

# *The Silver Lining*

*In the day of prosperity be joyful,  
but in the day of adversity consider:  
God also hath set the one over against the other,  
to the end that man should find nothing after him.*

*Ecclesiastes 7:14*

*January 2009*



*Sermon by Bro. Steve Stieglitz, Leo, IN*  
**Deuteronomy 14:1-21 and James 1**

Once again, we find ourselves in the midst of what is to us, a bit strange or unusual. We find essentially, the gist of this passage is a declaration of what is clean and unclean for the children of Israel to eat. We tend to, when we turn to a passage like this, try to make sense of it. Indeed there are some evidences for us to make sense. By making sense of this, I mean that we turn to this and we look at the categorization of what is clean and unclean and we try to decide if there would be some logical benefit or some logical disadvantage or undesirability in the animals that are divided in such a way. Indeed, I think medical or nutritional science could point to certain aspects of the beasts that are unclean and suggest that there is a good and a logical reason why, perhaps, those should be set aside.

But too much attention paid to that aspect of this passage misses the point that God really is making here. I don't want to take away from the fact that there may be health benefits in following a strict Hebrew diet. That isn't the essence of the passage. The essence of the passage is, as verse one indicates, you are chosen of the Lord. Because you are chosen of the Lord, God says, I am going to distinguish between you and all other people. I want you to constantly and forever remember that you are unique. You are unique by the virtue of the fact that you are my people. I want you to think of yourselves as my people. Someone asks you who you are, I want the first words out of your mouth to be, 'Well, I am of the chosen people of God.' If you want to distinguish further from there, that's fine. But first and foremost, you are mine.

What better way to keep that in the very forefront of someone's mind than to give to God's chosen people a constant choice. A constant filter, a constant awareness that that which you put in your mouth

distinguishes you from all other people. 'I can't eat that because I am a child of God. I belong to Him. Therefore I will only eat this.' It is not merely the dietary laws - there's a plethora of distinctions all throughout the Old Testament economy that lays out ways in which the children of God were unique, they separated themselves. There is, of course, a certain sense of that fact that the dietary laws were foremost a distinguishing of the people of God, more so than it was a health issue. Otherwise God wouldn't say, Go ahead and give it to your alien neighbor. Go ahead and sell it to them. Just don't eat it yourself. (Deut. 14:21) It flows against common grace.

Nonetheless, we return to the fact that God was setting up, in this economy, a way of thinking. He was creating a mindset. He was creating a world view. He was creating one in which the children of Israel thought of themselves, in every aspect of their lives, as unique, set apart. 'I belong to the Lord. Therefore, I don't do this.' That actually has some wonderful implications to the New Testament message. That is no surprise. We often say all of the Old Testament built to the climax of the reality of the New Testament. Everything we find in the Old Testament is a shadow of the glories of the reality of the New Testament. Perhaps we'll have a chance to develop that further.

James, a servant of God, writing to twelve tribes. Obviously referring to the Hebrew people which are scattered abroad. (James 1:1) The dispersion is a reference to the Jewish people that were dispersed because of the persecution from the Roman Emperor that made life so difficult in Judea and particularly in Jerusalem, that they fled that persecution and were scattered throughout the Roman world at that time. As the church of God, the fledgling church spread, it spread somewhat

in waves. Of course, one of them was the pursuit of Jews, not only in Jerusalem but throughout the Roman Empire. Throughout what we call

*Sermon continued on page 42*

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**SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:**

cleman@davesworld.net  
*(e-mail is preferred)*

The Silver Lining  
 1389 County Road 1600 N  
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*"Let this mind be in you,  
which was also in Christ Jesus"  
(Phil. 2:5)*

## Light From The Word



Writings based  
on God's Word

January 2009

### Call To Accountability

*"Our lot is found in pleasant places, A goodly heritage is ours" (ZH # 145).*

We are blessed to enjoy a church which has a rich heritage of beliefs and practices based on biblical principles and characterized by a pattern of carefulness and stability in our walk of faith. Our spiritual unity is strengthened greatly by individual brethren having the mind of Christ. *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 2:5).

The mind of Christ reflects many unifying godly principles including: 1) a oneness of emphasis on glorifying God in all aspects of our walk of life: *"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one"* (John 17:22); 2) a common spirit of concern for the salvation of lost souls: *"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest..."* (Matt. 9:38); 3) recognition that only charity creates a perfect bond of unity in Christ: *"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness"* (Col. 3:14); and 4) being joined together against a world of sin: *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world"* (1 John 2:15).

