer feel pain or suffering and are now running and singing in Heaven.

Often we do not realize the impact an individual has had on us and others until their death. We are awed by the testimonies and memories shared by those who were touched by our residents in some way, shape, or form.

One of the individuals who recently died was an 88 year-old man who had come to live at Timber ridge in 1996. This gentleman had lived in institutions since the age of 8, had no known relatives and had been appointed a state guardian to oversee his care. While this may portray a picture of aloneness to some, this was not the case for this man. He was fondly called “grandpa” by the staff that provided his care and had a sense of humor that could turn any scowl into a grin. For someone without a single relative, it was a touching sight to look upon the group gathered around his grave on a December morning singing “Silent Night” to a be-

loved friend.

Do you treasure those close to you? Above all, do you praise God for His undying love and mercy?

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

Romans 15:13

Holidays are always a busy time for all. Therefore, we are especially appreciative that the Peoria high school students and Sunday school teachers take the time to host a Christmas party for our residents each year. A dinner is served, followed by a play that highlights the reason for the Christmas season. After the performance, the students pass out a gift to each resident and are rewarded with smiles, cheers and clapping. It is a wonderful night and one that everyone looks forward to for months ahead of time.

Now that the holidays are over, we look forward to another year and pray that you feel God’s nearness in 2006.

GATEWAY WOODS Apostolic Christian Children’s Home Lauretta Schafer

Are you thankful? Are you thankful that you have (had) a mom and dad both living in your home? Are you thankful your parents are not divorced? Are you thankful that your parents are still living? Are you thankful your parents do not abuse drugs or alcohol? Are you thankful you do

not have parents who rejected you and terminated their rights to parent you? Are you thankful that you live in the same home as your siblings? Are you thankful that you know who your father is? Are you thankful that you have not been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused? Are you thankful that you have a family who loves you and cares deeply about you? Are you thankful that they love you enough to hold you accountable to God’s expectations for you to obey and honor your parents?

Perhaps growing up most of us took these simple blessings for granted. In our work with troubled children in our various programs at Gateway Woods we are constantly reminded of what great gifts most of us have had in our upbringing and continue to enjoy with close families who love us and love the Lord Jesus. So how then should we respond to recognizing that these are not simple entitlements but precious blessings from God through a gracious God and committed parents? A deep sense of gratefulness should well up in us, a determination to continue this legacy of love and faith, plus a heart of active compassion for those who have been wounded and have so little of what we have enjoyed in such abundance. Colossians 3:15b says “...and be ye thankful.”

Matthew 15:34 says “Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude...”

Matthew 20:34 says “So Jesus had compassion on them, ...”

Mark 9:22b says "if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus had compassion and helped them."

Luke 7:13 says "And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her,..."

Jesus gave us an example with His heart of compassion. He was moved to action to help others. Through His life and parables, He tries to train us toward a similar compassion. Luke 10:36-37 says "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." May the Holy Spirit speak clearly to our hearts.

News

God continues to bless us with many new residents. We currently have 17 teen residents plus 3 little children in our pregnant teen house. Please pray that God would continue to use us to plant the seeds in the lives of these children. It is amazing to see God's work unfold in each of their lives. God is so good!

We are prayerfully and anxiously anticipating the groundbreaking for our 4th group home next month as part of our Annual Representatives Meeting on March 11. We are thankful to each of you who have donated individually or during your church collection for this worthy cause. We are trusting God to continue to provide the needed funding as we move forward in faith to build. In this our 30th year of service, it is a blessing to see growth and God's

work in the lives of children and families.

Before we get too far into this year, it is good for us to stop and reflect on God's continued provision in the past year. A few highlights from 2005 include:

1) In 2005, Gateway Woods opened up a home for young women in need of our Christ-centered services who are pregnant or have young children. This program has been a huge success, and the young women are quickly learning what it means to be a godly, loving mother. The young children are also certainly benefiting!

2) Because of this new program, Gateway Woods is building a 4th group home on our campus. We praise God for each and every one of you who has supported or plans to support this effort through your church's special collection. We are prayerfully hoping to break ground in March 06.

3) Our Christian Adoption Services Program continues to have a significant impact. To date, we have helped over 40 families adopt more than 50 children from countries as diverse as Guatemala, Russia, Liberia, and China.

4) The 2005 Auction raised over \$345,000 to support our Christ-centered services, which is about 15% of our operating budget. This was the highest amount ever collected! We praise God for meeting our needs through you. This year's Auction is August 19, 2006.

5) Last year, Gateway Woods provided free or subsidized services totaling over \$1,000,000. Hun-

dreds of children and families in our community, across the country, and literally around the world have benefited from your generosity. This includes, not only meeting the children's physical needs of housing, food, and clothing, but also their spiritual needs of hearing, learning, and seeing the love of Jesus Christ in their lives. Gateway Woods' reputation for being a high-quality, Christian children's services organization is a testimony to the generosity and prayer support of the Apostolic Christian Church. We humbly thank God for each of you. Because of you, we are able to impact so many.

Our Mission

Our mission is to honor and obey God by providing help and healing to troubled children and families who may then bless others.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL Athens, AL Melissa Slagel

We had a wonderful addition to our preschool this month. Looking back over the last couple of months it has been amazing to see how God has worked. We prayed for children and He sent us children. With the number of students, we then needed a third teacher. So we began to pray for God to work in someone's life and lead them to us. As we were praying down here, little did we know how much He was working miles away, taking care of all the details. We welcome and feel so honored to have Sis. Beth Hill from Mansfield, OH as part of our staff

here. We are excited to have her here and so thankful to see such awesome evidence of what God can do.

In our classes this month we have been busy learning about the letters M, N, O, and P. We painted with Oreo pudding, tasted and counted pumpkin seeds, made pizza and even wore our pajamas to school. Also this month, Bro. Sam and Sis. Linda Schlatter (Junction, OH) were here helping out with teaching and fix-it jobs that needed to be done. We thank them for coming and giving so much time and love to us and the children here. God bless you both for shining so bright!

ALABAMA, ATHENS

Melissa Slagel

We want to give a warm welcome to Sis. Beth Hill. She moved here from Mansfield, OH, to take a teaching position at the preschool. It has been very exciting to us to have her here. In a small congregation just one person can be such an amazing addition. God bless you, Sis. Beth, for obeying God and may He continue to lead and guide you as He has so evidently done already.

Bro. Sam and Sis. Linda Schlatter have been assembling with us for several Sundays this month. They are so faithful in coming every year to help out at the preschool and with anything that needs to be done. We love them dearly and thank them for giving and loving so selflessly.

Our visiting ministers this month have been Bro. Lynn

Fiechter (Sis. Ronda, Bluffton, IN), and Bro. Mark Steiner (Sis. Sue, Smithville, OH). God bless you for traveling here to bring God's Word to us. We were also privileged to have a work team from Fairbury and Forrest, IL, stop through here on their way to Biloxi, MS. We got to spend an evening of singing and fellowship with them before they headed out the next morning. We thank you all and hope you were as blessed by us as we were by you.

September 4 of last year, Bro. Mark Ray gave his testimony and was baptized. We are so happy for him and are encouraged to see how God can change hearts. (We apologize for the error of overlooking it.)

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Ron and Ev Hoerr

"I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever."

Psalm 145:1,2

Our dear Sis. Ruth Vaughn (Koehl) went to heaven on December 17, after a month long illness. Funeral services were held December 21. Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann, Sis. Ruth's nephew, officiated at the service. Sis. Ruth had the songs and scriptures chosen for the services (Psalm 142 and 148, and II Tim. 4:7-8). She truly was prepared for eternity. Our sympathy goes out to Sis. Toni (Leona) Bentley (Koehl) and other relatives.

An unexpected phone call from Burlington, IA, to Bro. Tom and Sis. Diane Ebert, informed them that his mother, Relda, had passed away on January 6. May all the family find comfort in God.

The engagement of Sis. Natalie Knochel to Bro. Nathan Virkler of South Bend, IN, was announced December 25. Their parents are Bro. Herbie and Sis. Laurie Knochel and Bro. Stan and Sis. Beth Virkler (Remington).

What a joy to have many winter visitors when we gather together to worship. Our thanks to our visiting ministers: Bro. Todd Zollinger (Silverton), Elder Bros. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago), Willis Ehnle (Shioda, Japan), and Mark Bahr (Detroit).

Hospital patients were Dakota Thorpe and Sis. Katherine Laukhuf. Evelyn Howley is recovering from a foot injury.

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT

Jane Hodges

Bro. Darby Knochel's stepfather, Cecil Bledsoe (Madeline Knochel), passed from this life on Saturday, January 7, at the age of 93, after a short illness. He and Madeline were married for five years and resided in Mayer, AZ (about 30 miles southeast of Prescott). We extend our sympathies to Bro. Darby, his mother and the rest of their family.

On January 16, we finally received our first precipitation (snow) in the Prescott area since the beginning of November. It measured less than 0.1 inch, but we are thankful for any amount. The San Francisco Peaks, in Flag-

staff, received a dusting of snow also. This winter is the longest the mountains, in Flagstaff, have been without snow since 1930. Phoenix is still without precipitation and is heading toward a record of 102 days. Of course, the tourists are loving our nice sunny weather.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp

Our winter visitors have started arriving and it is always so good to see them. We are thankful God has watched over them through the months that have passed since we last fellowshiped with them. Sunshine and temperatures in the low 70's have greeted most of them.

Bro. Don Bauer (Sis. Glo) had knee replacement surgery on January 18. He is recovering quickly for which we are very thankful. We are hopeful he can assemble with us again very soon.

Many prayers are also being offered on behalf of Steve and Maria Bauer as Maria's mom is struggling with cancer. She is hospitalized at this writing. We pray God will wrap His loving arms around them and offer them comfort and grace for each day. This is when we learn what "one day at a time" really means. God is indeed in control.

We had a work team pass through on New Year's weekend on their way to Magdalena. Ministering Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Francesville, IN) was with the group and we were blessed that he was willing to serve on the pulpit. We thank him for his efforts on

our behalf. May God add His rich blessing.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Robin Moser

"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord."

Lamentations 3:40

2006 is upon us already and we rejoice in God's faithfulness as we look back on the year that is past. Those events are behind us and we plead for grace to avoid repeating the same errors, and to be molded into Christ's likeness in the days to come.

Our congregation hosted a surprise baby shower to celebrate God's creation of life for Bro. Doug and Sis. Carol Blunier; they are expecting their new arrival in March. We miss Sis. Carol's presence in our church family and hope they bring their child out to visit often.

We were thankful for visiting brothers who were willing to share the Bread of Life with us this month including Bro. Andy Klaus (Sis. Jana, Tokyo, Japan) and Bro. Herb Knochel (Sis. Laurie, Phoenix, AZ). May God bless them for making the effort to travel.

Our recent hospital patients were Sis. Sue Klotzle (Bro. Joe) and Bro. Doug Aberle (Sis. Sandy). We're grateful that their surgeries went well and pray that the recovery time is short. We also continue to pray for Sis. Kay Hackenjoes (Bro. Glenn) as she proceeds with her physical therapy sessions.

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Yasmin Koehl

As we welcome a New Year, let us turn our faces toward Christ with the realization of having 365 more days to serve Him more faithfully with joyful hearts.

This time of year is always special to our church as we gather with our annual winter visitors who come to San Diego each year. As a small flock, we especially find much joy in visiting with our brethren from across the land. We appreciate all our guests and would like to particularly thank Bro. Willis Ehnle (Sis. Lois, Shioda, Japan) for his willingness to share God's Word with us this past month.

In a little congregation, each member may be called to service in the physical aspect of the church. Our Bro. Leonard Locher served as our treasurer for many years. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to him for his labors of love in this service. We appreciated all his efforts and the time he invested. Our new treasurer is Bro. Terry Koehl. May God bless both these brothers for their willingness to serve.

We were thankful to have Bro. Rory Strahm and Sis. Joanne Varga amongst our congregation several times as we worshipped together. Our prayers for God's nearness and good health continue to be with them and with Bro. Tibor Bozzay and Sis. Julianna Topolchanyi who were not able to gather with us.

Please come and visit. It's always uplifting for us when we

have guests who take time out from their travels to gather with us.

May the wonder of God's love continue to touch your life this year, bringing you peace, happiness and many precious moments of a closer walk with Him.

**KITCHENER, ONTARIO
CANADA**
Johanna Fortenbacher

The love of God is greater far than pen or tongue can ever tell. It goes beyond the greatest star, and reaches to the lowest hell.

Hymns of Zion #289

Showing us His love this month were many visiting ministers. Elder Bro. Dave Graf (Sis. Barb) and Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia) all came from Akron.

Then in the brand new year, Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Dianne, Rockville, CT) came as well as Bro. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN). Also from Mansfield came Bro. Tim Gerber (Sis. Wendy). We thank the Lord and you for your labour of love to us. God bless you all.

COLORADO, DENVER
Ann Gonglach

We honor God in many ways. One way is through worship, which is very popular in most churches today. A way to honor God that may not be so popular is through our obedience. We can only win God's approval through faith in the blood of His Son Jesus Christ. However, our obedience not only brings Him honor, glory

and pleasure by proving our love to Him, but it also helps to make us into overcomers. I appreciate it when my children honor me through immediate obedience to my spoken or unspoken wishes. How much more should we, as believers, obey God's perfect commands.

Sis. Leona Lehman (Bro. Verne) is recovering from back surgery. We are thankful for the Lord's protection and healing of her.

**CONNECTICUT
ROCKVILLE**
**Laura Virkler
Amber Reutter**

We can all be thankful this month as we enter a new year for the blessings of the past and those we hope for in the coming months.

We rejoice with Bro. Ralph and Sis. Tina Schneider as their daughter Rachel begins a new walk of life in repentance. We trust the Lord will be near her and provide grace in this step in her life.

Our prayers go out to the family of Bro. Walter Rumpf who passed away this past month. He leaves his wife, Alice; daughters, Barbara (Richard) Kremkau, Deborah (William) Jackowski; sons, Robert (Donna), Ronald (Patty), and Gregory (Leslie); as well as many grandchildren. May God comfort and strengthen them.

We also extend our prayers to Bro. Richard (Sis. Betsy) Hany who underwent surgery this month. We are glad that he has recovered well.

Many of our congregation have

had the opportunity to help those who suffered much loss as a result of Hurricane Katrina. We are thankful that those who have gone in the past weeks have returned home safely. May God richly bless them for giving of their time and labor to help these people restore their homes and lives to some semblance of order.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON**
Henrietta Meyer

On December 18, our Sunday School children presented their Christmas program.

This month we said farewell to Dr. Dale Koch as he finished his assignment in North Carolina and headed back to Tremont. While he was in this area, many family and friends came to visit him and blessed our congregation.

Because Christmas and New Year's were on Sundays with Mondays being holidays, most of our congregation was out of town, so we did not have services those Sundays.

On January 8, our "off" Sunday we gathered at the home of Ken and Roberta Belsley for our belated Christmas potluck. What a blessed time of extended fellowship with just about all of our regular folks.

The Building Advisory Committee visited this area last summer and since then we have been taking some first steps toward securing our own place of worship.

Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Shawn Metzger (Sis. Sandy, Philadelphia, PA). Other visitors this month were

from Rockville, CT.

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
FORT LAUDERDALE
Renee Mangold**

We were thankful to have with us visiting Bro. Joe Braker (Sis. Shirley, Morton, IL) and Bro. Clint Schmidt (Winthrop, MN). Bro. Clint Schmidt will be visiting us for a time while he works on roofing projects here in Ft. Lauderdale. (There are many homes and businesses with damaged roofs since Hurricane Wilma.) May God bless these brothers for the work they do in His service.

There were a number of college young people here over winter break. We had a candlelit beach picnic and enjoyed a time of fellowship and singing.

**FLORIDA
NORTH FORT MYERS
Naomi Vogel**

We were blessed to have Bro. Matt Kaufmann minister to us on New Year's Day while he and his wife, Sis. Rebekah (Inoue), and children, Joshua and Darci, were vacationing here. They are from Bloomington, Illinois.

Bro. Carroll Gerber agreed to hold services in Naples on Wednesday nights through the winter months at the Best Western Hotel, exit 107, so those staying in that area don't have to travel all the way to North Ft. Myers at night. Thank you, Bro. Carroll, for coming out of retirement to serve us! Occasionally Bro. Bob Meyer also steps out of retirement and serves as a supporting minister when we only have one minister present. We appreciate you, too, Bro. Bob!

Our dear friend, Warren Gottier, has surrendered his life to serving our Great Savior. We are so happy for Warren and his wife, Carol. Their summer home is in Ellington, Connecticut.

Even though we are primarily a senior citizen group, we have two newlywed couples wintering with us: Bro. Don and Sis. Mary Ann (Klaus) Stoller from Gridley, Illinois, and Bro. Howard and Sis. Emily (Stoller) Harmon from Toledo, Ohio. We are pleased that they are spending a few months with us!

Bro. John Zeller (Morton, IL) and his wife, Sis. Christy, were visiting us this past week. We appreciate Bro. John ministering to us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

As was predicted, our little church is now very full. It is so amazing that so many people can come together from far and wide and from many walks of life and feel a kinship of Christian love! We truly are a blessed people!

**FLORIDA, SARASOTA
Robin Wiegand**

Greetings from Sarasota. Life brings joys and sorrows, which we have experienced once again. We rejoice with Jarod Calame who has made a beginning in repentance. We were sad to bid him farewell, as he is moving back to his home congregation in Rittman, OH. We wish him God's continued grace. We were also saddened over the sudden passing of our dear winter visitor, Bro. Art Wettstein, of Eureka, IL. He left a wonderful legacy and example for us to follow. We extend our sympathy to his wife, Sis. Donna, and their family.

At our annual business meeting, a number of brothers and sisters were entrusted with new duties. May God give each one much grace to serve Him heartily. To those who have completed their terms, we were thanked for their faithful service.

We were blessed with many visiting ministers this past month. They included Bros. Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL), Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL), Everett Gerber (Rockville, CT), Mike Baumann (Mansfield, OH), Darren Fehr (West Bend, IA) and our own Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL). We thank the Lord for His bountiful blessings: being fed

abundantly through His Word and sharing fellowship with many precious winter visitors.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA
Kevin Kipfer
Benjamin Stoller

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Matthew 6:33

Happy New Year our dear brethren. We hope this finds you all enjoying God's blessings in this New Year, and seeking God in all ye do.

Once again we were blessed to have many visiting brethren minister to us in the last month. They were Bro. Dan Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) and Bro. Dale Wulf (Sis. Becky, Lester, IA). On the next Sunday we enjoyed Bro. John Steiner (Sis. Carol, Oakville, IA) and Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Diane, Rockville, CT).

William Olar's message of the month: “I am really thankful to be back in the Atlanta congregation.”

With a New Year come new opportunities. Let us go forth and do the Lord's work in this New Year and be prosperous brethren.

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE
Doreen Moser
Sheila McCoy

How shall it be?
 Oh what this mortal vision
 Can neither see,
 Nor hear, nor understand...

Of happiness and glory
 Shall be given
 To those who pass into
 That promised land!

We may not have much mortal vision here on earth but God truly does bless us with faithful ministers who try and help us see and understand, if we only lend our ears to hear, what they have to say. We gathered together with the Elgin brethren to hear the Memorandum and to lift our voices in song. With the exhortations fresh in our minds, is there a better way to start the New Year?

Mary Spencer has been a hospital patient this month and Sis. Marlene Mueller is recovering from surgery and faces more treatments. Although we all have trials here on earth, let us keep climbing the path and encouraging one another along the way, as we look toward those heavenly shores.

Then onward, Brethren!
 Let us hasten thither,
 'Tis worth the hardship
 And the pain we bear
 To climb this path,
 For there shall never wither
 The blest inheritance
 Which we shall share.

ILLINOIS
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL
Ann Nussbaum
Jen Heiniger

How wonderful it is to see a child praising the Lord. Our Sunday School warmed our hearts with a wonderful message of Christmas on December 18.

Several visiting ministers served us from the pulpit this

month. These include Elder Bros. John Lehman (Bern, KS) and Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI); Bros. Mark Gerber (Bluffton, IN), Nate Lehman (Denver, CO), and Howard Plattner (Alto, MI). Thank you to all of you for your willingness to serve.

Bro. Dale and Sis. Mary Leman welcomed two grandchildren into their family. Isaac Christian was born to Brad and Erika Leman of Goodfield. He joins Aaron, Nathaniel, and Ashley. Tyler Jeffrey was born to Jeff and Jennifer Sass of Aurora.

Two other babies blessed our congregation this month. Ben and Rachel Gudeman welcomed their first child, Abigail Rose, on December 19. Grandparents are Bro. Darl and Sis. Cindy Schieler (Indianapolis) and Dan Gudeman and Sis. Rebecca Gudeman (Indianapolis). Bro. Zack and Sis. Casey Sauder and big brother Luke welcomed Reese Makenna on December 16. Her grandparents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Jean O'Shea of Chicago and Bro. Ed and Sis. Bonnie Sauder of Roanoke.

Our sympathies go to Sis. Jeannine (Bro. Larry) Mariani and her family in the death of her mother, Sis. Kathryn Rudin, of Cissna Park, on January 11.

We rejoiced to witness the wedding of our Sis. Rebekah Kaufmann (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Bonnie) to Bro. Aaron Plattner (Bro. Howard and Sis. Kristen, Alto) on January 15. May God richly bless your marriage.

On Christmas Day, we learned of the engagement of our Sis.

Betty Feller to Bro. Rich Zimmerman of Roanoke. They plan to be wed February 8. May God lead and guide you during this time of engagement and in your marriage.

Sis. Dorothy Harsh is currently staying with her daughter in Colorado. We are prayerful for her and hope she can rejoin us soon.

Finally, we would like to welcome Bro. Marty and Sis. Patti Rebbec and their family, formerly of the Roanoke congregation. We look forward to getting to know you better.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD **Steve Endress**

We had three engagements announced during this month. Lanae Dietz (Bro. Kenny and Sis. Mardell) was recently engaged to Peter Huang of Peoria, IL. His parents are Tom and Sandy Huang of California. Amber Pyles (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Becky) is engaged to Jerry Mooberry of Lacon, IL. His parents are Chuck and Diane Mooberry of Lacon, IL. Shane Pyles (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Becky) is engaged to Mindy Kimble of Lacon, IL. Her parents are Carl and Cecilia Kimble of Sparland, IL.

We once again offer our appreciation to the brethren who have served the church in the past, and our prayers to those who have been chosen to perform a church duty. Our new usher is Bro. Bill Stahl (Sis. Kristal), replacing Bro. Les Fehr (Sis. Barb). Our new trustee is Bro. Fred Hausmann (Sis. Sue), replacing Bro. Nate Stoller Jr. (Sis. Sherrill).

Sis. Hilda Dietz and Bro. Leroy

Streitmatter (Sis. Esther) have both spent time in the hospital recently. We pray that God will grant them full recovery if it can be His will.

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

We had one visiting minister this past month. Ministering Bro. Gary Endress (Sis. Evelyn, Bradford, IL) was with us the first weekend of this New Year. We are thankful for his services and enjoy having Bro. Gary and Sis. Evelyn often.

Several Wednesday nights in December and January were spent listening to the Elder Conference tapes. It was uplifting for our congregation to be exhorted and encouraged, as the Christian walk can be a struggle at times.

A very sad farewell was said to Bro. Nick and Sis. Sandra Waibel and their two young sons, Elijah and Caden, as they recently moved to Eastern Tennessee. Bro. Nick was transferred with his job. We are thankful to have had them here for a very precious two and a half years. We hope they will always remember our little church and know that we love and will continue to pray for them. We are grateful to Bro. Chad Kupferschmid who has replaced Bro. Nick as a Sunday school teacher.

The last Sunday of the month of January was the Sunday School Winter Potluck. After church, the Sunday school spent several hours participating in various games and activities at Bro. Neil

and Sis. June Knobloch's. We then reconvened at church for a yummy potluck!

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO **Rachel Meyer**

Greetings from Chicago. We recently received several inches of beautiful wet snow. I happened to be in my car as the snow blanketed the area, and as I drove the landscape looked as if it were something out of a magazine. I knew the morning would bring scraping, shoveling and reports of accidents. Human concerns. But for a brief window of time, I was able to enjoy the untouched beauty of a snowfall. It was a nice reminder of God's presence and love.

We would like to thank Elder Bro. Ron Schambach (Elgin, IL) and Bros. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL) and Bob Pfloderer (Morton, IL) for ministering to us this past month. We enjoyed fellowshiping with these brothers and their loved ones. May God be with them.

Several in our congregation have lost loved ones recently. We extend sympathy to Bro. Glen and Sis. Nancy Pfeifer on the loss of Bro. Glen's sister, Shirley. She lived at Timber Ridge in Morton for many years. Also experiencing a loss was Bro. Eric Zimmerman. His grandfather, Bro. Joe Zimmerman, Jr. of Morton, IL, passed away, and our sincere sympathy is given to Bro. Eric and his family.

We rejoice to welcome Sis. Carrie Stoller (Gridley, IL) to Chicago. She has accepted employment in our area and we wish her

the Lord's rich blessings in her endeavors. We congratulate Austin Anliker (Bro. Rod and Sis. Anne) who has graduated from high school. We were sorry to bid him good-bye as he has moved to Denver, CO, for employment.

Bro. John and Sis. Pauline Schrenk have been part of the Chicago congregation much longer than any of the rest of us can remember. They have told us of their intention to worship with the Elgin brethren in the future as this is much closer to their residence. They are hoping to visit Chicago often and we surely will welcome them with open arms. We pray God's continued blessing upon them and thank them for being such a special part of our Chicago Church for so many years.

Christmas Day, 2005, found my family and me in the hospital as my grandmother was receiving some treatment. To celebrate Christ's birth we sang several Christmas carols for her. Then my father mentioned he knew of a loved one on another floor who would appreciate a few songs. Would we care to go sing for her? Even though we were quite small in number, we were happy to do so. As we were leaving her room, a nurse quietly pulled us aside and said a family had heard the singing and wondered if we could come in and sing a favorite song of their loved one who was gravely ill. The song requested was "O, Holy Night." We didn't know if we could sing that particular carol very well but were glad to try. As we entered the room, we found a family that was clearly in despair.

As we sang, the family began to cry. By the time we were finished, we were crying too. For those few minutes in time, we were privileged to share God's love through song to total strangers. What struck me most was that initially we apologized to the family that our singing may not go very well. Afterward I realized that our singing could have cracked a mirror and it would not have mattered. Jesus Christ was reaching out to that family. We were simply vessels for His use. It was a Christmas miracle for me. The one gift that has remained constant for over 2,000 years was all we could give. But it was enough.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK

**Pam Walder
Andrea Walder**

We're thankful for the news of another soul who has turned his back on the world. Chad Kaeb (Bro. Eric and Sis. LouAnn) has recently made a beginning in repentance. We wish him God's continued grace and guidance along life's pathway.

Our hospital patients this month have included Sis. Arlene Stock (Bro. Lester), Bro. Herman Bauer, Sis. Twylla Beer, Bro. Gilbert Stock (Sis. Kathy), and Grace Farney. Our prayers continue to ascend to God on their behalf.

Visiting us on the pulpit this month were Bros. Tom Waldbeser (Atlanta, GA), Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), Dan Moser (Elgin, IL) and Art Mueller (Belvidere, IL). We appreciate God's Word being spoken by these

brothers.

Sis. Kathryn Rudin passed from this life into eternity. We extend our sympathy to her family, including her brothers-in-law, Bro. Alvin (Sis. Dorothy) and Bro. Ben (Sis. Evelyn) Rudin, and her nieces and nephews.

Our annual church business meeting was held January 4. We lend our support to the brothers and sisters chosen to fulfill their duties. Bro. David (Sis. Vickie) Maul, Sis. Sylvia (Bro. Walt) Laubscher, and Sis. Megan (Bro. Anthony) Kaufmann are our new Sunday School teachers. Bro. Stan Maul and Bro. Max (Sis. Donna) Yergler are our new trustees, and Bro. Anthony (Sis. Megan) Kaufmann is on the fellowship hall committee.

Bro. Dave and Sis. Barb Young have been blessed with a new grandchild. Haelly Ann Marie Young was born to Brett and Holly Young. We wish them God's blessings as they raise their family.

We will miss Bro. Matt and Sis. Jerilyn Waldbeser and their children as they have relocated to Morris, MN. May God provide for them in their time of adjusting to their home.

Notes of Thanks:

We wish to thank the many loved ones who remembered us on our 40th anniversary. May God bless all of you.

Bro. Fritz and Sis. Joan Waldbeser

To our extended church family,
We humbly appreciate and

would like to thank everyone for your prayers, love, and the many other acts of kindness that have been expressed to our family during this time of loss of our dear Andrew. We have come to realize more so than ever what it means to have prayers ascending to God on our behalf. It is these prayers that have lifted the burden of loss and will help us through the days ahead. May our Father in heaven be the Rewarder of you all.

Love,

Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Denise Kaeb and family

Bro. Elmer and Sis. Mary Lou Kaeb

Sis. Aldean Kaufmann

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE **Rachel Schrock**

We were reminded recently that even though repentance is a free gift for mankind, it was not free as it cost God everything. He was not able to look upon His Son as Jesus became sin for us. May we always appreciate the great sacrifice that was made so that we can have the hope of a home in Heaven someday!

We thank our ministering brothers whom often remind us of Jesus' death on the cross. This past month we have been blessed with visiting ministering brethren: Elder Bros. Ken Indermuhle (Sis. Linda, Sardis, OH) and Rick Plattner (Sis. MaryAnn, Fairbury, IL), and Bros. Victor Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH), Gene Lehman (Sis. Verna, Wolcott, IN) and Greg Lehman (Sis. MaryBeth, Wolcott, IN). May God bless each of you for your will-

ingness to labor for Him on our behalf.

Sis. Rosie Hoerr (Bro. Max and Sis. Suzanne) has taken advantage of the free gift of repentance. We appreciated hearing her testimony and witnessing her baptism the weekend of January 15. As she continues on the narrow pathway, may she always feel God's abiding presence and guidance.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Amy Gasser
Miriam Gasser

We were encouraged to hear that Tim Braun (Bro. Gene and Sis. Sue) found grace to begin his repentance in late December. What a wonderful resolution to make at the onset of a new year! Our prayer is for a life-long commitment and for continued grace to grow and prosper each day.

On the weekend of January 7-8, many from here traveled to Rittman, OH, to attend the wedding of Bro. Brently Schambach (Bro. Don and Sis. Leann) and Sis. Mollie Beery (Bro. Earl and Sis. Suzanne). We welcome Mollie to the area and look forward to having her assemble in the Elgin church.

Sis. Carolyn Haas' son, Paul, became engaged to Esther Barany (Phoenix, AZ) on Christmas Day. They are planning to be married on April 7 in Phoenix.

We thank Elder Bro. Charles Sauder (Tremont, IL), who assisted Bro. Ron in the reading of the Memorandum on January 14. May we take our shepherds' exhortations and advice to heart. The next day, Bro. Charles kindly

taught us again, as he brought forth the Word in the morning and afternoon.

Bro. Ken Lindoerfer's wife, Mary, had the misfortune of falling and breaking her hip on Christmas Eve. She is currently in rehabilitation. Mark Schambach (Bro. Les and Sis. Alison) was also a hospital patient this past month. We hope each of them will have a good recovery.

On January 11, Sis. Kathryn Rudin passed away in Elgin, and her funeral was January 14 in Cissna Park. She was the sister of Bro. Paul Weiss, Bob Weiss (Eleanor), and Sis. Pat Schifferer (Bro. Howard). Ruth Olwin, the grandmother of Bro. Eric Humbracht (Sis. Erica), died on January 13 in Elgin and is survived by her husband, Roy. Our sympathy is extended to the families of these departed ones.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Cindy Stoller
Lisa Metzger

On January 14-15, we enjoyed a wonderful weekend of provings and baptisms to welcome into the fold four new sisters in Christ. They include Sis. Rebecca and Sis. Miranda Leman (Bro. Chris and Sis. Marlene) and Sis. Rachel and Sis. Angela Martin (Bro. Craig and Sis. Marilyn). We rejoice with them and pray for God's continued grace along the pathway of life.

Allison Ehnle (Bro. Gary and Sis. Carole) has recently begun her repentance to salvation. We are so thankful for her and wish her much grace and favor of the

Lord in this important change of life.

Our medical and hospital patients this month include Sis. Eleanor Baer and Wilma McCanless. May God watch over and keep them in His tender care.

We were saddened at the passing of our Bro. Elmer Ginzel. May his dear wife, Sis. Dorothy, feel the Lord's comfort and nearness during this time of sorrow and loss. Also grieving the loss of loved ones are Phil and Wilma McCanless in the bereavement of his sister, Katherine Weatherford, and her brother, Richard Rocke. Let us remember to "weep with those that weep" and pray for the sorrowful of heart.

Bro. Jason Rassi (Bro. Curt and Sis. Kathy, Tremont, IL) recently had his wedding engagement announced to Sis. Elli Fischer from Roanoke (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Annette). We wish this new couple the Lord's blessings as their lives blend into one.

First-time parents, Bro. Steven and Sis. Rachel Dotterer, thankfully welcome home their new little daughter, Ashlyn Ann. May the Lord provide them wisdom to bring her up in His ways. Ashlyn's grandparents are Bro. John and Sis. Jeanne Dotterer and Bro. Ed and Sis. Donna Kupferschmid.

This month our visiting ministers included Elder Bro. Art Nohl (Morris, MN), and Bros. Mike Ursu (Kitchener, Ontario), Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL), and Randy Mogler (Washington, IL). Their work in the Lord's vineyard is much appreciated. We thank

them for their service unto us.

Notes of Thanks:

We want to thank everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy and prayers in the passing of our dear husband and father. God bless you all.

The family of Bro. Samuel P. Blunier

"No farewell words were spoken, no time to say goodbye. You were gone before we knew it and only God knows why."

We are so thankful for all the kind deeds shown to us upon the sudden passing of our beloved husband, dad and grandpa. Thanks to all for the phone calls, cards, flowers, gifts, food and memorials, but most of all, for your love and prayers. May our Heavenly Father bless each and every one.

The family of Bro. Art Wettstein

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY **Anna Schmidgall** **Lila Fehr**

We appreciate all of the visiting ministers that spent time with us this month: Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) and Bros. Jim Kaeb (Bern, KS), Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Al Schambach (Remington, IN), Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA), Gary Brown (Forrest, IL), Nathan Wieland (Goodfield, IL), and Ken Eisenmann (Cissna Park, IL).

Bro. Dennis and Sis. Jane Steidinger are happy grandparents to two more little grandchildren. Gracie Lynn is the daughter of Tim and Amy Steidinger.

Gracie's maternal grandparents are Randy and Rita Lessman. Little Luke Lehmann Steidinger is the son of Bro. Matthew and Sis. Janelle Steidinger of Bloomington, IL. His maternal grandparents are Art and Jana Lehmann.

We rejoice when a soul turns from the darkness of sin to the Light of Life. We are thankful that Josh Runyon (Bro. Mark and Julie) and Nick Osborne have chosen this pathway.

We want to remember, in prayer, those who have been ill and have afflictions of the body. Our hospital patients this month were Joann Stoller, Dale Mowery, and Bro. Don Kaisner. Surgical patients were Sis. Carmen Kilgus (Bro. Paul), Sis. Sharon Kelson (Bro. Bernard), and Sis. Thelma Slagel.

Our dear Sis. Edna Stoller has reached the end of her life here on earth and has gone on to her eternal reward. We will miss her quiet presence. Our sympathies are also extended to Dick and Esther Koehl in the passing of Sis. Ruth Vaughan of Phoenix, AZ.

ILLINOIS, FORREST **Jill Wenger** **Lori Leman**

We were thankful for the visiting ministers that shared God's Word with us in Forrest this month. They were Elder Bro. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Paul Gasser (Akron, OH), Elder Bro. Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL), Bro. Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL) and Bro. Robert Beebe (South Bend, IN).