Sincere self-examination has been one of the hallmarks of the effort to strengthen biblical unity during these past two years, beginning with the leadership and extending to every brother and sister who is a part of this blessed heritage. Many have acknowledged areas in their lives where the mind of Christ has not been in control. True spiritual unity can only come when there is true obedience to God's Word. Where deficiencies are found we must repent and make amends and implement the necessary changes to align ourselves with the mind of Christ, by His grace. This is the "call to accountability." It does not consist of looking upon the deficiencies of others, but truly examining ourselves in the mirror of God's Word (Jam. 1:23-25).

We must strengthen our resolve to abide in Christ's love and allow Him to have control of all aspects of our life (John 15:8-12). Because love is the supreme characteristic of a believer, we must nurture Christ-like love for all of our brethren. *"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one an-*

*other"* (John 13:34). We are to walk a sanctified life grounded in faith and grace, which is committed to honesty, mutual respect, submission to authority, modesty in appearance, a forgiving spirit, forbearance and all other biblical virtues. It renounces emulation, sedition, implacableness, talebearing, covetousness, pride, lust (including competition) and all other vices. When we have the pure mind of Christ, there is no compromising of these biblical truths.

We are committed to continuing to address the many threats to biblical unity and to seek the guidance of the Spirit in helping each other promote the mind of Christ throughout our Brotherhood. Some of the evident fruits of this effort include: increased accountability on the part of the elders, greater understanding and forbearance of each other, a deepening of relationships enabling more effective cooperation in addressing issues and a much more open communication in elder forum and conference discussions allowing the Word to be the focal point for decisions.

Whenever a major effort toward improvement is undertaken it is understandable that there will be gentle skepticism on the part of some brethren. A submissive spirit, along with recognition of evidence of good fruits allows this to be overcome with time. We are deeply grateful that there have been reports of this encouraging process occurring in the hearts of many brothers and sisters across the land.

A misguided prejudgment of such efforts leads to a closing of the mind and a resistance to acknowledgment of good fruits as well as potential for God's blessing. There are many warnings in the Scriptures against giving personal opinions a place of undue authority in our minds. One of the most direct of these is in Romans 12:16: *"Be not wise in your own conceits."* David acknowledged his need for humility in recognizing that there were things he did not fully understand and thus should not prejudge. *"Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me"* (Psa. 131:1).

The mind of Christ is reflected in a meek spirit. Jesus said of himself, *"I am meek and lowly in heart"* (Matt. 11:29). Meekness can be defined as wisdom, strength

and self-assurance kept under control vs. bold or harsh judgment and confrontation. *"Who is a wise man and ended with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom"* (Jam. 3:13).

Lack of respect and callous disregard for authority are serious violations of God's Word and do not reflect the mind of Christ. When Jesus was tested by the Pharisees on this principle he answered their crafty question by saying, *"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's"* (Matt. 22:21). When the church leadership after much prayer and seeking of the guidance of the Holy Spirit calls upon the Brotherhood to give their support and cooperation to a biblically sound effort, it is not to be taken lightly. This "call to accountability" was again put forth as a clear sounding trumpet at the recent Princeville Conference. It was a call to engagement—to join the ranks and be prayerful and supportive of the ongoing efforts to encourage all of us to put on the mind of Christ, put self aside and become diligent laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. We must have faith that the many important issues which are of concern will be addressed in due time and according to God's plan as outlined in the Word, not by our own timetable or preference.

Every brother and sister can make a difference, beginning now. This requires humbling ourselves and taking to heart the consistent exhortations which are being communicated through individual elder presentations to their respective churches, conference teachings, approved Elder Body documents and articles such as this. We should not delay doing what is right, as the Word teaches us to *"number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom"* (Psa. 90:12). We can also each make a difference by the words we speak to one another regarding the strengthening of our blessed heritage: *"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name"* (Mal. 3:16).

An editorial committee of elder brothers is preparing articles for this section of the Silver Lining to address some of the special needs of our times.

Suggestions for subjects are welcome and can be sent to:

Silver Lining Editorials, 1377 County Rd 1600 N, Roanoke, IL 61561 or by e-mail to [cleman@davesworld.net](mailto:cleman@davesworld.net)





## 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

### Apostolic Christian Publications

Apostolic Christian Publications (ACP) originated from a request at the 1961 general conference to make available Apostolic Christian developed Sunday school materials. In 1962 a committee of Elders was appointed to search out feasibility of this request. Brethren invested considerable time and effort in developing the new Sunday school materials over the next few years.

Out of this effort the idea and need for an Apostolic Christian Publications non-profit organization began. The first meeting of the newly established Apostolic Publications was held in 1968. A new building was built in December of 1989 northwest of the Eureka church.

Over the years the offerings of the bookstore have grown to more than 150 items available for purchase including, Bibles, songbooks, SS material, dictionaries, concordances, VBS material and supporting materials such as the *Statement of Faith*, *Church Welcome* booklet, etc.

ACP has a board of directors consisting of 16 Brothers and 2 counseling Elders with 10 year terms.

### Mission

It is the mission of Apostolic Christian Publications to promote spiritual growth and religious training by developing, publishing and disseminating Christian materials, relating to the needs, purposes and functions of the Apostolic Christian Church of America.

### Website

In 2006 a website was developed to make items more accessible to those in other states as well as worldwide.

Orders can be completed online, by phone, or by mail. Some items are available without charge (except for shipping) and can be downloaded or shipped via UPS.

Examples of free materials include the complete *Light from the Word* articles published in the Silver Lining to address some of the special needs of our time, the *Statement of Faith*, *Church Welcome* booklet and other items. The web address is [www.acpublications.org](http://www.acpublications.org).

### Selected items offered

#### Sunday School Materials

A complete set of Sunday school curriculum and supporting material is available, starting at the preschool level and continuing on through High School. Work books and teacher's guides are available up to the 4th grade. Commentary/study guides are available for the Hurlbut's Bible story book. Curriculum guides are available for 7th thru 12th grade.

#### Vacation Bible School

A complete set of workbooks and teacher's guides are available for vacation Bible school from nursery school thru 8th grade.

#### Song Books

Eight different song books are available at the bookstore.

- Zions Harp
- Hymns of Zion
- Tabernacle hymns
- Gospel hymns
- Zions Melodies
- Hymns of Christmas
- Hymns of Zion/Tabernacle hymns combined book
- The Children's Harp

#### Hymns of Christmas

A paperback collection of Christmas songs that is convenient for

Christmas caroling in nursing homes, retirement homes, individuals homes, etc. It has been recently updated and improved to include all Christmas songs from our Apostolic Christian song books.

#### Hymns of Zion/Tabernacle

This combined hymnal is now available and primarily intended for use in homes, Sunday schools, fellowship halls and other appropriate song worship purposes. The Hymns of Zion and Zion's Harp remain the designated hymnals for our church sanctuaries.

#### The Children's Harp CD

This CD or cassette was created by brothers and sisters using children from many of our churches. It is a great tool to teach your children the songs from the Children's Harp song book. It is professionally done and is very pleasant to listen to.

#### Spanish Material

Limited items are available in Spanish including the *Statement of Faith* and the *Church Welcome* booklet. Spanish materials are welcomed for the expanding World Relief and Mission efforts in Spanish speaking countries as well as the increasing needs for Spanish speaking members and friends in the United States.

#### Imprinting

AC Publications offers imprinting on many books and Bibles that are sold at ACP.

#### Hours and contact information

The bookstore is open Monday thru Friday from 8:30am till 11:30am.

**Phone and fax:** 309-467-3611

**Website:** [www.acpublications.org](http://www.acpublications.org)

**E-mail:** [office@acpublications.org](mailto:office@acpublications.org)





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

## Aid to Indonesia

On December 26, 2004, an earthquake registering a magnitude of 9.2 occurred in Indonesia. This created a tsunami that raced to shore at speeds of over 200 miles per hour and grew to a height of nearly 100 feet. Within minutes, everything in its wake was devastated, leaving 230,000 people dead and 1.7 million people displaced from their homes. The world was shocked and numbed as it was the worst natural disaster known to the modern world.

Over the ensuing months, hundreds of earthquakes occurred here. On March 28th, an earthquake near Nias and Tello Islands registered at a magnitude of 8.7. Although considered an aftershock, it ranks as the 7th largest earthquake since 1900.