Sis. Sandra Schneider (Bro. Jim) has fulfilled her six years of teaching the little children in Sunday School of Jesus and His love. May the Lord bless her for her kind and loving way with the children. Sis. Holly Steidinger (Bro. Glen) was elected to fill her place in teaching Sunday School. "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:16)

We sympathize with Bro. Homer Blunier (Sis. Virginia) in the passing of his brother, Bro. Samuel Blunier (Eureka, IL). Also our thoughts and prayers go out to Sis. Mary Ifft (Bro. Duane) in the death of her father, Willis Alford, of Fairbury, IL; and Don and Marge Stephens in the passing of their son-in-law, Neil Knauer, of Fairbury, IL.

Kaylee Kaeb (Bro. Eldon and Sis. Stephanie) has begun her repentance in the Lord. May she kneel at the foot of the cross and humbly submit herself to the service of Him.

Those experiencing hospitalizations were Blake Hall (Bro. Don and Barb), Bro. Chris Metz (Sis. Vi), Bro. Homer Blunier (Sis. Virginia), Bro. Wayne Drayer (Sis. Gloria) and Beth Ifft (Bro. Duane and Sis. Mary). May God's healing touch be felt upon them all.

Note of Thanks:

I want to thank everyone for all the cards, gifts and telephone calls in remembering me on my 80th birthday. I felt so unworthy! God bless you all.

Sis. Rosetta Stoller

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

**Rita Bauman
Amber Grimm**

We are always thankful for the miracle of healthy births. This month Tyler Eugene was born to Bro. Chad and Sis. Janelle Hillman, and Mitchell Wayne was born to Bro. Fred and Sis. Stephanie Wiegand.

There are times when tragedy brings us closest together. We could see and feel the love of the church and pray the Schieler family could also in the death of Hugh Schieler, son of Richard and Lisa. May they continue to look to God for comfort in this time of loss.

Our prayers go out to Sis. Bertha Wingeier who was in the hospital this past month. May she feel the love of God and His healing strength.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL), Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Curt Rassi (Sis. Kathy, Tremont, IL), and Bro. James Knapp (Sis. Lisa, Congerville, IL). We are thankful for each of them for their labors.

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Colossians 3:17

Several brothers from our congregation went to Biloxi, Mississippi, to help with the efforts in cleaning up after Hurricane Katrina. We pray for them and for

safe travels.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY

Perry A. Klopfenstein

We rejoice with Bro. Kyle and Sis. Tara Wettstein over the birth of their first child born on December 28, 2005. He was named Benjamin Allen. Grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Darleta Gramm and Bro. Lyle and Sis. Linda Wettstein. Great-grandparents are Sis. Delores Marti and the late Bro. Allen Marti, and Ann and Ron Daughtery, and the late Bro. Willis "Butch" Gramm. Great - great - grandparents are Sis. Ruth Gramm and Sis. Pauline Witzig. May God be with this couple in their efforts to train up their son in the nurture and fear of the Lord.

Bro. Jeff and Sis. Cynde Stoller became the parents of a son, Matthew Arthur, on January 21. His siblings are Jeremiah, 7, Faith, 6, and Patience, 4. Grandparents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Elna Wettstein, Eureka, and Bro. Joe and Sis. Karen Stoller, Gridley. Great-grandparents are Sis. Marie Stoller, Gridley, and Sis. Mildred Bauman, Goodfield, and Sis. Donna Wettstein, Eureka. We also pray for God's grace to enable this couple to nurture this dear child in the Lord's ways.

Bro. Daryl Hodel had surgery on his wrist. Bro. Doug Hodel, his son, was in the hospital for hernia surgery. Burton E. Grusy was hospitalized for knee replacement surgery, and is recovering. Bro. Ralph Schlipf was injured in a fall at his home. His hip was broken and required a new one via sur-

gery. Sis. Joan Aupperle is recovering from a broken wrist.

We sympathize with Sis. Marty Bahler over the loss of her mother, Alma "Babe" McRell, of Minonk, who passed away on January 10.

Sis. Carissa Schlipf has moved to Casa Via Esperanza to work at the orphanage in Magdalena, Mexico. Also, Sis. Carrie Stoller has moved to the Chicago area.

We appreciated our recent visiting ministers: Bros. John Bradle (Roanoke, IL), Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN) and Mark Gerber (Bluffton, IN).

ILLINOIS, MORTON
Annette Tanner
Julie Bahr

Five years ago this month, my husband and I moved our family from Emporia, Kansas, to make Morton our church home. What a blessing this move has become for us. On that note, in an effort to share our Morton Church events through this monthly letter, Sis. Annette Tanner and I will try to rise to the challenge of filling the shoes of Sis. Christy Zeller, who has just retired this position.

A warm welcome to Bro. Grant Heinold, who moved here from New Mexico and has also chosen to make Morton his church home.

Bro. Ted Hirstein held our family night worship service. The topic was entitled "Beginnings" which was a perfectly formatted lesson to begin another New Year.

Monday evening Bible study has resumed after a December break. Our study is over the Book of Revelation. It is exciting and encouraging to study this last book

of the scriptures—The Book of all Books!

Visiting ministers were Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla, Chicago, IL), Bro. Mathew Rassi (Sis. Bridget, Chicago, IL) and Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL). Thank you for remembering to visit our Morton assembly.

On December 16, precious first baby daughter, Haley Jayne, was born to Bro. Seth and Sis. Sarah (Rassi) Webb. Bro. Gary and Sis. Debbie Rassi and Bryan and Jayne Webb are the honored grandparents.

Zoe Jane Hoerr was born on December 18 to Bro. Joey and Sis. Julie of Peoria. Grandparents are Bro. Randy and Sis. Jane Schick of Morton, and Bro. Joe and Sis. JoAnne Hoerr of Peoria.

Terry and Janeen Baum are welcoming into their home, nine year old Anastasia Janeen from Russia. Supportive and loving grandparents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Jody Baum, Morton, and Daryl and June Hari, Phoenix.

Little Analea Faith, age five, has become the adopted daughter of Bro. Phil and Sis. Cindy Witzig. What a delightful little gal we have grown to love, as little Ana has been in the Witzig's foster care since near birth. Grandparents are Bro. Harold and Sis. Dorothy Witzig and Bro. Stanley and Sis. Naomi Vogel.

Elizabeth "Libby" Bauman passed away December 29. On January 1, Romeo Hermann passed away. His brother is Bro. Don (Sis. Mavis) Hermann and his sister is Florence Witter, both

of our Morton church.

Shirley Pfeifer passed away on January 10, and Michael Culkin passed away on January 11. Both of these dear souls were residents of our Timber Ridge Home here in Morton.

Retired ministering Bro. Joe Zimmerman Jr. peacefully went Home on January 12. Bro. Joe occupied the Morton pulpit for 24 years. His wife, Sis. Mildred (Millie), survives. Also surviving are one son, Bro. Joe (Sis. Barb) Zimmerman; two daughters, Kathy (Jim) Heiniger and Mary Zimmerman; one brother, Bro. Rich Zimmerman; and one sister, Sis. Lois (Bro. Marv) Getz.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA
Lou and Marjean Lonteen

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."

Recent guest ministers were: Bro. Ron Joos (Pulaski, IA), and Bro. Wayne Leman (Roanoke) spoke at Family Night. We appreciate your visits.

"Let your moderation be known to all men, the Lord is at hand."

On December 18, the Sunday School Christmas Program was presented. It was inspiring to hear the voices of the students tell of their love for the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

Bro. Steve Hodel and Sis.

Claire Witzig were united in Holy Matrimony in Gridley on December 18. Parents are Bro. Irvin and Sis. Sharon Hodel and Bro. Jerome and Sis. Mary Witzig (Gridley).

Congratulations to Bro. Shane Fehr (Bro. Dave and Sis. Linda Fehr), Washington, and Sis. Emily Oberfel (Bro. Dave and Sis. Kathy) on their engagement.

"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice."

New Babies: Drew James Kieser was born to Bro. Brent and Sis. Fawn (Esslinger) Kieser on December 1. Mason welcomes home his new playmate.

Bro. Joey and Sis. Julie (Schick) Hoerr are happy parents of a baby girl, Zoe Jane, born on December 18. Grandparents are Bro. Joe and Sis. Jo Anne Hoerr and Randy and Jane Schick of Morton. Kai and Aja welcome their new little sister.

Levi Asher was born on December 27 to Bro. Dan and Sis. Susan (Schwenk) Meister. Sophia and Abram are happy to have a new little brother.

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

Those on our prayer list due to health challenges are: Bro. Ben Bauer, Bro. Dave Dunbar, Bro. Harry Eisenmann, Bro. Jim Hoerr, Bro. Bob Joos. There are many in the church and at Skylines who would prefer to feel much better than they do. We trust God will be with you each and every day with His nearness and encouragement.

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Note of Thanks:

Sis. Lillian Koehl would like to thank everyone for their love and kindness in word and deed during the time of her 94th birthday. May God be your rewarder.

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

"Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Philippians 4)

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE
Kara Blunier
Vera Baer

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

II Timothy 4:5

January 1, Bro. Walt Herrmann had his last sermon from our pulpit. May God bless him, his dear wife, Sis. Betty Lou, and their family for the many years of being a servant of the Lord.

December 18, Bro. Brad Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) had services for us. In the evening, the Sunday School children told us about the meaning of Christmas.

Bro. John Grimm (Columbus, OH) and Bro. Fred Witzig (India-

napolis, IN) were here Wednesday evening for church. On Christmas Day, Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Fairbury, IL) was the speaker for the Spirit. We thank each of these Brothers and their wives for being willing to come. We also thank our local ministers who Sunday after Sunday and Wednesday nights are willing to allow God to use them. May they and their wives each feel the Spirit's direction and be willing to abide therein.

January 1, Bro. David and Sis. Kara Blunier, along with Faith, Marcus, and Jerod welcomed Lily Jane to their family. Grandparents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Jane Lemman (Bradford, IL) and Sis. Joyce Blunier from here. Also, receiving a little blessing was Ben and Esther Cozadd. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Mary Lynn Streitmatter. She is named Lillian Grace. Her "big" brother, Gage, loves her also.

We had our business meeting in January and thank the Brothers and Sisters who have served their term of duties. We wish the brethren who are beginning their duties God's help and blessings.

Hospital patients this month are Sis. Marlene Plattner, who is home, Sis. Mary Lou Streitmatter, who is recuperating at her daughter's, and Sis. Edith Martin, who is also home. Sis. Joan Berchtold is in the hospital at this time. May she and her family feel God's love and nearness.

Note of Thanks:

Dear Loved Ones,

Thank you to all of you for the kindness you have shown to me

following my recent hip surgery. The prayers, gifts, words of encouragement, and visits were appreciated very much. What a blessing to be part of a loving church family!

Humbly, Sis. Phyllis Knobloch

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

**Dee Fehr
Doris Fischer**

Psalm 127:3 says "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Bro. Luke and Sis. Allison Fischer welcomed their first child, Clay Benjamin, on December 30. Clay's grandparents are Bro. Duane and Sis. Rachel Schroeder and Bro. Kevin and Sis. Annette Fischer. Another first child is David Samuel, who was born on January 4 to Bro. Sam and Sis. Marjorie Bertschi. David's thankful grandparents are Bro. Rich and Sis. Bev Bertschi and Bro. Clark and Sis. Lisa Leman. We rejoice with these families on the safe arrival of those precious boys!

On January 14-15, our congregation was blessed to hear the testimonies of four dear souls and then to witness their baptisms. We welcomed as our brothers and sisters in faith: Bro. Benji Leman (Bro. Ben and Sis. Janet), Bro. Joel Wuthrich (Sis. Val Wuthrich and Bill Wuthrich), Sis. Kyle McKimmey (Tina and Keith) and Sis. Heather Rocke (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Eva). That same weekend we appreciated the presence and ministry of Elder Bro. Bruce Hohulin and Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger from Goodfield and Bros. Steve Baner and Clark

Stoller from Gridley. We also thank Elder Bro. Jim Platter (Princeville, IL) for his assistance in the reading of the Memorandum. We're grateful to these brothers and their families for their willingness to visit and be used by God for our edification.

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

Genesis 2:18

We rejoice with Bro. Rich Zimmerman as he has found a "help meet for him" in Sis. Betty Feller of Bloomington. Their engagement was announced on Christmas day. We also rejoice with another couple, Sis. Ellie Fischer and Bro. Jason Rassi (Eureka) on their engagement. Sis. Ellie's parents are Bro. Kevin and Sis. Annette Fischer and Bro. Jason's parents are Bro. Curt and Sis. Kathy Rassi (Tremont). We pray God's blessings on these couples as they plan for their weddings and prepare for their marriages.

Our condolences are offered to Sis. Carol Martin (Bro. Glen) and their family at the passing of her father, Bro. Ervin Schwartz, of Bluffton. Our prayer is that God's spirit of comfort could be felt in those times when the loss seems great.

Notes of Thanks:

I wish to express my deep appreciation for the cards, gifts and flowers I received for my 87th birthday and Christmas. Words

can never convey how thankful I am for your love and support.

Sis. Doris Bowald

We wish to express our deep appreciation and thanks for the love, prayers, gifts, cards and food given during Edna's time in the hospital and nursing home. May God richly bless every one.

Bro. Harold and Sis. Edna Roth

The family of Sis. Ann Pfister would like to thank everyone for their prayers, support, cards, calls, food and any other act of kindness show to us during her sudden passing. God bless each one of you.

Brother, sisters, nieces & nephews of Sis. Ann

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

**Teresa Rowell
Sheri Allen**

As we come through the Christmas season, it is always good to reflect back on the year and count our blessings. We really are a blessed people and we should thank God each and every day that we live here on this earth. We never know when life shall end for any of us and we need to live our lives as if it was our last day on earth.

We sympathize with Sis. Wilma Pulfer (Bro. Les) in the death of her brother, Bro. Art Wettstein (Eureka, IL). May God comfort her in this time of loss.

We were privileged once again to have visiting ministers among us. Bro. Vern Wettstein (Sis. Judy, Congerville, IL) was with us

for our New Year's Eve service, and we had Bro. Dewayne Dill (Sis. LaRae, Minneapolis, MN) with us for New Year's Day. We pray that we can always hold these brothers up in prayer as they fulfill their duties in preaching the Word to us.

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord..." (Psalm 127:3). Rejoicing in the birth of another grandchild are Bro. Todd and Sis. Beth Stuber. Bro. Doug and Sis. Amber Nohl (Morris, MN) had their third child, Archie Alan. Crystal and Lewis welcome him home. Bro. Rich and Sis. Evelyn Sauder are thankful for the safe arrival of Titus Andrew. He is welcomed into the family circle of Brad and Kim, Leah, Micah, and Jonathan Grant. Also arriving in the family of Bro. Nathan and Sis. Sandy Koch is Justus William. Gabriel, Josiah, Charity, Promise and Alexander are excited about their new baby. Bro. Cleo and Sis. Nancy Koch are Justus' grandparents.

As we know, sickness is always around us and sometimes it gets to us. We pray that our three hospital patients can receive the healing of the Great Physician and assemble with us again. They are Bro. Dick Miller (Cindy), Heidi Koch (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Cathy) and Katie Schaefer (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Tammy).

We rejoiced to hear the wedding announcement of Bro. Jason Rassi (Eureka, IL) and Sis. Ellie Fischer (Roanoke, IL). Bro. Jason's parents are Bro. Curt and Sis. Cathy Rassi from our congregation.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON

**Nancy Knepp
Barb Banwart**

Visiting ministers recently were Bro. Trent Schrock (Sis. Heidi, Leo, IN), Bro. Duane Rocke (Sis. Bonnie, Minneapolis, MN) and Bro. Mike Rieker (Sis. Carol, Peoria, IL). How we appreciate the bringing forth of the Word in Spirit and in truth.

Our concern and prayers go to those who experience prolonged or passing illnesses. Recently hospitalized were Bro. Eugene Kellenberger, Bro. Lloyd Schumacher (Sis. Betty) and Sis. Ann Meiss (Bro. Harold). Undergoing surgery were Sis. Vicki Hodel, Sis. Marvella Steffen (Bro. Scott) and Sis. Judy Witzig. May each of them mend well.

On Christmas day, the engagement of Bro. Shane Fehr to Sis. Emily Obergfel of Peoria was announced. Parents are Dave and Sis. Linda Fehr and ministering Bro. Dave and Sis. Kathy Obergfel (Peoria). May they continue to look to God for His direction as they walk thankfully the path of life together.

It was a special blessing to enjoy the visit of Bro. Greg and Sis. Shelle Schumacher and children at Christmastime. They have now returned to Wackersdorf, Germany, where they are living at this time.

Among us are several who have laid to rest loved ones in recent weeks. Harold Wettstein (Loretta) lost a brother, Bro. Arthur Wettstein (Eureka, IL). He was uncle to Sis. Janine Rocke

(Bro. Kevin) and Sis. JoEllen Martin (Bro. Todd). Alice Wooten (John) of Bloomington, IL, the mother of our convert, Kathy Stoller (Richard), was taken quite unexpectedly. And our oldest member, Sis. Martha Simon, exchanged mortality for that which fadeth not away. Feeling this loss most deeply is Sis. Edna Simon who lived with Sis. Martha and who faithfully attended her sister in the nursing home the past three years. May God's love and nearness comfort each one. What blessed hope for the believer is conveyed by the words, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (I Cor. 15:54). And to know that "At Home 'Tis Well."

Note of Thanks:

I want to express my deep gratitude to all who have offered their support to me during my accident and stay in the hospital and since returning home. The cards and gifts and especially the prayers have helped so much. I am so thankful for the church family and their prayers.

*In Christian love,
Delores Kiefer*

INDIANA, BLUFFTON

**Amy Gerber
Amber Steffen
Elizabeth Frauhiger**

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

I Timothy 6:12

We are excited to see the hand of the Lord move across our congregation and call many souls. Amanda Isch (Bro. Jim and Sis. Rachel), Adam and Mary Leman (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Val), Chad Fiechter (Bro. Mike and Sis. Shari), Ashley Troxel (Bro. Kim and Sis. Lisa), Adam Neuenchwander (Bro. Dee and Sis. Laura) and Ryan Neuenchwander (Bro. Tom and Sis. Sue) have all heeded the Saviour's calling and began their repentance.