There was a massive outpouring of humanitarian aid from around the globe. The brethren and friends of the Apostolic Christian Church gave generously to the World Relief Disaster Fund. World Relief appropriated funds to provide immediate relief with food and temporary shelter but also worked to provide long term relief through economic development and improvements in the medical infrastructure. Funds were used to help build and equip a hospital on Tello Island.

This area of Indonesia is considered the poorest with 75% of the families surviving on less than \$100 each month. Nearly 6 out of every 100 children will die before their 5th birthday and out of every 300 babies born, one woman will die in the process of the delivery. These are mortality rates not seen in the United States since the 1920's. Prior to the hospital on Tello Island, seeking medical help meant traveling for

hours by boat.

The World Health Organization recommends that this island community of 26,000 should be served by at least 6 physicians, however there are only two Indonesian physicians there to do the work. Throughout Indonesia, the number of physicians available to care for the people is severely inadequate.

In April, World Relief sent a medical-dental team consisting of 2 physicians, 2 nurses and 1 dental hygienist to Tello Island to help supplement the medical care being provided as well as to assess ongoing needs.

Tello Island is the most populous island of this archipelago of 101 islands of which 45 are inhabited. Here, our medical-dental team grew in number to 17 which included an additional 2 physicians and 2 nurses as well as a dentist, pharmacist, interpreters and support staff. Most of the team members and all of our supplies were shuttled from the boat to the beach by canoes. The villagers were already sitting patiently, eagerly awaiting what for many of them was their first medical exam.

Our team examined approximately 125 patients on that first island. We provided medications for illnesses when the appropriate therapy was available and encouraged ongoing follow up at the Tello hospital.

On the morning that we were scheduled to leave the first island our team awoke to a torrential downpour which would delay our departure for hours. Unknown to us, other events were unfolding on this island. A woman had gone into labor, however the labor was not progressing. The medical team recognized the gravity of the situation and called for a medication to

be brought from Tello Island. After the medication was administered, the expectant mother's contractions increased and she delivered a healthy baby boy. It is certainly possible that without the rainstorm the medical team would have already been on its way to the next island leaving the mother and infant to become another statistic to support the severe lack of medical care in this area of the world.

We developed a strong Christian love for our Indonesian team members. They find comfort in the Psalms and the encouraging words of Jesus Christ, our Lord. They love to sing.

We toured the hospital recently built with World Relief funds. World Relief also provided some new laboratory equipment that would be invaluable to the physicians in diagnosing illnesses in the patients they encountered and we were able to train the local physicians in the use of this new equipment.

In summary, it was obvious that the medical personnel on Tello Island have been wonderful stewards with the money so many people have graciously given by the grace of God and that they do all things for the glory and honor of our Lord. Our assistance helps them promote, in a sustainable way, physical, emotional, economic and spiritual well being. World Relief is planning to support an ongoing mobile medical clinic to these Islands. An Indonesian physician and nurse will travel via boat four days a week to provide medical care. They will also use the Tello Hospital for follow-up care. It is our prayer that we can make a difference in the medical outcomes for these people.

– Submitted by the Medical Work Team



**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
HOME FOR THE  
HANDICAPPED  
www.achh.org**

As we went through the Thanksgiving season, we reflected on our thankfulness for our families, guardians, friends, and church family that diligently pray that God will continue to provide His protection, add His blessing, and bring dedicated staff to the Agency.

We have opened the first of our six new CILA homes in the community. Four men have moved in and are very proud of their new home. Please pray that God will help them to build positive relationships and enable them to live as independently as possible.

As more residents prepare to move from our larger homes to small, more independent living settings, both excitement and anxiety increase. There is a sense of anticipation as residents, staff and families plan the move and prepare the home. However, there is also some apprehension about the changes that it will mean both for the individual and the staff that care for them.

There are blessings that each of us enjoys and trials that some face that others will never fully comprehend. The "Angels" in our presence may never understand or comprehend the uncertainty of the times, just as we will never be able to fully know what it is like to live with the restrictions God has given their body or mind.

May each of us be thankful for the crosses we carry and the blessings we have received.

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**GATEWAY WOODS  
APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
CHILDREN'S HOME  
Heather Beer**

Opportunity. What do you think of when someone tells you they have an opportunity for you? Is that a new job, a great deal, a once in a lifetime vacation?

How about the illness you deal with every day, the drop in the stock market, or the inevitable inconveniences of life?