Bro. Ervin Schwartz was called Home on December 29. Our prayers are extended to his dear wife, Sis. Alice; his daughters, Sis. Sharon Meister (Bro. Richard, West Lafayette, IN), Sis. Carol Martin (Bro. Glen, Roanoke, IL); his sons, Bro. Ernest (Sis. Robin, Bluffton North), Sidney Schwartz, and Tracy Schwartz; three sisters, Sis. Martha Gerber, Sis. Ada Gerber (Bro. Harry) and Sis. Alice Steffen; 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

January 13 was the final day on this earth for our Bro. Ralph Baumgartner. His wife, Sis. Jeannie, and daughters, Sis. Kim Maller (Bro. Bob), Sis. Connie Kaehr (Bro. Sam), Sis. Vicki Grube (Sis. Lonnie) and Barbara Werling (Jay), mourn the death of their dear husband and father. Bro. Ralph also leaves behind a brother, Herb Baumgartner; two sisters, Sis. Pauline Gerber (Bro. Jerry) and Sis. Marilyn Baumgartner (Bro. Tom); and nine grandchildren.

Our prayers are also extended

to Sis. Lolly Hartter in the death of her dear mother. We pray that all of those hurting in our congregation will feel the comforting hand of the Lord in their lives.

We thank Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Sis. Leonda, Leo) and Bro. Dan Dubach (Sis. Bethany, Prescott, AZ) for their humble service in bringing forth the truth of God's Word to us this month.

January 14-15 was a very special weekend for our two new sisters in Christ. Sis. Kelsey Compton (Bro. Gary and Sis. Jean) and Sis. Lydia Kaehr (Bro. Jon and Sis. Juli) gave their testimonies and were baptized. We welcome them into the family of God.

Our prayers are lifted up for our Bro. Steve Reinhard (Sis. Renee) and Sis. Dorothy Frank as they battle afflictions of the flesh.

Kaine David was born on January 9 to Bro. Nathan and Sis. Rachel Mueller. This precious baby boy is the first grandchild born to our Bro. Jim and Sis. Jan Schwartz and the first grandchild of Bro. Dave and Sis. Terri Mueller (Bluffton North).

Our annual business meeting was held on January 1. We were encouraged as we looked back on 2005. In our congregation, we celebrated 25 baptisms, 10 weddings, and 14 new babies. Sadly, we buried 17 dear ones in 2005. We are thankful for the 18 new Sunday School teachers and 10 new office holders voted in this year. Thanks to the many willing brothers and sisters who have served our church over the past several years.

**INDIANA
BLUFFTON NORTH
Darren Drayer
Tiffani Schladenhauffen**

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Jeremiah 29:13

Drake Moser has chosen to seek the Lord with all of his heart as he began repenting this month. We are prayerful that he will continue to seek the Lord and grow closer to Him. Drake is the son of Bro. Wm. Gene and Sis. Edna.

We rejoiced with Sis. Adrienne Steffen, daughter of Bro. Tim and Sis. Marlise, as she was united in marriage to Bro. Braden Reinhard (Bluffton, IN), son of Bro. Doyle and Sis. Jan. We wish them God's blessings as they begin their new life together.

Big brother Drew Frauhiger welcomed his new baby sister, Kylie Jane, into this world on January 9. Kylie Jane's joyful parents are Bro. Jessie and Sis. Janelle, and her grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Irene Frauhiger and Bro. Keith and Sis. Kay Steffen.

Kaine David was also born on January 9 to first-time parents of Bro. Nathan and Sis. Rachel Mueller. First-time grandparents on both sides are Bro. Dave and Sis. Terri Mueller and Bro. Jim and Sis. Jan Schwartz (Bluffton, IN).

We grieved this month with Bro. Ernie Schwartz (Sis. Robin) at the loss of his father, Bro. Ervin

Schwartz (Bluffton, IN). Our sympathies are also sent to Sis. Pauline Gerber (Bro. Jerry) at the passing of her brother, Bro. Ralph Baumgartner. Our prayers are also with Sis. Louise Gerber (Bro. Carroll) and Sis. Betty Steffen at the loss of their brother, Robert Bertsch. We pray each family would find comfort in the Lord during their time of grieving.

We had several loved ones who had surgery this month. They were Bro. Fred Rupel (Sis. Rhonda), Sis. Goldie Stettner (Bro. Howard), and Sis. Diane Mason. We pray each would feel the Lord's healing touch. And may we all remember what we were reminded of this month, that no matter what occurs in our life, because of Jesus we have reason to rejoice.

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice."

Philippians 4:4

**INDIANA
FRANCESVILLE
Barb Huber
Jessica Murray**

We greet one and all with love in Jesus' name! By His grace, we have begun 2006! Our new year began here with the blessing of gathering for a church service followed by our annual New Year's Eve program. Bro. Neal Widmer (Sis. Kris, W. Lafayette) graciously served as our minister. We thank him for his service first to God and then to all of us. So many good thoughts, scripture readings and songs were given to help us keep God's priorities for the com-

ing year. We plead His grace to live this year for Him.

I Corinthians 15:58 tells us "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." This verse is being put into action in our congregation as many of our brothers and sisters are serving in disaster relief and our church's mission efforts in Mexico and Haiti. May we who stay at home keep them always in our prayers.

We were richly blessed with a topical Bible Study presented by our Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein on the subject of "The Carnal Christian" based on I Corinthians 3. Through his presentation and many Scripture references, it was evident that there can be no such thing as a "carnal Christian"; because, if we are truly justified by faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, we will allow ourselves to become sanctified into His will for our lives. The question which must be settled in a born-again person's heart is "Can Jesus be Saviour and not Lord of my life?" It was an insightful, spiritual evening and it should cause us all to strive strongly to be growing in grace and strength in the power of the Lord and growing in determination to shun the world and its allure.

Our beloved Sis. Valera Culp was hospitalized for a short time. She is back at home at Parkview Haven for which we are thankful.

Our sympathy and prayers for God's comfort goes out to our

friends, John and Tabetha Abair, at the loss of their little sister, Jessica. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (I Peter 5:7).

As February brings the world's celebration of Valentine's Day, here is what the Word has to say about the "real love" found in our Lord and Savior:

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love ... In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

I John 4:7, 8 and 9

For Those Who Love Me
I live for those who love me,
For those who know me true,
For the Heaven that smiles above
me,
And awaits my coming too:
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the wrong that need resistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that I can do.

—G. Linnaeus Banks

Note of Thanks:

I want to sincerely thank everyone who thought of me at Christmas! I pray that God will bless each and every one of you for your kindness! Philippians 1:3

Sis. Minerva Wuethrich

**INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS
Debbie Anliker
Sandy Lichtle**

We rejoice with Bro. Darl and Sis. Cindy Schieler and Sis. Rebecca Gudeman on the birth of their granddaughter, Abigail Rose, born on December 19. Abigail's parents are Ben and Rachel Gudeman (Bloomington, IL).

Ben Graham (Bro. Dick and Sis. Jeanette, Princeville, IL) has begun a new life in the Lord. We pray for God's grace and wisdom to be with him as he seeks to serve the Master.

We sincerely welcome Sis. Sally Dotterer (West Lafayette, IN) to our congregation. It is a blessing to have Sis. Sally as part of our church family.

On January 15, Sis. Bekah Kaufmann (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Bonnie, Bloomington, IL) and Bro. Aaron Plattner (Bro. Howard and Sis. Kristen, Alto, MI) were united as one in the Lord in Bloomington, IL. We pray for God's blessings upon their union as they make their home in Detroit, MI.

**INDIANA, LACROSSE
Shirley Frank
Cathy Nuest**

Don't grieve for me,
For now I'm free
I'm following the path
God laid for me,
I took His hand
When I heard Him call,
I turned my back
And left it all.

—author unknown

Shirley Pfeifer (daughter of de-

ceased Bro. Ernie and Sis. Emma Pfeifer) passed away January 10 after suffering from cancer. We extend our sympathy to her brothers, Alvin Pfeifer (Carol) of Wanatah, IN, Bro. Glen Pfeifer (Sis. Nancy), Batavia, IL, and Ken Pfeifer (Becky), Jacksonville, FL. We thank Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL) for coming and sharing in the funeral services. Shirley spent the last 32 years of her life at the Home for the Handicapped in Morton, IL, but we always enjoyed her visits home. We will miss her presence among us and the sunshine she brought into our lives.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sis. Fern Antrim who suffered a heart attack and stroke and has been moved to a nearby nursing home where she can receive therapy.

We are thankful for ministering brothers who visited us this past month: Bro. Jim Butikofer (Iowa City, IA), Bro. Ted Steffen (Alto, MI), Bro. John Lehman (Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Ned Stoller (Alto, MI). May the Lord be their rich Rewarder now and in the life to come.

**INDIANA, LEO
Ethelyn Schlatter**

Sheri and Brad Connor welcomed Addie Elaine on December 21 into their hearts and home. Addie is their first child and the granddaughter of Bro. Dave and Sis. Sharon Pfister.

Elder Bro. Mark and Sis. Sara Streitmatter (Bloomington, IL) visited on January 8. We were encouraged by his message from

God's Word.

Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda Schrenk, their four daughters, Sis. Elizabeth, Abigail, Hannah and Sarah, are in Jamaica on a two week work project. Our prayers are with them. Tashi, an exchange student from Knockpatrick campus, will accompany them on their return. She stayed with the Schrenks in 2005 and was home for the holidays.

Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz read the Memorandum from the 2005 Elder Conferences. It's been some time since we heard the tapes and was good to be reminded of the path in which we need to walk. "...to write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe." (Phil. 3:1). "This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16).

—Love makes all hard hearts gentle.

—When we bend our knees in prayer, it keeps us from breaking under the load of care.

—Remember this: that very little is needed to make a happy life.

—Reach up as far as you can, and God will reach down all the way.

**INDIANA, MILFORD
Carlton Beer
Carol Haab**

December 18 the miracle of the birth of Jesus was once again told through recitation and song during our annual Christmas program. May we take the spirit of love for others that Christmas brings and do our part to create peace and good will every day in

2006.

It was a blessing to begin the new year with a visiting minister. A family gathering brought Bro. Gary Sinn (Sis. Paulette, Latty, OH) to worship with us. May the Lord richly bless him.

Our annual business meeting was held on January 5. Those elected were Bro. Dick Steffen, trustee; Bro. Randy Beer, Bible class teacher; Bro. Darin Price, Bro. Jeremy Price and Sis. Pat Beer, Sunday school teachers; Sis. Pat Mikel, church secretary; Bro. Rich Schlipf, speaker system; Bro. Troy Wuthrich, usher; Sis. Gwen Steffen, World Relief sewing committee; and Sis. Anne Troup, food committee. Bro. Rich and Sis. Kathy Schlipf and Bro. Phil and Sis. Jane Price graciously volunteered to be in charge of sunrise services in April. Also lending themselves to the service of the Lord were Bro. Bill and Sis. Judy Longcor and Bro. Rob and Sis. Kim Schlipf as they volunteered to plan the monthly hymn singings which includes Christmas caroling. It is so heartwarming to see the willingness to serve. We want to sincerely thank the brothers and sisters just completing their duties. We also would like to thank our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter for being with us.

Sis. Ruth Beer (Bro. Don) was hospitalized this month. May God's healing powers sustain her as we continue to lift her up in prayer.

INDIANA, REMINGTON

**Beth Virkler
Tammy Waibel**

We greet you one and all in His name! December 18 we were blessed by our children in the Christmas program. They really were enthusiastic about telling us the story of Jesus' birth!

We didn't have any visiting ministers this past month but we were just as blessed.

A woman very special to the hearts of us all decided to give herself to God. Marcella Tyler (Dale) has made a great beginning and we are happy that she could enjoy the blessing with her daughter, Krystal, who started repenting last fall. It is wonderful they will have each other in this blessed time. We wish this family many days in the glory of His Almighty!

The beginning of January marks our annual meeting and we have some wonderful teachers coming in to teach our little ones about our Lord. The teachers going in are as follows: 6th — 8th grades, Bro. Chris Hartter (Sis. Jill); 3rd — 5th, Bro. Brian Schneider (Sis. Kristen); 1st and 2nd grades - Sis. Denise Weerts (Bro. Dan). Going out of these positions are Bro. Jason Getz (Sis. Sarah), Bro. Dan Weerts (Sis. Denise) and Sis. Patti Bahler (Bro. Kurt). Thank you all for your willingness to serve.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

**Melisa Gerst
Stacey Feller**

We have had a few visiting ministers over the holiday season, and thank them and their families for visiting us here in South Bend.

Bro. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL) shared the Christmas message with us, Bro. Joe Gerst (Iowa City, IA) was here to ring in the new year, and our Elder Bro. Curt Frank (LaCrosse, IN) shared a Sunday with us in January.

Christmas day found us rejoicing as usual, with the added excitement of an engagement. Bro. Nathan Virkler (Bro. Stan and Sis. Beth Virkler, Remington, IN) has been worshipping with us in the past year and announced his engagement to Sis. Natalie Knochel (Bro. Herb and Sis. Laurie Knochel, Phoenix, AZ). We extend our congratulations and warmest wishes for God's blessings upon this new union in Him. We look forward to welcoming Sis. Natalie into our church family.

We thank the good Lord for His protection of Micah Frank (Bro. Tom and Sis. Carolyn) who was in a recent accident. Micah sustained some head injuries, but was spared considerably. Praise be to God!

We held our annual business meeting in January and elections for offices. Thank you to all who have done and continue to do so much to contribute to the spiritual and physical operations of our church.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Ed Lester

Greetings to everyone once again.

We are enjoying the calm January weather. This month has been pretty quiet. Sis. Aldene Freiden (Parkview Haven,

Francesville) celebrated her 90th birthday this month. We would like to wish her a happy birthday.

Everyone at Valparaiso would like to thank Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus (Remington, IN) for worshipping with us.

“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.”

Psalm 63:5

**INDIANA
WEST LAFAYETTE**

**Andria Sprunger
Hollie Meister**

We wish to thank Bro. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN), for sharing God's Word with us last month.

Bro. Chad Hoerr (Bro. Doug and Sis. Peg) and Sis. Olivia Hoerr (Bro. Don and Sis. Jackie) both graduated from high school last month. Pray for God's clear direction for them as they enter into a new area of life.

A group from our congregation, including several of our college students, had the opportunity to travel to Magdalena, Mexico, last month. We are thankful for their safe return.

Bob Meister (brother of Bro. Richard Meister) and Laura Ridge have started repenting this month. We rejoice with them as they begin their walk with the Lord.

We extend our sympathies to Sis. Sharon Meister (Bro. Richard) on the loss of her father, Bro. Ervin Schwartz.

**INDIANA, WOLCOTT
Elaine Bahler
Lowell Bahler**

“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Luke 15:10

We rejoice with Phillip and Sasha Kyburz (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Nancy) who have made known their desire to seek the Lord in repentance. May God grant them much grace and understanding in this most important step.

We deeply appreciate the ministry of Bro. Neal Widmer (Sis. Kris, West Lafayette, IN) and Bro. Dan Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) this past month. Though they each came to spend time with their family, we all received a blessing from their visit and are thankful they were willing servants of His Word.

It is our prayer that the Great Physician will heal Chris Bahler (Sis. Teresa) who underwent surgery for a broken ankle, and that he will have a good and speedy recovery.

Alex Schieler (Bro. Dave and Sis. Merri) has closed his university textbook and started a new book of life's experiences. He graduated in December with a degree in mechanical engineering and has taken employment in Silver Bay, MN. We pray that God will go with him and grant His divine wisdom and guidance in this new endeavor.

Note of Thanks:

We want to sincerely thank each one who prayed for us or sent cards prior to and following Ashley's birth and death. The love of our brethren is a tremendous blessing and encouragement!

Bro. Brent & Sis. Erica Blume

**IOWA, BLOOMFIELD
Barbara Schock**

My sin- oh, the bliss of this glorious tho't

My sin- not in part, but the whole-
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it
no more

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O
my soul!

Hymns of Zion #55, vs. 3

We are thankful that three of our converts, Andy and Stacy Joos (Bro. Ron and Sis. Christy Joos, Bro. Roger and Sis. DeAnn Wuthrich) and Daniel Rokey (Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Phyllis, Goodfield) have found peace with God and man and have made known their wish to be baptized. We look forward to hearing their testimonies on February 18. Our prayers continue to ascend to the Father for them.

This month we have also been blessed with a couple of visiting ministers. On January 1, Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie, Oakville) was here for the day. On January 15, Bro. Joe Gerst (Sis. Connie, Iowa City) was here also. We thank these brothers for the effort on their part to share the Word with us. May God richly bless them.

The first week in January, a

number of us from Bloomfield were blessed with the opportunity to go down to Mississippi on a work team. Even months after the hurricane, there is still so much to do. We were able to help a little bit. We went down there to give, but we received much more than what we gave. May God be with all the people down there who were touched in some way by the hurricane.

IOWA, ELGIN
Gloria Frieden
Heidi Butikofer

Peace – restored relations of harmony with God.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Romans 5:1

It was recently announced that Rollyn Aberle (Bro. Pete and Sis. Deb, Tremont, IL) has found peace with God and man, and we look forward to hearing his testimony of faith. Rollyn has been coming to church in Elgin while attending NICC at Calmar.

When peace, like a river, attendeth
my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught
me to say,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Bro. Wade Halverson was elected to replace Bro. John Schupbach (Sis. Janet) as trustee. May God bless Bro. John for his labors during his term and bless Bro. Wade as he accepts these duties.

Our thanks to Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City) for coming “home” and sharing God’s Word with us.

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE
Willa Clark

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Matthew 5:48

These words, spoken by our Saviour Jesus and read in a recent service, issue a challenge to each of us to do better. Jesus makes it plain we should not fall back on the common excuse, “I’m only human.” No, we are to do the very best we can, striving to live in His perfect image. We are already well into the new year. How well are we doing in our efforts to make our lives more like our Lord?

We have been blessed with a warmer than usual winter, but no matter what the temperature, our hearts are warmed when we are visited by ministering brothers and their families. Elder Bros. Gary Hertzell (Sabetha, KS) and Doug Schock (Bloomfield, IA) and Bros. Jerry Meeks (Sabetha, KS), Ron Joos (Bloomfield, IA), Gary Endress (Bradford, IL) and Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL) have ministered to us in December and January. We thank them, and thank the Lord for the Word shared with us.