So often we tend to think of opportunities as something that will bring us joy, raise our status, or make life easier, but many times the most rewarding opportunities come masked as difficult, frustrating circumstances. In James 1:2-4 it is written, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." It seems that it is our nature to want to avoid conflict, uncomfortable situations, and that person with whom it is hard to get along. However, many believers have attested to the fact that it is in the uncomfortable and stressful times of life that they have experienced the greatest spiritual growth.

Many times in our work with residents at Gateway, we hear our flesh saying, "We wish we didn't have to deal with this situation." It is then that we remind ourselves that with no conflict, there is little growth. Each hard situation is an opportunity for us to model the Spirit's power to overcome sin, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of using Biblical principles when working through our problems. We all have things throughout our days that we'd selfishly rather not deal with, but in those times we have opportunity to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:39), be angry and sin not (Ephesians 4:26), be kind and tenderhearted (Ephesians 4:32), and give thanks in all things (I Thessalonians 5:18). In the end, God's name can be lifted up and honored - that's what we call opportunity!

**NEWS:**

Before we get too far into 2009, here's a quick snapshot of 2008:

- In 2008, Gateway Woods was able to provide \$680,000 in free or subsidized care to children and their families. Our mission is "to provide hope

and healing to troubled children and families who then may bless others."

- Our Adoption and Foster Care Programs did very well. We have placed over 120 children in adoptive families since our program opened. Foster Care continues to serve more children and license more Christian foster parents. We are still seeking an Illinois Adoption Manager. Please contact us if you would like more information about this position.

- This 2008 Auction brought in over \$420,000. This is approximately 15% of our operating budget. Thanks again to all who donated items, attended the Auction, bought items, or prayed! Next year's Auction is Saturday August 8, 2009.

**NEWS:**

- Pine House construction is now completed and our Staff and residents have taken occupancy of the house. We are still accepting donations towards the house, as we have not yet reached our final goal. We still need a good small car and a big van. Please contact us at (888) 443-4283 if you can help us out with these vehicles.

- Please remember to pray for Bro. Darren and Sis. Britni Eisenman as they began serving as Alternate Houseparents this month. We are thankful for those who have a heart to serve children and families in need.

- We are delighted to announce the hiring of Bro. Paul and Sis. Nicole Suvar (Leo) to become our newest set of Alternate Houseparents. The Suvars began work on January 12, 2009. Please keep them in your prayers as well.

- We are grateful that Sis. Rachel (Huber) Klopfenstein has begun her new job as Foster Care Case Manager this month. Please pray for her and the Foster Care Staff as they continue to license more families and serve more children.

- We are excited to announce the arrival of Bro. Jeff and Sis. Margo Waibel's son, Baker Phillip Waibel. He



was born on December 18, 2008, and he weighed 8 lbs. 10 oz. and was 22 inches long.

- We are very thankful that He continues to provide us with the right staff. Because of our Adoption services expanding into Illinois, construction of the Pine House, and other ministry opportunities, there are a number of service positions waiting to be filled. Open positions include Counselor, English Teacher, Assistant Houseparent, Alternate Houseparents, and IL Adoption Manager. Please see the notices in this month's edition of The Silver Lining for more information. We trust that God will continue to provide us with qualified, mature Brothers and Sisters who will be able to serve Him in a ministry that is 'Turning Lives Around'. Perhaps this includes you!

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**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN  
PRESCHOOL  
Athens, AL  
Sarah Hodel**

December has been a very busy month for us here at the preschool. As soon as Thanksgiving was over we started practicing for our Christmas play. You never can tell how it's going to go when you have 23 children with parts to memorize, places to stand and songs to learn. The night of the play, though, everything went surprisingly smooth. No criers, no screamers, just a bunch of cute kids telling the story of Jesus.

The second week of December we had a lot of rain which caused for some flooding issues in the school. It kind of threw a wrench into everything and made it difficult to stay organized. We ended up having school in the fellowship hall for about a week. The kids were troopers through it all, but they were very ready to be back in the school by the time it was all dried out.

We ended our year with a Christmas party. The kids were able to exchange gifts and have a few extra goodies. After that, we all were ready for our Christmas break.

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

*Isaiah 9:6*

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**ALABAMA, ATHENS  
Louise Hall**

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

*Luke 2:14*

How incredible it must have been to be a shepherd and see the sky filled with angels singing. What a joy to sit and reflect on that first Christmas, so long ago. It was a blessing to be able to watch our Sunday School do their program for us. They did a little play of a family who is reminded of the real meaning of Christmas through all the hustle and bustle of everything else. They did a great job!

We want to thank our visiting ministers for this month. Bro. Gary Sinn (Sis. Paulette, Latty, OH) and Bro. Art Ingold (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman, OH) were here to share the Word. Thank you for your efforts! Also thank you to Bro. Larry Steffen (Denver) who was willing to do our adult Sunday School while visiting here.

Our Bro. Don Ross was in the hospital for a few days. We are glad he is back home recuperating.

We mentioned earlier that Bro. David and Sis. Barbara's son, Eric, is in Iraq for awhile. We know he would love some encouragement, and if you would like to write him, his address is:

PFC Eric Coulter  
509th - FSC 504th BFSB  
Joint Base Balad  
APO - AE  
09391

Many of us had the opportunity to

travel up to Forrest, IL, for our Bro. Mark Klaus's wedding to Sis. Rebekah Wenger. Mark's mother is Sis. Betty from Washington and Rebekah's parents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Renee from Forrest. We all enjoyed the weekend and want to welcome Rebekah to Athens. We are so excited to have you here!

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**ARIZONA, PHOENIX  
Heather Hinrichsen**

We were blessed this month to hear God's Word brought to us by Bro. Ken Lawson (Atlanta) and Elder Bro. Tom Klotzle (Altadena).

Sis. Eunice Dotterer went to be with the Lord on November 27 at the age of 88. She is survived by her sister and sister-in-law, stepsons Kenneth, Tim, and Larry and their families. She was preceded in death by her husband, Edwin Dotterer. She will be missed and remembered by those she loved and served.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

*Revelation 14:13*

On December 14, Sis. Evelyn Hoerr left her earthly body and met her Savior face to face. She leaves behind her husband, Bro. Ron, daughter Sis. Julie Hoerr, son Bro. Jake Hoerr (Sis. Wanda), and four grandchildren (Franz, Anneliese, T'kya and Fredric). Sis. Evelyn was a pillar of faith and love in the Phoenix church and although we rejoice that her suffering is over, we will miss her greatly.

After a brief hospital stay, Sis. Nancy Baumgartner (Bro. Leon) is home again and experiencing God's healing powers.

We say farewell to Kari and CJ Riek and Nathan Zollinger. Kari and CJ are moving to Oklahoma City, OK, and Nathan is moving back to Ohio. We wish



them all God's blessings and pray for a smooth transition into their new homes and jobs.

Bro. Morgan Langhofer (Bro. Erik and Sis. Cindy) and Sis. Kyra Klopfenstein (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Carol, Peoria) announced their engagement on November 30. Bro. Morgan is currently attending the West Lafayette church while going to medical school.

The Sunday School had their Christmas program on December 14 and we thank all who were involved for a wonderful evening. The children sang with love for the Lord and all enjoyed the fellowship.

As we are in the midst of the Christmas season, let us remember the true meaning of giving and extend the gift of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ throughout the New Year.

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### **ARIZONA, PRESCOTT** **Denise Steidinger**

Our congregation partook of Holy Communion on Sunday, November 23. We were thankful for the willing service of our Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich and Deacon Bro. Herbie Knochel, Jr.

Bro. Rolf Kaeppler had knee surgery in December and is recovering well.

We enjoyed the Sunday School Christmas Program on December 7 following services. The children had such enthusiasm and love for Jesus.

Bro. Rodney and Sis. Denise Steidinger were blessed with another baby girl on December 9, Haley Elizabeth. She is welcomed home by her big sisters, Trinity and Kiley. Grandparents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Dianne Steidinger and Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna Banwart (Fairbury, IL).

We enjoyed an afternoon of Christmas caroling with a chili supper following on December 13.

### **ARIZONA, TUCSON**

#### **Lisa Knapp**

We enjoyed a visit from Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) and his family over the Thanksgiving weekend as they came out to visit Sis. Lauren who is attending the University of Arizona. We enjoyed seeing them and having them spend a Sunday with us. We also thank Bro. Ben for his service on the pulpit.