IOWA, IOWA CITY
Diana Butikofer

Bro. Ben, Sis. Wendy, Hope and Spencer Weyrick welcomed

Natalie Rose into their family on December 17. Her grandparents are Fred Sr. and Joyce Weyrick and Bro. Brad and Joyce Eland. Our prayers are with them as they strive to raise their children to know the Lord.

Congratulations to Jeff Landherr (Ron and Audrey) on his graduation from Iowa State University. We wish him the Lord’s blessings on his new job and home in New York.

“O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord”

Psalms 105:1-3

We were glad to hear that Ruth Gerst (Bro. Joe and Sis. Connie) has repented and chosen to trust her life to the Lord. Then this past Sunday we read three parables in Luke 15 about three different treasures that had been temporarily lost and the joy that finding them again brings; Jesus assured us there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. Over the next three days Jacob, Rachel and Jesse Snodgrass (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Becky) also made the decision to repent and go to their Father and trust in His care. Our rejoicing and prayers of support are with all four as they too “seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore” (Psalm 105:4).

IOWA, LESTER
Dawn Knobloch
Dawn Metzger

As we sit and pause, we are reminded of the many reasons to be thankful to God for all He has done and continues to do for us. We are thankful for ministering brethren who are willing to share God's Word with us. Those visiting in our congregation this past month were Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Oakville, IA), Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Bloomfield, IA), Bro. Roy Koehl (Morris, MN), Bro. Kent Mogler (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Bruce Frank (Cissna Park, IL), Bro. Larry Bahr (Fort Scott, KS), Bro. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS) and Bro. James Knapp (Congerville, IL). Elder Bro. Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA) was here to assist our Elder in reading the Memorandum and kindly encouraging us in our walk with the Lord.

We are thankful to hear Bro. Brad Meyer (Sis. Trinda) and Sis. Marge Mogler are feeling better after spending some time in the hospital.

Two little girls were born and we are thankful for their safe arrival. Elizabeth Diane was welcomed by Bro. Matt and Sis. Hana Hartter on January 13 along with Dustin and Marissa. Grandparents are Bro. Jerome and Sis. Gail Hartter and Tedd and Sis. Diane Larson. Nicole Mary was born on January 16 to Bro. Merlin and Sis. Marilyn Meyer. Excited siblings are Jessica, Erica and Javen. Bro. Nick and Sis. Mary Kuenzi (Silverton, OR) and Bro. Ray and Sis. Twyla Meyer are Nicole's grandparents.

We are thankful to hear of those answering the call to repentance. Jonathan Feuchtenberger has heeded this call. We pray God's direction and Spirit will be with him always. Jonathan now assembles with the Taylor, MO, congregation. Bro. Tim and Sis. Beth Feuchtenberger are his parents.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Tim and Lois DeHaan and family at the passing of Lois' mother, Herdis Almond.

Jodi Metzger and Marty Swenson have announced their engagement. We share our congratulations with them and wish God's blessings and direction on their upcoming marriage. Charlie and Linda Metzger are Jodi's parents.

In the past year of 2005 our congregation experienced sixteen births, four baptisms and seven deaths.

Pvt. 2 Austin Knobloch (son of Bro. Denis and Sis. Jackie Knobloch, grandson of Bro. Bud and Sis. Irene Knobloch and Sis. Janet Wysong) graduated from Cavalry Scout basic training, Fort Knox, Kentucky, October 20, 2005. Immediately following basic training, Austin attended Airborne Jump School, Fort Benning, Georgia. He is presently stationed with the 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. His address is Austin Knobloch, PO Box 70141, Fort Bragg, NC 28307. Please feel free to send letters of encouragement and pray for him as well as all those serving in our armed forces.

IOWA, OAKVILLE
Rosalie Wiegand
Sharla Wiegand

On Christmas Day, we appreciated having visiting ministering Bro. Gary Endress (Bradford, IL) in our midst.

Many from our congregation were present for the wedding of Bro. Dan Lanz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Janet) and Sis. Autumn Fehr of West Bend, IA (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Judy) on January 8. We hope that Sis. Autumn soon feels at home here. The editor regrets the error made when the engagement was printed in this column, as Sis. Autumn's parents were incorrectly named as Bro. Dan and Sis. Eunice Fehr.

Owen Jon Schmidgall was born on January 11 to the family of Bro. Brian and Sis. Heidi (Lanz) Schmidgall. Also welcoming him home is big sister, Leah. From this congregation, thankful grandparents are Bro. Keith and Sis. Tonya Lanz, Elder Bro. Jon and Sis. Julie Schmidgall, and great-grandparents, Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Marian Schmidgall and retired Elder Bro. Ed and Sis. Joan Lanz.

The bells of Heaven are ringing as several young people in our congregation have started repenting. May the Lord grant them much grace to build a firm foundation upon the solid rock.

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 5:20

IOWA, WEST BEND
Sue Schneider
Lori Skoglund

Words of Life were shared with our congregation by several visiting ministers this past month. Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Dean Messner (Sis. Wanda, Winthrop, MN), and Bro. Kent Getz (Sis. Betty, Elgin, IA) were with us on New Year's Day. We thank them and their families for their efforts.

Bro. Dan Lanz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Janet) from the Oakville, IA, congregation and Sis. Autumn Fehr (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Judy) were united in holy matrimony on January 8. Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Oakville, IA) and Elder Bro. Dennis Warner (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA) came to share this special day with them and us. We are happy for Bro. Dan and Sis. Autumn and wish them God's richest blessings in their life together.

In contrast, there have been families that have felt the pain of separation that occurs when loved ones are called from this life. Henry Fehr passed away on January 1 leaving behind his brother, Bro. Elmer (Sis. Matilda), a sister, Sis. Hulda Wirtz, and many other friends and relatives.

Dorothy (Richard) Zaugg's brother, Ellis Sauder of King George, VA, and Pearl Gerber's sister, Dorothy Lampe of Burt, IA, have also died recently. We extend our sympathies to those who are sorrowing.

Several of our loved ones have been hospitalized: Lucille Wirtz with a broken hip, Pearl Gerber for medical treatment and Sis.

Deb (Bro. Mark) Bruellman for surgery. Many have suffered from various illnesses that have been passed around. Mankind tends to be more appreciative of good health, and for other blessings that can easily be taken for granted, after being deprived of the same.

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

1 Th. 5:18

If I can right a human wrong,
 If I can help to make one strong,
 If I can cheer with smile or song,
 Lord show me how.

—Kleiser

JAPAN, SHIODA
Ayako Inoue

Greetings in the name of the Lord!

We started the new year on a beautiful Sunday morning on New Year's Day. We pray that this year will be another blessed year to all of us.

We were glad to have Sis. Kay Kellenberger and her relatives from Roanoke and Goodfield churches visiting us on the 8th. Also, Bro. Ben Pearson from Indianapolis arrived on the 21st for a 2 month stay in Japan. We are very thankful God has lead him to this plan to help us spread the Word in Shioda.

JAPAN, TOKYO
Haruyo Onoda

Greetings to all in the name of our Lord. The Japanese Archipelago has been suffering from severe coldness and heavy snowfalls

since the beginning of December, which is very unusual. Especially in the northern part of Japan and the districts facing the Sea of Japan, more than 100 people died because of snow. Nobody could predict it. How small and weak we human beings are in the natural disasters! We (Tokyo church) are very thankful, however, for beautiful and sunny days in our area which locates along the Pacific Ocean. We celebrated the Christmas morning with a regular worship service attended by about 20 people. We had two new families. One from the US. This family had three children. Their father is Chinese and mother is Japanese. They were visiting their grandma who lives near the church. The other was a couple, husband and wife. We hope they will continue to come.

After having a simple lunch, we had a Sunday School Christmas program. The highlight of the program was, of course, children's performance. The lower class students performed a finger puppet Christmas story, while the upper class students performed a flannel graph. Both classes had practiced very hard with the help of S.S. teachers and everybody admitted that the children's English is getting better and better year after year. I'd like to say thank you for all the people who got involved in the program: Mr. Hashimoto (88), Bible reading, Midori Nakazawa, picture cards reading, all the men singing, Kaoru Seya, candy packing. We were very happy to see the room was packed with so many people, but all of us

missed Bro. Andy, Sis. Jana and their children so badly.

Sis. Onoda's husband had a heart surgery on the 26th of December and he is doing very well. He stays home and is undergoing rehabilitation now. Hopefully he will go back to work soon. We were strongly encouraged by the prayer chain of our brothers and sisters both in the US and at home. Thank you very very much.

During the new year holidays, we had some guests from the US. They are Sis. Kay Kellenberger's aunts and cousins. They are Blunier relatives. Everybody enjoyed having them and meeting them. We welcome you all, brothers and sisters, any time and would like to share the bonds and ties through the faith in our Savior Jesus Christ. Pray for us as we pray for you.

May God bless all of you throughout the year 2006.

KANSAS, BERN
Sheri Edelman
Rita Menold

Our congregation rejoiced the weekend of January 7-8, as we welcomed three new Brothers in Christ! Jason Kaeb (Bro. Paul and Sis. Joan), Scott Strahm (Bro. Richard and Sis. Edie) and Austin Esslinger (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Gerty) brought their testimonies before the church and were welcomed as new babes in the fold!

Bro. Ryan and Sis. Tiffany Menold, and big brother Kellen, welcomed little Nate Bradley on January 13! Grandparents are Bro. Brad and Sis. Teresa Kellenberger of Sabetha, and Bro.

Joe and Sis. Kathy Rokey. We wish them God's guidance and direction as they raise their precious bundle from heaven!

Benji Strahm (Bro. Elwin and Sis. Mary) and Kim Sander (Glenn and Mary Sander, Sabetha) were united in marriage on December 31! We wish them much love and happiness as they establish their home together.

Bro. Greg Braker (Sis. Wendy, Lamar) ministered to us on Christmas Day, and Elder Bros. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction) and Mike Leman (Sis. Deb, Denver), as well as Bros. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester) and Larry Bahr (Sis. Julie, Fort Scott) were with us January 8. Bro. Mike mentioned that it would be so much nicer if God could just stand before us and preach, but we sincerely want to thank each of these brothers for lending of themselves!

Our prayers have been with Bro. James Menold (Sis. Louise), as he has spent some time in the hospital this past month.

We held our annual business meeting on January 12. We thank each of our brothers and sisters who have duties in the church!

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT
Ethel Smith

Greetings and a blessed New Year to all. As we enter into a new year, we often make resolutions, but the most important resolution we can make is to walk a closer walk with our Lord and Saviour, and live each day in the light of eternity.

The first day of the new year our dear friend, Thayer Banwart (Bro. Lon and Sis. Debbie), was announced to have peace and desires baptism. The date set for the baptisms of our three converts, Thayer, Adrian Bahr and Ryan Lewis, is set for the weekend of February 4-5. We look forward to this joyous occasion with thankfulness for God's work in their lives.

Our visiting ministers were Elder Bro. Don Braker (Sis. Eileen, Kansas City, MO) who was so kind to spend Christmas day here in Ft. Scott in the absence of our ministering Bro. Larry Bahr. Bro. Jeff Streitmatter (Sis. Lynne, Sarasota, FL) was here for Wednesday evening service on December 28 and Bro. Brandon Emch (Sis. Maria, Kansas City, MO) on January 7. Some interesting thoughts were that God is more interested in us submitting our lives to His will, than us trying to understand everything about God. Also, that as our physical body diminishes, our spiritual covenant with God increases. This is comforting to many as they grow older.

KANSAS, KIOWA
Jenny Stewart

Our congregation had the annual business meeting this month. We appreciate everyone who was elected to the positions. Our prayers are with you as fulfill your duties in these tasks.

We don't have any hospital patients this month, however, several have or have had the flu virus that is going around.

Let us be thankful and count our blessings!

Count your blessings, name them one by one;

Count your blessings, see what God hath done;

Count your blessings, name them one by one;

Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.

Hymns of Zion #116

**KANSAS
LAMONT-GRIDLEY
Eileen Bahr**

While our ministers went to be with their families for Christmas, we enjoyed Bros. Cory Metzger (Wichita, KS) and Jeff Bahr (Kiowa, KS) coming home for Christmas.

We appreciate the efforts that Bros. John Lehman (Bern, KS), Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) and Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) made to bring us the Lord's Word on January 11.

Old age creeps up on us – we are one of the four oldest couples in our small congregation. It is pleasant to sit by the woodstove and relax on a Sunday evening; however, we did drive the 15 miles to the community's old folks home for a half hour of singing. One lady is always there waiting when we start to sing and the others congregate when they are brought in from supper. Little Hannah Luthi brings a smile and memories to them as she jiggly stands in front of the group holding a loose page. Some sing along when it's a song they know. My "reward" was seeing the tears creep down a wrinkled cheek ... there was still

enough time left of the evening to sit by the fire.

**KANSAS, SABETHA
Dawn Strahm
Rebekah Beyer**

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Darrel Stoller and Bro. Ed Strahm (Bern, KS), Bro. Tom Lemman (Denver, CO), and Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City, MO). We thank these brethren for sharing God's Word with our congregation.

Our heartfelt prayers are with Whitney Grimm (Bro. Rod and Sis. Arlene) as she underwent testing and surgery this month. May God's healing hand be upon her.

Seeing our children go through suffering or pain is very difficult as a parent. It reminds us of all that Jesus had to go through on this earth and how that must have grieved God, His Father. We also see that all else in this life pales compared to our faith in Jesus Christ. How thankful we can be that we serve a living and merciful God.

**KANSAS, WICHITA
Emma Miller**

By the time you read this, Christmas 2005 will be history. According to our Wichita tradition, those who were able caroled on Wednesday nights in place of mid-week services. On Sunday, December 11, the congregation was treated to a program prepared by the Sunday School teachers and students. While I was not privileged to be present, I was told by my sister that the children

seemed so happy to participate in the program. What a compliment!

I received a Christmas card from a sister-in-faith, one of my contemporaries, who added this thought to her message. "We lived in a time when Christmas had depth of meaning in the name of Jesus. How fortunate we have been." Yes, we were fortunate.

Tuesday, December 6, several from the Wichita congregation joined with those of the surrounding Kansas churches to work at the MCC in Newton. The men were especially busy packing canned meat for shipping.

Bro. Howard Warner who lives in Hutchinson has been hospitalized to treat his congestion. May the Lord be with him and Sis. Ann. We are thankful that some of their children have homes in that area and they will attend to their needs.

The Wichita job market has been in a slump so we welcome the headlines that report we are making a comeback, especially in the airplane industry. If you are seeking work, investigate the Wichita job market. Our ministers' names and addresses are correct in the ministers' book. Give them a call if you want to discuss job possibilities.

**KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON
Barb Huber**

The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell; It goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell. Oh, love of God, how rich and pure,
how measureless and strong,

It shall forever more endure,
the saints, and angel's song.

Hymns of Zion #289

Truly, we cannot comprehend how great God's love is for all mankind in that He sent His only begotten Son to redeem us from sin.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:10). May our lives daily reflect gratitude and appreciation for God's love, and be a witness so that others may come to know His love and His saving power from sin.

God has blessed our assembly and we are so thankful for the ministering brothers who came to share His Holy Word: Bro. Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction, OH) and their children, Andy and Angie; and Bro. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo, IN). We pray that God will bless them and be their rich Rewarder.

We also want to thank our dear Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Sis. Roberta, Smithville) who traveled many miles on Wednesday evening, January 18, to minister and conduct our annual business meeting. The only newly elected position was Bro. Scott Germann as trustee. We appreciate all those who continue to fulfill their responsibilities, whether small or large, for we are one body in Christ, seeking to do all to honor and glorify Him. We pray a special blessing on Bro. Andy and Sis. Roberta for their continued dedication in shepherding our small flock.

Other brethren and friends

who assembled with us during the past month were from Indianapolis, IN; Rittman and Toledo, OH. It's always a joy to have you fellowship with us.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to the Marshall and McCullough families, in the death of their dear Dad, grandfather, brother, and uncle, Al Marshall. May the Lord comfort their families in the coming days, is our prayer.

We are thankful for the Lord's healing hand as Edna Clements has been able to return to Crestview Haven where she resides. May the Lord continue to restore her to good health.

A hearty welcome is extended to anyone who may be in our area or travelling through to worship with us. You may contact Bro. Doug Germann (859) 224-8710; Bro. Lester Huber (859) 745-2541; or Bro. Jan Neukomm (859) 273-8574.

MEXICO, MAGDALENSA

Sis. Gloria Gonzalez

Greetings of love from Magdalena.

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

Luke 2:11

December was family time, school break time, but most importantly it was time to, "Rejoice, our King was born long, long ago in the little town of Bethlehem." There's joy and hope because of that birth. Thank thee so much, Father, for sending Thy only Son,

Jesus Christ.

"Keeping Christmas is good, but sharing it with others is much better."

CVE enjoyed the fellowship of two work teams in December; one from Elgin, IL, and the other from Purdue. We were thankful for the two ministering brothers, Bro. Chuck Kellenberger (Elgin, IL) and Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Francesville, IN), who accompanied the teams and shared the Word with us. Also we want to thank Sis. Cheryl Herrmann for bringing a medical team.

December 5 we welcomed Sis. Carissa Schlipf (Gridley, IL) and Sis. Katelyn Thames (Washington, IL) as they, following God's direction, came to help and worship with us here at CVE.

As we start a new year, let's reflect back and ask ourselves what we did or did not do right. Then with our Lord's help and the help of the Holy Spirit, let's kneel and ask Him to be guiding us in His will this coming year.

MICHIGAN, ALTO

Terri Huber

Rose Watson

Our congregation is rejoicing with the angels this month as Aaron (A.J.) Oesch (Jeff Oesch and Karen Keho) gave his life to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are praying for him as his new journey begins.

Bro. Justin and Sis. Sarah Ooms welcomed their first baby into the world on January 20, Hudson Joseph. Bro. Wally and Donna Gerst are the thankful first-time grandparents.

Also, Steve and Robin Woodridge of Southfield welcomed twin daughters into their home this month. Andrew, their 2 year-old brother, is excited to have them here. Local proud grandparents are Stan and Elaine Wingeier. Congratulations to both families, and enjoy every precious moment with them.

Our prayers of celebration go out to Bro. Aaron Plattner (Bro. Howard and Sis. Kristen) from here and Sis. Rebecca Kaufmann (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Bonnie) from Bloomington, IL, as they exchanged their wedding vows in Bloomington, IL. We pray the Lord will guide them as they begin their new journey together.

We had our annual business meeting this month and would like to take a moment to thank everyone who is leaving roles this year. We are so thankful to everyone for the time and duties they do. We are welcoming Bro. Nathan Steffen for the next three years for Sunday School Superintendent. World Relief committee is Bro. Robert Hermann. Also, Bro. Robert is our new usher. Bro. Duane Schrenk as Trustee, Bro. Martin Blough as cemetery caretaker, Sis. Laurie Steffen and Sis. Julie Saunders, kitchen committee.

Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to Bro. Carl Steffen and his family as he has been hospitalized for a couple of weeks from a motor vehicle accident. Our thankfulness too, as he has recently been moved to a rehabilitation center. Also, Dennis Koehl is recovering well from an outpa-

tient surgery this month. Thanks be to our wonderful Creator.

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY
Sarah Knochel
Janelle Ramseyer

I rev'rence love's great pow'r un-
ending,
Which in Christ Jesus is revealed;
To Grace, itself so freely spending
To love a worm like me, I yield.
I'll sink all thought of self effacing
Into love's ocean, all embracing.
Zion's Harp #74

We appreciate the service of Bro. Dave Steffen (Sis. Linda, Elgin, IL) as they were with our congregation on New Year's Day. May God richly bless them and their family for coming and ministering unto us.

Our congregation rejoices with Stacy and Sis. Marcy Cowan as their adoption of Brandon Chase has been finalized. We welcome little Brandon into our congregation and pray that he will grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Bro. Gene and Sis. Carol Meylan are thankful grandparents of Brandon.

Two other couples have also delighted in the birth of grandsons. Bro. Brian and Sis. Char Wieland welcomed Austin Dewey into their hearts. Parents are Jason and Angelique and excited sisters are Savanah and Cheyenne. Bro. Rod and Sis. Evelyn Wieland welcomed their second grandson, Collin (Bro. Jesse and Sis. Bonnie Bedolla, Detroit, MI). Collin has an older brother, Graham. What a wonderful opportunity these couples have to be a light and example

to their grandchildren and teach them of the ways of the Lord.

An April 30 wedding is being planned for Bro. Chad Wieland (Bro. Merle and Sis. Elaine) and Sis. Rebekah Ruegsegger (Bro. Glenn, Jr. and Sis. Maria). We wish them the Lord's blessings as they plan their upcoming marriage.

Even though we can rejoice with those that rejoice; our hearts go to those who have suffered from the infirmities of the flesh in the past month. Sis. Peggy Jackson (Bro. John), Sis. Leah Ramseyer, and Sis. Florence Wieland have each spent time in the hospital and we entreat the Lord's healing touch on each of them as they recover.

Wednesday evening, January 11, we had our annual business meeting. Bro. Tom Wackerle (Sis. Kim) was selected for a three-year trustee term. Sis. Joan Long (Rick) was selected to a four-year term on the Kitchen Committee. Bro. Joe Ramseyer was elected as treasurer for a three-year term. Bro. Rod Wieland has been re-elected for church secretary. We would like to thank Bro. Gene Meylan (Trustee), Sis. Gail Szabo (Kitchen Committee) and Bro. Derrell Steffen (Treasurer) for their completed years of service to our congregation.

To the Bay City Congregation:

February is our collection month for the Silver Lining dues. Please put your donation in the General Fund. Thank you.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT**Tiffany Wieland****Mary Weigle**

Our Hymns of Zion songbook is a wonderful source of spiritual messages. In hymn number 37 we read that "Love of all gifts is the greatest which the Spirit doth bestow". We rejoice with Bro. Aaron Plattner and Sis. Bekah Kaufmann as they were joined in marriage on January 15. Aaron's parents are Bro. Howard and Sis. Kristen Plattner of the Alto, MI, congregation and Bekah's parents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Bonnie Kaufmann from Bloomington, IL. We welcome Sis. Bekah to our Detroit fellowship and hope that she will feel the warmth and love of our congregation.

Our thoughts and prayers have been with Sis. Sanche Denes and Sis. Lorene Maibach as they have been experiencing some physical problems which have necessitated in hospitalization. We know that God is faithful and will supply their needs. We have also been especially prayerful for Mario Kobal and his family in the death of his wife, Maria. She is also survived by her sisters, Pauline, Anna, and Sis. Suzanne Sabados, and her brother, Joseph. In John 16:20 Jesus tells us that "ye shall weep and lament, ...but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

The Woodhaven Community extends hearty thanks to ministering Bro. Bill and Sis. Carol Waibel as well as Sis. Vicky Ramseyer for providing the Word and song to our residents at a recent Church service. They are from our Bay City, MI, congrega-

tion and we appreciate so much their willingness to travel over the miles to provide a message of hope to this special group. Also, we enjoyed the visit of ministering Bro. Don Gudeman (Sis. Mary, La-Crosse, IN). We have welcomed their visits over the years and always look forward to having them worship with us.

We extend our congratulations to Bro. Jesse, Sis. Bonnie, and little Graham Bedolla as they have welcomed new baby Colin into their home. It is such a wonderful occasion when we are blessed with new babies in our church family, realizing that they represent the future of God's work here on Earth.

**MINNESOTA
MINNEAPOLIS
LaRae Dill**

"Order my steps in thy word..."

Psalm 119:133

This verse seems an appropriate petition to the Father for 2006.

While the winter months here bring their share of cold, cloudy days, our hearts are warmed by the love and fellowship of the Christmas season just past. It was enjoyable to see a number of local college students and family guests home for the holidays. Also, special times were shared with a number of our older sisters during Christmas caroling. Thanks to Sis. Katie Blunier for hosting the carolers at her home.

We miss Sis. Ethel Bednarski as she spends these cold months

with her family in southern California. Also, Sis. Vera Schmidt continues to heal at home.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Heidi Nohl**Katie Koehl**

Bro. Paul Messner (Winthrop, MN) ministered God's Word to us this month. May God bless him for his labors.

We rejoice that two souls have sought the Lord in repentance: Howard Goll (Edna) and Corey Schaefer (Bro. Stan and Sis. Bev). Our prayers are with them as they take this most important step in their lives.

On December 30, Jeslyn Lane was born to Rod and Shari Olson. Excited grandparents are Bro. Jerel and Sis. Linda Schmidgall and Jerry and Bernita Olson. And, Archie Alan joined the home of Bro. Doug, Sis. Amber, Crystal and Lewis Nohl on December 30. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Bonnie Nohl and Bro. Todd and Sis. Beth Stuber (Tremont, IL). We trust God will bless these families as they raise their little ones.

Hospitalized this month were Bro. Jason Moser, Bro. Wallis Feuchtenberger (Sis. Diane) and Bro. Paul Fehr. We trust God will provide for each of them.

We welcome Bro. Matt and Sis. Jerilyn Waldbeser, along with their two sons, Braden and Derek. We hope they will feel at home here in Morris.

Notes of Thanks:

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends,

My husband and I would like to thank everyone for your prayers, words of encouragement, gifts and deeds of kindness during my treatments. We have truly felt the healing hand of God. The Lord richly bless you for your thoughtfulness.

In Christian love,
Bro. Greg and Sis. Sheila Reuter

A big thank you to everyone sending cards to Leo for his 90th birthday. It meant so much to him.

Bro. Leo and Sis. Thelma Dogotch

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP
Ginny Stoll
Rachel Steiner

The Sunday School program was given to our congregation. How wonderful to listen to our children praise Jesus without fear from our government. Just as the children often sing "this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!", we pray we will all be a light to others - in words, deeds and actions.

Russell and Amanda Miller are the parents of a precious new baby girl, Ava Elaine, born on January 7. Big sister, Lydia, welcomes her home. Grandparents are Sam and Sandy Miller and Rick Kisor and Teresa Heath.

Those under the care of a physician or in the hospital this month were Lowell Demm (Shirley), Bro. Elmer Schmidt (Sis. Hazel), and Malakai Ebling (Bro. Adrian and Sis. Beckie). We pray for God's healing touch in their lives.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY
Garry and Marty Rokey

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

II Cor. 9:15

We are thankful that God has recently provided visiting ministers for us. They were Bros. Glen Funk (Wichita, KS), Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS), Galen Rokey (Bern, KS), John Rowell (Burlington, IA) and Edwin Strahm (Bern, KS). Many thanks, dear brothers, for your labors.

We welcome a new set of twins, Olivia and Liam, daughter and son of Patrick and Joanne Funk. Paternal grandparents are Bro. Glen and Sis. Sally Funk (Wichita, KS) and maternal grandparents are Malcolm and Lorraine Hogg, and Glenn Murray (North Island, New Zealand). May God bless this young family.

We have good reason to pray for several in our congregation who have physical afflictions. They are Bro. Jesse Delph, Sis. Diane Smith and Mark Mattix. If God is willing, may the Great Physician abate their diseases.

"I said unto the Lord, thou art my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O Lord."

Psalms 140:6

MISSOURI, LAMAR
Becky Marti
Mindy Braker

This month we had several visiting ministering brothers: Jim Koehl (San Diego, CA), Paul

Zimmerman (Forrest, IL), Dale Frank (Oakville, IA) and Jeff Bahr (Kiowa, KS). May the Lord provide for each one.

Bro. David and Sis. Carol Dotterer welcome their baby girl, Brianna Sue. Grandparents of Brianna are Bro. Bill and Sis. Sharon Dotterer and Bro. Roy and Sis. Judy Braker. We wish Bro. David and Sis. Carol grace to bring her up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord.

Sis. Sandra Luthi (Bro. Lawrence), Bro. Leon Luthi (Sis. Teresa) and Sis. Carol Dotterer (Bro. David) spent time in the hospital this past month. We are thankful each one has been able to reassemble with us.

Reminder: March is Silver Lining collection month for the Lamar congregation.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR
Sally Haerr

New beginnings! Another year of unknowns is now before us and aren't we thankful that Jesus goes before us into each day, guiding our every step. And when we fall and make mistakes, He is right there to pick us up, forgive us and encourage us to go on. I like to think each morning... "This is a new day with no mistakes in it."

New beginnings finds us planning ahead and also looking back to see how we can improve and "strengthen those things which remain." Once again, God blessed our annual business meeting with peace and harmony as each report was submitted.

Our Elder Bro. Kent shared his India (trip) pictures/project find-

ings with us on a Wednesday evening. How our hearts go out to those souls who struggle just to survive and we have so much. As we witness others struggles, may we go beyond our tears and give of our abundance. We may never know the difference it makes, but God knows and I believe He thinks of it as "our reasonable service".

Bro. Ron and Sis. Christy Joos (Bloomfield, IA) and part of their family came to spend a Sunday here in Taylor. We thank Bro. Ron for always being willing to bring God's Word to us.

The sick and/or hospitalized this month were Bro. Jim Sutter (Sis. Chris), Jody Meyers (Danny) and Bro. Don Grimm (Sis. Tricia). May God move our hearts to pray for each other "in sickness or in health".

**NEW YORK
CROGHAN-NAUMBURG
Hope Graves**

We ushered in the New Year with a potluck and singing in the church basement which was enjoyed by all. "Another year is dawning, Dear Master let it be, in working or in waiting, another year with Thee." (Hymns of Zion #150, vs. 1).

Our prayers went with Elder Bro. Duane Farney as he traveled to Haiti with a work team in January. We were thankful that they were able to complete two new school roofs and all arrived safely back home. Here with us to help minister the Word in Bro. Duane's absence was ministering Bro. Dan Goric (Rockville, CT).

Our prayers extend to Bro. Walter Rumpf's family in his death on January 7. The funeral was held in Rockville, CT, with a burial in the Saratoga National Cemetery, NY. We will miss Bro. Walter who faithfully drove hours each way to attend church for years while his health allowed.

We are thankful that John Dawson V has been able to recover from unexpected surgery.

The prayers of the church pour out for Gerald Lehman who has begun the road of repentance. It is so special to us when we see those that return to their roots after a lifetime away from the church. May Gerald feel God's ever present help and strength at his side as he makes this change in his life.

Do not put off till tomorrow
Your repentance, come today.
For to wait will bring you sorrow,
Only grief comes from delay.
At the feet of Jesus bowing,
Make confession of your sins.
While your tears of grief are flowing,
Let the loving Saviour in.
Zion's Harp #52, vs. 3

**OHIO, AKRON
Mara Henico
Rachel Steidl**

After a few beautiful, spring-like days, we are reminded of the goodness of God in making the times and seasons so uniquely beautiful. Each day is a gift from God, and we are thankful that He continues to provide for our congregation.

On behalf of our church, we want to take this opportunity to thank Sis. Joyce Gasser (Bro.

Paul) for her many years of service as our Silver Lining Correspondent. Sis. Joyce has served in this capacity since she moved to Akron. As this term expires, and she retires from this office, we pray that God richly bless her for her many efforts!

A work team recently returned from Haiti, and we welcomed back Bros. Ron Palitto, Greg Henico Sr., Dan Reljin, Andy Steidl, Mark Steidl and his wife Sis. Megan, and Sisters Christina Steidl and Mara Henico. May God bless their efforts to help others.

Our prayers are with Bro. Eugene Bako (Sis. Dianna) as he was hospitalized this month due to a stroke. May God be with him and his family in this time.

We are thankful that Bro. Richard Baumgartener (Sis. Evelyn), and Bro. Dan Reljin (Sis. Amy) have been able to assemble with us again after their hospitalization. We have confidence that God will continue to provide for them and their dear families as they regain strength.

Note of Thanks:

We wish to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who remembered us with prayers, calls, food, and cards at the passing of our mother, Helen Demiter. We have been deeply touched by your love and kindness.

Humbly,

*Bro. Greg and Sis. Sarah
Henico and family*

**OHIO, COLUMBUS
Nancy Banks**

We are thankful for the efforts

of our Elder Bros. Mark Masters (Mansfield, OH) and Don Braker (Kansas City, MO) as they read and expounded upon the Conference Memorandum. May we heed the warnings that were brought forth. Elder Bro. Mark (Sis. Jeannine) and Elder Bro. Don (Sis. Eileen) were with us the following day to bring us the Word of Life. Bro. Tim Gerber (Sis. Wendy, Mansfield, OH) was also with us for a mid-week service.

The annual business meeting was held January 15 and positions of responsibility were filled. We welcome Bro. Matt Miller as our Sunday School superintendent, Bro. Casey Banks as trustee and Sis. Lynn Hartzler who will serve on the kitchen committee. Sis. Nancy Banks will continue as the Silver Lining reporter. We wish to thank those who have so willingly served in those positions in the past.

Our World Relief night was well attended as soup packets were made and school bags were assembled.

A sign on the front of a church said it so well ... "Prayer is the oil for the daily grind." (author unknown)

OHIO, JUNCTION

Cindy Schlatter

Two families from our congregation were blessed with precious babies this past month. Ethan Scott was welcomed into the family of Bro. Scott and Sis. Sara Manz on December 25. Ethan's big sister is Haley and his grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam Brake (Sardis, OH) and Bro.

Don and Sis. Connie Manz. Carla Dawn is the new sister of Heather, Caleb and Brian Manz. She was born on January 19 to Bro. Tony and Sis. Denise Manz. Carla's grandparents are Elder Bro. Ervin and Sis. Sandy Knecht (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz. May our Heavenly Father grant grace and wisdom to these couples as they raise their dear children.

We are thankful there are willing servants to care for needs within the church. As one year ends and another begins, terms expire and the vacancies are filled once again. Our prayers and support are with the following as they take on new responsibility: Bro. Roger Gasser (Sis. Sue) - Song Leader in Charge, Bro. Sam Manz (Sis. Shelby) - Gateway Woods Rep., and Bro. Neil Stoller (Sis. Sandy) - Trustee.

OHIO, LATTY

Amanda Steffen

Carmen Eisenmann

How refreshing a new year is! It can be a time of renewal for one's soul. May each of us thank God daily for our lives.

We were blessed to have five visiting ministers and all in one day, too. Visiting us on the pulpit were Bros. Justin Koch (Sis. Marcia, Washington, IL), Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo, IN), Greg Stieglitz (Sis. Lisa, Indianapolis, IN), Ron Kipfer (Sis. Linda, Bluffton, IN) and Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI).

Several people have been in the hospital or have had surgery. Bro.

Charles Dunham, Sis. Bonny (Bro. Doug) Wenninger and Landyn Whitman (Jeremy and Mandy) were patients this past month. Sis. Florence Stoller has moved to a nursing home for a time. May God be with them all as they look to Him for healing and strength.

Bro. Dave and Sis. Debbie Wenninger are mourning the loss of her father, Louis Daeger, of Ottoville, OH. May God comfort them in this time of loss.

It is always exciting to hear of another soul turning her life over to Christ as Abby Greutman has done. Rejoicing with her are her parents, Bro. Greg and Sis. Kristy Greutman.

Ryan and Kayla Bagley are a very happy couple. They were married on January 14. Her parents are Bro. Ray and Sis. Carol Stoller and his parents are David and Susan Bagley of Antwerp, OH.

For the year 2005, our congregation experienced 11 births, 2 deaths, 6 weddings, and 12 baptisms. There were 9 converts at the end of the year. The tally of our business meeting is the following: Bro. Steve Sinn and Sisters Jennifer Shepherd and Carla Laukhuf for Sunday School; Bro. Tom Sinn for church trustee, Bro. Doug Wenninger for Fellowship Hall trustee; Sis. Jodi (Bro. Dale) Stoller for kitchen committee; Bro. Rick Plummer for Fellowship Hall scheduling and Bro. Don Wenninger for trustee of the Villas.

Addendum: These are the final comments on our building pro-

ject. Dedication was on November 6 and was widely attended. We are enjoying having the construction done and being able to meet regularly every Sunday without major mishaps. There is ample room for visitors, so please come and see us soon!

OHIO, MANSFIELD
Esther Baumann

We rejoiced to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of Sis. Christine Ramsey and Bro. John Ramsey Jr. (children of Bro. John Sr. and Sis. Dawn) on January 7-8. We pray they will continue to grow in the Lord. Elder Bro. Ervin Knecht (Sis. Sandra, Eureka, IL) came to help assist with the weekend and we thank him for his labor of love.

Sis. Beth Hill (Bro. Chip and Sis. Sieda) has accepted a teaching position in the Athens, AL, Preschool. We will miss her and pray the Lord will watch over her while she is absent from our midst.

OHIO, RITTMAN
Hannah Beery
Sarah Bauman

Should praise of man be more to me
Than God's most blessed favor?
And though man might reject His Word,
The Truth remains forever;
Unchanging, sure, it does impart
A comfort to the poor in heart.
Zion's Harp #113, vs. 2

This month we were blessed to have several visiting ministers. Bros. Joe Dotterer (Bloomfield,

IA), Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), Steve Pamer, Ron Palitto (both of Akron, OH), Kenneth Dietz (Bradford, IL), Warren Schlatter (Junction, OH), Dwight Stoller, Gary Sinn (both of Latty, OH), Alan Schambach (Remington, IN) and Gary Anliker, Tom Schambach and Dan Moser (all of Elgin, IL) were among us. May the Lord bless these brothers as they continue to preach the Word of God.

On Christmas Eve, Brad Hartzler (Richard and Sis. Karen) and Melissa Keel were united in marriage. May the Lord bless them as they begin their lives together.

January 8 was the wedding day for Bro. Brently Schambach (Elgin, IL; Bro. Don and Sis. Leann) and Sis. Mollie Beery (Bro. Earland Sis. Susie). May the Lord continue to be with them as they establish their home in the Elgin area.

Now God invites; how blest the day!
How sweet the gospel's charming sound!
Come, sinners, haste, O haste away,
While yet a pard'ning God is found.
Hymns of Zion #82, vs. 5

Jared Calame (Jim Calame) has answered this call to repentance. May God continue to grant the needed grace each day anew. Jared was living in Sarasota for a time; we welcome him back into our area.

We have had several new babies, for which we are thankful.

Gavin Thomas was born to Scott and Mandy Maibach, joining his big sister, Paige. Gavin's grandparents are Roger and Cindy Maibach.

Rita Catherine was born to Mike and Myra Pierce on December 26. May God be with them as they welcome Rita into their home. Grandparents are Bro. Richard and Sis. Pat Steiner, Dave and Peg Pierce and the late Rita Pierce.

Todd and Lori Pelfrey were blessed with the birth of a son, Logan Reese. Welcoming another grandson are Bro. Ronald and Sis. Joann Christian.

Taylor Ann was born to Josh and Kristin Olszewski on January 7. Taylor's grandparents are Bud and Ann Olszewski and Bro. Dan and Sis. Diane Gasser.

"...for I am the Lord that healeth thee."

Exodus 15:26

Many of our loved ones have had hospital stays this month. They include: Sis. Mary Ellen Saylor (Bro. Bill), Sis. Lillian Maibach (Bro. Andy), Bro. Jack Maibach (Sis. Delores), Sis. Marge Stoller (Bro. Everett), Owen Rigggenbach (Bro. Ryan and Sis. Laura), Sis. Marjorie Boltz (Bro. Bob) and Gladys Ramsier. May God be with these dear ones as some of them are still recovering.

Note of Thanks:

Sis. Marjorie Boltz would like to thank all those who remembered her with thoughts, cards,

prayers or meals. May God bless each one.

OHIO, SARDIS

Eric and Jami Hartzler

Praise and thanks to our God and Father in heaven for the blessings that He bestows upon us. We are especially thankful for His healing hand on several in our congregation. Sisters Martha Indermuhle and Paula Figel (Bro. John) were both hospitalized, but are both home again.

Other blessings this month include three visiting ministers.

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!”

Isaiah 52:7

Bro. Doug Harmon (Sis. Lanna, Toledo) was able to be with us for a Wednesday evening service, while Bros. Paul Gasser (Sis. Joyce, Akron) and Matthew Rassi (Sis. Bridget, Chicago, IL) assembled with us on New Year's Day. We appreciate the effort that they made to be with us and for their willingness to be used as ministers of the Word to us. May God bless their efforts.

We were also blessed with a wedding this past month as Bro. Matt Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam) and Sis. Dawn Maibach (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Lois, Smithville) were united as one in the Lord on January 15. The Sardis congregation is encouraged by the addition

of another young couple. The Brake family also celebrated another wedding anniversary as John and Sis. Almeda Brake passed the 60-year mark.

As the apostle Paul instructed the Corinthian church and all of us that all things be done “decently and in order”, our annual church business meeting was held on January 11. We are thankful for the service of those that have fulfilled their offices. Bro. Milan Indermuhle (Sis. Cheryl) finished his term as trustee, Bro. Bob Dotterer (Sis. Laura) has completed his tenure as secretary, Bro. Eric Indermuhle (Sis. Lisa) is the outgoing usher, and Sis. Laura Dotterer (Bro. Bob) has fulfilled her responsibilities on the kitchen committee. As these offices are now filled by others, we pray the Lord will bless the efforts and provide the grace that is needed to carry out the responsibilities. Bro. Garth Maibach (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Lois, Smithville) is the new usher, Bro. Alan Blough (Sis. Renee') is now a trustee, Bro. Matt Brake (Sis. Dawn) will assume the secretary position, and the kitchen committee will be filled by Sis. Cheryl Indermuhle (Bro. Milan). May God bless all who labor willingly in His service.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE

Ruth Gasser Edith Miller

We have been favored with a number of visiting ministers this past month. Our thanks go to these brothers for their labors on our behalf. Those who served our

congregation were Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle, Bros. Bill Brake, Mark Ramsier (all from Sardis, OH), Lucas Frank (Detroit, MI), Joe Dotterer (Bloomfield, IA), Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL), Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), Matthew Rassi (Chicago, IL), Ron Palitto (Akron, OH) and Jerry Bauman (Rittman, OH). May God be their rich rewarder.

Three weddings took place in our area recently. On December 31, Keith Hartzler was married to Sally McHenry. Keith's parents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Jane. On January 1, Sis. Jessica Dotterer became the bride of Bro. Corban Rigggenbach. Parents of this couple are Bro. Dave and Sis. Luanna Dotterer and Bro. Ed and Sis. Anita Rigggenbach (Rittman, OH). On January 15, Bro. Matthew Brake (Sardis, OH) and Sis. Dawn Maibach were joined in holy matrimony. Parents of this couple are Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam Brake (Sardis, OH) and Bro. Bruce and Sis. Lois Maibach. Our wish for each of these couples is that the Lord would be the centerpiece of their home and that His love could be felt therein.

Blessings have been experienced as new little ones are born. Rejoicing over their newest grandchild are Dale and Sis. Elaine Dotterer. Anna Jo arrived safely to Bro. Andy and Sis. Val Dotterer (Forrest, IL) on November 28. She is also welcomed by big brother, Jesse. On December 23, Mike and Jennifer Snowbarger became parents to Luke Benjamin. Luke's grandparents are Linda Maibach and the late

Bro. Ben Maibach. On December 26, Gage Adam was born to Adam and Sis. Marcia Martin. Tristin, Bethany, and Bailey, as well as grandparents, Bro. Mark and Sis. Sue Steiner, are happy for his safe arrival. On January 13, Shawn and Jennifer Frazier became first-time parents as Bethany Ann entered this world. Bro. Steve and Sis. Jollene Hofacre are the thankful grandparents.

We trust in the Great Physician for comfort and healing to those who have experienced surgery this past month. Our prayers are with Shania Nieman (Doug and Melaney), Bro. Art Riggensbach (Lynn), and Sis. Elaine Dotterer (Dale) as they are recovering. We wish them the blessing of good health again.

We extend sympathy to Cory Shook, whose grandmother passed away recently.

OHIO, TOLEDO
Teresa Rywalski
Rebecca Beard

“Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”

Psalm 25:5

Teaching us over the past few months have been: Bro. Gary Maibach (Sis. Mary Ann, Smithville, OH) and Bro. Art Ingold (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman, OH). May God bless these dear brothers for their willingness to serve us.

Our prayers are with Sharon Harris as she has recently under-

gone surgery. We look forward to the time when she will be able to worship with us again.

OREGON, PORTLAND
Brianna Strahm

Greetings from the Northwest to each one. We enjoyed hearing the Christmas story brought forth once again by our Sunday school children on December 18. We had planned to have a potluck following the program, but an ice storm hit sooner than predicted and the meal was canceled.

We continue to keep Bro. Nathan and Sis. Sarah Kuenzi and their family in our thoughts and prayers. Harrison, their youngest child, continues to undergo medical testing to determine the cause of an unknown illness. May the Lord grant them much grace and patience during this difficult time.

We were blessed to have Elder Bros. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marian, San Diego, CA) and Art Metz (Sis. Betty, Silverton, OR) with us this past month. Also, we enjoyed visiting ministering Bro. Brandon Emch (Sis. Maria, Kansas City, MO) bring the Word to us. We thank these brothers for their willing service in the household of faith.

OREGON, SILVERTON
Melissa Kuenzi
Cindy Metzger

Another year has gone by...and a new year to look forward knowing that “God leads His dear children along”. Elder Bro. Art Metz gave the statistics from last year at the New Year’s

Day service. In 2005, there were 15 babies born, 10 baptisms, 4 marriages, and 1 funeral service.

Sis. Tonya Schneider (Bro. James) was in the hospital this month and continues to be in our prayers.

A funeral service for Ernie Hari was held January 14. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Evelyn, and family, including his sister-in-law, Alice Gehring, as well as to his nieces, Sis. Janet Kuenzi (Bro. Lee), Sis. Verla Hari, and Sis. Ann Kuenzi (Bro. Terry).

We are thankful to those who were visiting and ministered to us this month: Bro. Tim Zimmerman (Sis. Barb, Lamont-Gridley, KS), Bro. Brandon Emch (Sis. Maria, Kansas City, MO), and Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marian, San Diego, CA), as well as Bros. Wayne Fehr (Sis. Kathy) and Ron Jones (Sis. Liz) of Portland, OR.

PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA
Nathan &

MaryElizabeth Gasser

This month we held our annual business meeting, and had an opportunity to reflect on the many contributions made by everyone in our congregation. In churches small and large, every individual plays a part in the spiritual growth and unity of the body of believers. We thank God for the dedication of all those who’ve assembled with us in the past year, and seek His grace in the coming year, that more can be brought into the fold, and every soul can

experience the peace, love, and spiritual growth He desires of us.

TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE
Mike and Monica Fritz

We have been privileged to begin the new year with many blessings. The Lord has richly provided for us from His Word through our visiting ministering brothers: Bros. Dave Hartter (Sis. Beth; Sabetha, KS) and John Lehman (Sis. Ruth Ann; Wolcott, IN). We have also been blessed through the fellowship of brethren and friends visiting from Cissna Park, Fairbury, Forrest, Goodfield, and Princeville, IL; Sabetha, KS; and Morris, MN.

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: Milford, IN (2/19); Smithville, OH (2/26); Cissna Park, IL (3/5); Kansas City, MO (3/12); Forrest, IL (3/19); Indianapolis, IN (3/26). If you are planning to worship with us, please call ahead to confirm our schedule. We also usually meet on Wednesday evenings for a song service and would welcome any midweek visitors. Contacts are Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz (615) 952-9933; and Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 356-5755.

TEXAS, McALLEN
Sandy Kipfer

A hardy Christian greeting to all. The Lord was definitely with us as we were able to obtain our new meeting hall in McAllen, TX.

On January 15 we were thank-

ful in having Bro. Beirne and Sis. Joyce Messner (Morris, MN) minister to us. Services will be held on January 29; February services are on the 12th and 26th; and in March on the 12th and 26th.

If you are going to be in the McAllen area, we extend a warm invitation to worship with us. Our address is: Holiday Inn Express, 1921 South 10th Street. Turn South 1 ½ blocks off the Expressway (Highway) on 10th Street. Services will be held at 10:30 and 12:30. Please contact Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Joyce Nohl (956) 581-8266; Sis. Kim Kaiser (956) 357-2591; Sis. Erin Knobloch (956) 357-1657; Andy and Kristi Plattner (956) 433-9844 or (956) 607-8329; Pam McMaster (956) 787-7881; Bro. Aaron and Sis. Sandy Kipfer (winter only) (956) 581-5612.

TEXAS, SAN MARCOS
Amy Ringger
Serenity Ringger

Volunteer workers from a variety of our churches have been here about a week now to work on the new church facility. They have the new roof almost finished, the painting started, and the tile in the main areas in progress. It's an exciting time for our congregation; for, as one of our boys commented, "This is history in the making!"

One of the best parts of this project has been the opportunity to fellowship as we work together. One Wednesday evening, we stopped work and had church services in the kitchen. (The assembly room is not entirely finished.)

It is a delight to anticipate having regular Sunday worship services there, which may happen soon. Please call to confirm the location of our church services if you plan to visit this month. Directions to the property are these: from the intersection of Hwy 71 and 21, go east one mile to the second exit onto the frontage road. Immediately turn right and proceed back west on the frontage road, and the church is the first place on the left. The address is 1025 Highway 71, Bastrop, TX 78602. It is a one-story building with limestone siding.

Rachel Lehman has recently moved to Austin for work and plans to worship with us. Her parents are Chuck and Pat Lehman from Remington. It was a pleasant surprise to see her sunny smile one Sunday morning and to meet her.

The following ministers and their wives served us: Bros. Darrell Stoller (Sis. Gloria, Bern), Steve Sauder (Sis. Mary, Tremont), Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Fairbury), Max Reimschisel (Wichita), and Tom Schrenk (Zapata). We are also thankful for the visitors from Bluffton, Bay City, Lexington, Congerville, Roanoke, Rockville, Peoria, Ft. Scott, Taylor, Rittman, Smithville, Lester, Sabetha, Bern, and Latty.

Upcoming churches serving us are these: Bradford (2/5), Mansfield (2/12), LaCrosse (2/19), Bloomington (2/26), Congerville (3/5), and West Bend (3/12).

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.

VERMONT, NORWICH
Areli Reutter

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17

Greetings to our beloved
Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

We thank God for the gift of sal-

vation. We thank Bro. Warren Zahner (Sis. Bonnie, Rockville, CT) for preaching God's Word to the Norwich flock.

We also want to express a special thanks to the dear couples from Rockville who have graciously assumed maintenance and structural responsibilities for our meeting place. May God bless one and all for these efforts, both small and great.

Until springtime, our present schedule is to hold services on the second Sunday of each month. If you would like to worship with us, please call Bro. Kirby Reutter at (802) 776-5293. Everyone is welcome!

Services start at 10:15 in the morning and at 12:15 in the after-

noon. Sunday school for all ages is held in the morning.

To arrive at our meeting place, please take exit 13 from Interstate 91 and proceed to 344 Main Street. 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.

Sometimes, especially in the winter, we locals find that only "two or three" of the Vermonters have gathered. Even so, we cherish the Lord's promise:

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

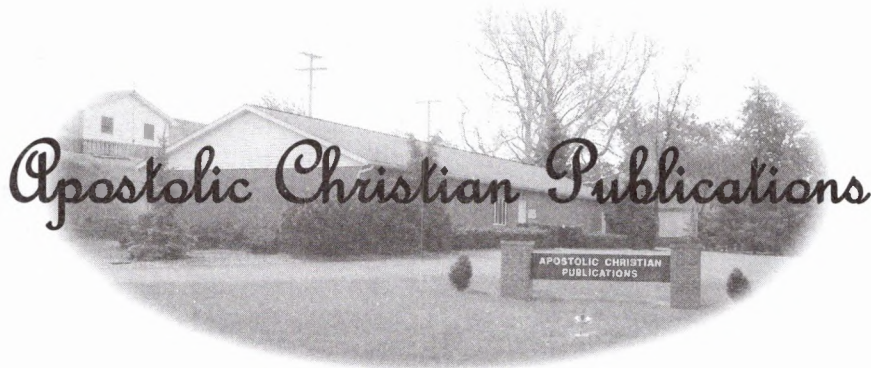
Matthew 18:20



**Plan to attend the
2006 Athens/Tennessee Memorial Day Weekend**

Mark your calendar to attend this year's annual Athens/Tennessee Memorial Day Weekend scheduled for Saturday, May 27 and Sunday, May 28. This year's weekend theme will be "Footsteps to Jesus" with included speaking topics of "Attitude and Ways to Study the Bible", "Lukewarmness (both in personal life and church support)" and "Lack of Prayer and Watching can lead to Backsliding."

On Saturday afternoon, we again plan to hold an auction at the Tennessee Fellowship Area. Everyone is encouraged to bring at least one item to donate. Church services on Sunday will be held at the Athens, Alabama Apostolic Christian Church.



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Sermon continued from page 2

Can't you just get along, we say? Then I think about God up in heaven looking down on the children of men. Can't you all just get along?

Sure, accidents are going to happen. Sure, offenses are going to come. Let's just each one try not to cause that offense. That is what the Bible says. But then it speaks about, and even referenced in the prayer, about forgiving. About forgiving one another. We are to forgive with such liberality as we wish to be forgiven. That takes grace, dear ones, because it is not natural. It is not the way of man.

Just like for David when he was there. Here was his enemy. He was ready. Saul even said, he said, would you let your enemy go if he was in your hands (I Samuel 24:19)? David let his enemy go. Jesus, when He preached the Sermon on the Mount, He said that we are not just to love our friends and our neighbors and our family. But we were to love our enemy. How then can any of us take up arms and go fight in a battle against the enemy? But much rather that we are to give and give and give more than they ask when they ask us for something.

But particularly, as we discuss now, amongst the brotherhood. If we would have a disagreement, perhaps we would see things a little differently. This happens, doesn't it? We would think to ourselves, now why would it happen if each one of us are following after the Holy Spirit? And in this chapter it speaks about that, that the Holy Spirit dwells within our hearts (I Corinthians 6:19) and so no longer am I walking after Matthew's way and you walking after your way, but now we are walking in God's way. Listening to what God says. Agreeing and believing in that which He says. Yet we have to take that Word which He says and apply it to our lives, don't we? That portion that we might call the wisdom, walking in the wisdom of God, to know how to take the words that are written, the thoughts, the ideas, the ex-

pressions and apply it to the activities and the way of life. How does this apply to me? How would this apply to my neighbor? That is where we would see some differences, don't we? Because each one of us grew up differently. We saw different examples. We have a different view point of it. Yet the purity is there, dear ones, if we can take ourselves out of the picture. Our own viewpoints, our own thoughts, our own directions and rely fully on the Word, we will be one. We'll be united. We'll be even as Jesus was with His Father and as He desires we would be with Him. Of one mind, walking in one Spirit, minding those things that are His.

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?..." I Corinthians 6:2. We can read this in those prophecies about the kingdoms that will be established, about the responsibilities that will be given. Jesus gave the example of the man that was given the talents and he came back with ten more. He was given the twenty cities. And the man that came back with one. He had done nothing with it. It was even taken from him and given to the man with ten. (St. Luke 19:11-24) As a responsibility to carry out the work. If then we would be used, dear ones, as believers in this life or perhaps for all eternity to be used as judges to judge the world with Jesus, to be there with Him, shouldn't we be able by His grace, to handle the matters that are here upon this earth?

Perhaps this verse could be read also: if you cannot handle it here, if you cannot be used even as the example, consider the others that are watching, and you would drag them down, how then can you expect to enter? I think about that often as we consider the children of the Old Testament, the children of Israel, and how often they displeased God. All the nations around them were watching them. They wanted to see what they were going to do. They had heard of the miracles of crossing the Red Sea, of the walls of Jericho falling down. They knew this was

God's chosen people. They wanted to see how they worked, what they did. What did they do to receive God's blessing? When they would flee and walk away and serve idols, it displeased God greatly. One; because they were disobedient but two; because their example was so poor. And it is all given to us for an example, that we would not walk in those ways.

"...if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?..." I Corinthians 6:2,3. I don't know how that works, dear ones, but it is stated here in the Word so it is truth. Do you feel qualified to judge an angel? Do we feel qualified to judge anyone? Let's consider that fact. It speaks in the Word that we are not to be judging one another (St. Matthew 7:1). When we stop and we consider it, we get to those times in life, maybe when a life is taken, when we are really sobered and we are thinking about the soul, we are thankful, aren't we, that it is not our judgment as to whether a soul has sought the grace to be in God's will or not.

But we do have responsibilities in this role of judgment even now, dear ones, as we live. That is with each one of our souls. Individually we are to judge, to consider where we are at. What does a judge do? He takes the action that has occurred. He compares it to the law and he sees if they are guilty. We need to take the Word of God, compare it to how we are walking in life and see if it matches. If it doesn't, we are guilty, we are condemned.

Verse three continues. "...how much more things that pertain to this life?" I Corinthians 6:3. Maybe we say we can't understand it. Maybe we don't know. Maybe it is unclear to us. But I think in the depths of our hearts we know when we are doing that which is right and when we haven't. Because it bothers us.

Perhaps not. I know with Pharaoh it said his heart was hardened (Exodus 7:3). It didn't seem to bother

him. Sin right before him. Disobedience to God. It said his heart was hardened. But praying, dear ones, that each one of us would find enough grace to have soft hearts that we could be affected when we see sin in ourselves, in others, that it would convict us. We pray that, don't we? That the Holy Spirit would be convicting ourselves. For those that are not yet converted, that the Holy Spirit would convict their hearts. That they would recognize their need for salvation before it is too late.

"If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church." I Corinthians 6:4. Why, dear ones, would we go to one that we do not esteem highly in the church to make the judgments? I believe this is a safety for us. Can you imagine the popularity contest or the political-ness that would come into the church, if those that were popular, those that were gifted in different gifts were given total authority and we would go to them to settle our disputes? How much safer is it to go to one, that from the world's viewpoint is the basest of men? To go and ask for wisdom from the Word. One who has nothing to gain from the judgment.

Isn't that what we want from our judges in this land? We don't want them to be gaining financially or in any way if they make a judgment one way or the other. We want them to be impartial. Such would be one who is least esteemed. Who would have nothing to gain from the judgment but to look into the Word and to say yea or nay.

This next verse, dear ones, it is so true. "I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you?..." I Corinthians 6:5. We think about this also - forgive me for always referencing children but - when we talk to the oldest child, we say, you know better. Don't get dragged into it just because the younger one is bickering. You know better. That is how it is with you and I, dear ones, as believers. We know

better. We know the Word. We are to rather take the fault, it says. "...to be defrauded?..." I Corinthians 6:7, that is the word it uses here. To take the short end of the stick. We hear that. Isn't that what Jesus was speaking about when He said, when you are asked to go a mile go with them two? When they ask for your coat, give them your cloak also. Willing to take the short end or willing to give the long end, is really how it comes down to.

It said, "But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers." I Corinthians 6:6. Think about the example there, dear ones, that is given. If we would just think upon a circumstance like that, we would think, well, they can't understand the Bible enough to reconcile their differences so they are seeking out men for their wisdom to reconcile the differences. How absolutely backwards that is, dear ones and yet that is how the world looks at it. The world is no longer going to the Word as absolute truth. It is going to men to try to come up with ideas and new philosophies and ways that will work to bring peace to the world. Are any of those things going to work? We know they won't. They will come to naught. It will pass away, is what the Word says. But the Word will not pass away. (St. Matthew 24:35) That is why we want to use the Word for our judgments, within ourselves, amongst ourselves and with others.

We get to this portion here that speaks very clearly about the kingdom of God. It talks about the inheritance of the kingdom of God. What have we done to inherit? What does somebody do to inherit something? Is it anything that they do of themselves? It is not. If the parents would die, it goes to the children or however it is worked out. You receive an inheritance, having done nothing of yourselves to deserve it. So it is as we are adopted into God's family, those that are believers, and we become children of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

Who died that we might receive the inheritance? It is not God that is

going to die, dear ones. But Jesus died and He rose again. So it is a bit of a different inheritance than we might think of today. And yet, is a full giving of all that He has, that we would receive it to inherit the kingdom of God.

But it says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?..." I Corinthians 6:9. We know this don't we? We know what is required to receive the kingdom of God. Receiving the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ and His shed blood. It is not of ourselves lest we should boast. But it is good for us to be reminded. Paul recognized here that they knew this. Because what did he say before he started this list? He said, be ye not deceived (I Corinthians 6:9). Because the world would say that some of these things aren't that bad anymore. It's okay. It's not okay. Don't be deceived. The Word says it is wrong.

Fornication (v.9). We know this and yet what do young people do? Living together, all these kinds of things, even before marriage. It is wrong. Don't be deceived.

Idolatry (v.9). Following after anything besides God. Giving praise and honor to anyone besides God. Think about our sports, entertainment in general. Hollywood. Any of those things. Giving praise to anyone but God. Idolatry. Don't be deceived. It is wrong.

Adulterers (v.9). Those that are married. Families breaking up, getting divorces, getting remarriages. It is wrong! It is not to happen. Don't be deceived.

Effeminate (v.9). I don't know exactly what that means. But it comes to mind that it's men with men and women with women, working those things which are unseemly. Don't be deceived! It's wrong! The world is trying to pass laws that it's okay. It is not okay. Think about Sodom and Gomorrah and God's hatred for it. Rained down fire and brimstone to kill them all except for Lot and his

Sermon continued from page 45

two daughters. (Genesis 19:12-25) Even they had it sticking to them.

"...nor abusers of themselves with mankind," and the list continues "Nor thieves..." I Corinthians 6:9,10. We would not doubt the thieves, would we? We know that is wrong and yet what happens? It is no longer like we think of breaking into a house and taking things. The world has come up with different ways to rob. Think about the corporate scandals. Think about taxes. All these kinds of things. It is no longer you have to break into a house to steal. But it is wrong. All of it.

Covetous (v.10). Desiring more than we have. Desiring something that somebody else has. Keeping up with the Jones', the society says. It is wrong! Don't be deceived! It says here, will not inherit the kingdom of God (I Corinthians 6:10). We can get caught up in these things, can't we? We have to push them off, actively resisting Satan.

"...nor drunkards, nor revilers..." I Corinthians 6:10. What is a reviler? Speaking back. Speaking harshly. "...nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." I Corinthians 6:10. And I don't believe, dear ones, that this is a complete list. But it was to give the example, the intent, the recognition. Don't be deceived when the world starts to sway the values. Use the Word as the standard. It is so needful.

And so beautiful how he says here in verse eleven because it's true and every one of us knows it. "And such were some of you..." I Corinthians 6:11. Every one of us, dear ones, were defiled in sin, weren't we? And yet if we could recognize it and be willing to humble ourselves and say, "I am a sinner, God forgive me," God is willing to forgive us as much as we are willing to forgive others. He will go so much further if we will just let Him. There is no limit to that. To

forgive and forget.

I know I have said this before. But it is just amazing. We can't hardly remember anything; names, places. Yet we remember when someone's wronged us. And when we try to forgive and forget, we can hardly do it. Yet there is God, who knows everything. Who doesn't forget anything! He knows it all! Except those things that we've asked forgiveness for. And He'll forgive. They'll be covered and gone from His sight and from His mind. That's beautiful!

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient..." I Corinthians 6:12. What a difference from the way the world takes the Bible. What a difference from the way that sometimes we take the Word, isn't it? We consider the Word as the upper limit rather than the lower boundary. Just like they did in the Old Testament when somebody was killed and they had to put an upper limit. An eye for an eye. The maximum sentence you could require from somebody if they would poke out your eye was their eye. (Leviticus 24:19,20) You could not kill them. You could not slay them. That didn't mean you had to take out their eye. That was the upper limit. Yet it became the lower boundary, to make sure that vengeance was taken at least that far.

So it is in the Word. Especially in the New Testament now, when Jesus speaks these thoughts. Where He doesn't define, He doesn't necessarily give the lists. He speaks about it as a matter of the heart for our consideration, using that Godly wisdom to apply it to our lives.

"...all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." I Corinthians 6:12. That certainly applies today, doesn't it? We think of things that are addictive. The smoking, the gambling, the internet. I will not be brought under the power of any. Why is that, dear

ones? Because we need to be guided by the Holy Spirit. And if we are under the power of something else, our mind is not going to think properly. We are not going to consult with the Holy Spirit when we make decisions. We are going to be making the decisions off our own mind, our own wants, whatever power we are under. Which is always Satan if it is not God.

"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." I Corinthians 6:13. He speaks now directly to these things of our body. Of the sin of fornication and adultery. The wickedness that is there. The incorrect use of that which God made to be holy.

The disappointment that has to be there from the sins that came about. It was so beautiful with Adam and Eve in the garden as they would have children (Genesis 1:26-31). But they lost it, wanting to live forever. That was what Satan tempted them with, wasn't it? Wanting to know the difference between right and wrong. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They ate from that tree, dear ones, and now we know the difference between good and evil. (Genesis 3:1-7) And we have the choice. We can read here in this chapter what is evil and we know what is good. We want to mind those things that are good.

Thankfully, dear ones, they did not eat of that tree of life. That tree is still in the garden. It says it will be in heaven above. (Revelation 2:7) That is when we will live for all eternity, the soul of man. May it be that our souls can be prepared, that we can enter into that kingdom of God. That we would stay true and faithful. That we would not be deceived. That many souls would yet come to recognize and realize the joy of salvation that is given freely to mankind.

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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| 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 |
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| 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 |
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| Rusty Adrian | 573-769-3650 | | aadrian@socket.net |
| Terry Miller | 941-485-4302 | 941-485-4302 | kjs@a5.com |
| Pete Webel | 419-756-2587 | | peter.webel@gm.com |
| Ted Hirstein | 309-266-8769 | | hirstein@mtco.com |

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 |
|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| 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 |
| Reynosa | March 11-18, 2006 | Construction/Medical | Brian Mogler | 712-478-4649 | bmogler@alliancecom.net |
| 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 |
| Reynosa | March 25-April 1, 2006 | Construction/Medical | Erin Knobloch | | pudgydawn@yahoo.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:

Kansas: Paul Kaeb
 Phone: 785-284-3261
 Cell: 785-547-5269
 E-mail: paulkaeb@ksiconveyors.com

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

Illinois: Marvin Sauder
 Phone: 309-925-4171
 Fax: 309-925-4171
 Cell: 309-339-9894
 E-mail: mmksblf@dpc.net

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

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

If anyone is serving in our Armed Forces that would appreciate receiving a printed sermon, please send their name and address or email address to:

Printed Sermons
6082 N. 2800 East Rd.
Forrest, IL 61741
or phone (815) 657-8798

The Apostolic Christian Preschool has an immediate opening for a teacher directed of the Lord, with a degree and/or experience in Elementary or Early Childhood Education. It is a wonderful experience to teach children about the Lord in a loving, Christian environment. If you feel the call and want to find out more please contact:

Bro. Mike Moore
 (256) 729-0620
 8653 Beechwood Rd.
 Athens, AL 35611
 Email: ALM@aol.com



History Update

At the Morton, Illinois, conference in August of 2003, the Elder Body voted to commission an updating of the current history book *Marching To Zion*. Work thence began to update all the information on each church and all the work associated with projects such as World Relief, etc.

The work was complicated by the fact that due to technical advances since the first edition was published in 1984, the disks would no longer fit today's technology. As a result, it became necessary that the entire book be re-written and re-typeset. This, of course, slowed the process and made the ultimate completion of the task much longer.

The first edition of *Marching To Zion* consisted of 650 pages. Very likely the second edition will total 700 pages or more. To date (as of January 20), approximately 500 pages have been sent to Sekan Printing Company in Fort Scott, Kansas. The remainder of the pages will be sent as soon as they are re-written.

As most authors will likely admit, the real work begins when the proofreading begins. Writing a book can become burdensome at times, but a heavier weight of responsibility is the proofreading phase. To date, proofreaders have been enlisted to help complete this time consuming process. Also, at some point, each church's history will be given to the local Elder for approval, and for a final review.

Another task in the overall process is to complete a topical and name index in the back of the book. This requires going through each page and listing all the names, and most of the topics. While this will add to the time of production, it is valuable for the readers, and for any subsequent researchers who might use the book.

The question is often asked, "When

will the new *Marching To Zion* be available?" An explicit answer cannot be given. The only thing that can be said with certainty is that the author and the proofreaders are working to complete the project. A definite date cannot be given. There is no deadline.

One thing that is evident in this work is the change that has taken place during the past 25 years. This is referring to the number of new leaders, new churches and the significant expansion of World Relief and work projects related to serving others. It is remarkable, and the expansion phase will be covered in the new book.

New Elders

As mentioned above, there have been new leaders ordained to lead the local flocks. Up until January, 2006, there have been 48 new men ordained as Elders since the first edition *Marching to Zion*. In working on our heritage, one becomes familiar with all the American Elders since 1847 beginnings here in America when the first Elder, Benedict Weyeneth, aged 29, came to establish the first church in Lewis County, New York. Since that time many men have served in leadership capacities. The historian learns about these men but a good many were from past eras, and many more have gone on to their reward. In this, the historian does not know them on a personal basis. Thus, in listing the new 48 men ordained since the first edition, it was special in that the author knows every one of them. It was a privilege to work on this phase of the book.

The Importance of History

The percentage of persons interested in history does not reach a very high number. Often, history is seen as somewhat boring and irrelevant. Yet, it dem-

onstrates how our foreparents dealt with the problems and opportunities of their eras. If they made mistakes, or had successes, we can learn from that, and apply their wisdom to our time.

The faithful examples from history often inspire us to do better, to want to become more devoted to the faith and to try to be more pleasing to the Lord. If we are to "keep" the faith of our fathers, it is necessary to know what that faith — and its distinctives — were. As we learn from the past, it can help us to apply the Scriptures in a better way and become more effective in learning how to preserve unity among the churches.

Freedom

In working on a denominational history it becomes glaringly apparent that freedom to worship is one of the most wonderful facets of our brotherhood. In America, it is not as it was sometimes in Europe and especially in Eastern Europe where religious suppression was the norm. Here in America, the Bill of Rights has preserved an open door into our churches with no intervention regarding our beliefs and how we administer the churches. This is a blessing we can hardly comprehend, but one for which God is to be thanked on a daily basis.

The Ties That Bind

In the January issue of *The Silver Lining*, the final installment of the series "The Ties That Bind" was carried. This is to let the readers know that if any persons are interested, this series is now in booklet form and can be ordered by writing to me at P. O. Box 404, Pontiac, Illinois. The booklet is free of charge.

By Perry A. Klopfenstein

Next issue: Misc. historical data

The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

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"Seeking The Will Of God"

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

When you visit some place, regardless of the purpose of the visit, do you seek the will of God as to where you should go, what you should do, and what you should say, while on that visit? That issue recently came up in some of my correspondence and it made me think that maybe we should be more mindful of the need to seek God will in such matters, not just simply do what we feel like doing, nor go where we feel like going.

When it comes to marriage, we are all taught that we should seek the will of God. In short, we believe that we should not go by our own emotions but we should seek to marry the person with whom we can best serve God. Then the emotions will take care of themselves. Isaac experience in seeking a wife is often cited as a good example as to how believers should approach marriage. Concerning this matter, it is written in Genesis 24:50, the thing proceedeth from the Lord. Jesus said, or whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my

brother, and my sister, and mother. This is an encouragement for us to do the will of God.

Jesus teaches us to do the will of God but sometimes we can't quite determine what His will is. Therein lies a dilemma. However, we should at least seek for the will of God based on His Word and consultation with others who love the Lord.

Making request I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God. Romans 1:10. Here the Apostle Paul was making request that God would grant him a prosperous journey to visit the Romans. I assume this would include doing the will of God while visiting. It behooves us to think more about the will of God as to what we do, say, eat, drink, and where we go. I believe we have a tendency to fall short there.

In Romans 8:27 we read, the Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. The Spirit can do that because He knows the will of God in all things,

better than we do, but it might be well for us to add these words to our prayer, not as I will but as thou wilt, or, thy will be done. Jesus added those words to His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane as written in Matthew 26:39 and 42.

But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. I John 2:17. This is a familiar teaching as it is connected to the scripture, love not the world, verse 15. Then doing the will of God has something to do with making choices based on spiritual things, not just material things. That would be important in determining whether or not to start a business. It's not just how much money you could make but whether it would be pleasing to God.

In seeking the will of God we may not always be able to determine exactly what His will is, but if we sincerely make decisions based upon what we believe to be the will of God, we will have made some progress and God will un-

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*Hast thou given the horse strength? hast
thou clothed his neck with thunder?
Job 39:19*



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