We recently enjoyed our annual Christmas events, Christmas caroling at local nursing homes and our Sunday School Christmas program. These are both highlights of our year and always enjoyed by everyone. We had more children in our program than we had last year and many more carolers than last year also. God has truly blessed our little church in the past year and we are very grateful. We look forward to seeing our winter visitors and enjoying fellowship with them in the winter of 2009, Lord willing.

As we hear of cold, snowy conditions in the Midwest and east, we are enjoying weather in the 60's with sunshine—so come see us!

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### **CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA** **Catherine Brame**

“And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou has found favour with God. And, behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

*Luke 1: 28, 30, 31, 35*

An angel sent by God came to a teen-aged girl. He said, “Fear not,” and

“thou shalt conceive,” to a young virgin espoused to a man, not yet married. He said this to a child who lived within a small village, within her church and its traditions. Everything Mary had been raised to know dictated how she should respond to this message. The angel did not depart until Mary had responded; thus, it seems that Mary had a choice in how she would respond.

If she had kept to her village and her church and her traditions, Mary, like her cousin's husband, Zacharias, could simply have disbelieved what she was hearing. Surely God could never ask a virgin to become pregnant – bearing a child, not Joseph's child, outside of marriage. Mary knew this would bring disgrace to her family and would result in her being stoned outside the village gates.

At Christmas, I marvel at the people God chose to bring Jesus into this world: A girl whose deep and personal relationship with God allowed her to respond, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word...” (Luke 1:38); a man of such kindness that he took Mary with him to Bethlehem, knowing that her baby would be born while he was away, and that the baby would come too early to meet with their traditions. He chose a godly man who would uproot in the middle of the night and flee with Mary and the baby to Egypt – a man who listened to angels. So, in this season I pray that I will always remember that it is my personal relationship with Jesus and, through Him, with God, that is the one, most important thing. I pray that I will have the vision to recognize the barriers of self, culture and traditions and that I will hold true to all of those things that are good, without allowing them to become a substitute for my relationship with God.

On November 21, members of our congregation headed down to Magdalena to join with the World Relief Trip. It was a wonderful opportunity to share with others and to find new meaning in our Thanksgiving cel-



ebriation.

December 6 found our Sunday School taking a journey to Bethlehem. The children and some of the parents met up at Bro. Justin and Sis. Robin Moser's for dinner before taking a step backwards in time. We are blessed to have a beautiful representation of old-time Bethlehem available to us, complete with Roman soldiers and camels and merchant booths just as from days gone by. We are given shekels to spend as we walk through the gate, and no one is charged to come and see what Bethlehem was like when Jesus was born. The children's eyes sparkle with new understanding of what it is like in a manger, and how intimidating the Roman soldiers really were.

Our Sunday School provided a lovely Christmas program on December 14. The theme of the program was John 3:16, and it was delightful to hear our 3 and 4 year olds recite that verse to us as the program opened. The children recited scripture, each child explaining a different person's role in the birth of the Christ child. It was so good to see the progression of understanding from the very youngest children to our high school teens, and to see the older children assist the younger ones as we prepared for this program.

Following the Sunday School Christmas program, we went out for our annual Christmas caroling, visiting two local nursing homes. It was very cold for Southern California, and we welcomed the hot chili and warm drinks that greeted us when we returned to the church.

While it has been very cold for the past week or two, good weather is around the corner. We would love to see anyone who is in the area, and will gladly assist in making arrangements should you be coming in this direction.

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### **CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO** **Yasmin Koehl**

As a church, we end 2008 with much joy and yet a few tears...

We welcome Sis. Linda Fulop back to our congregation from central Illinois. We missed her instant smile and warm fellowship. We feel blessed she is in our midst again!

Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marian) and family were saddened to say good-bye to their brother and uncle, Elijah Petrovic. His death was sudden, causing many grieving hearts...as well as a reminder to live each day as our last, for we never know when our life here is done.

#### *Note of Thanks:*

Marian and I wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have sent cards, emails and gifts of love following the passing of my brother, Elijah. It was encouraging and humbling to hear from so many of you. May the Lord God richly bless you for your love!

Lovingly in Christ,  
*Peter Petrovic*

With much love and joy, Natalia Grace Fulop was welcomed into the loving arms of the Denes Fulop family! Our congregation rejoices in the miracle of Natalia as she came much earlier than expected. After many weeks in the hospital, she was able to come home perfect and healthy from her adorable little face to her tiny toes. We're all anticipating the day when she can finally join her family in church!

As a family welcomes a new baby in their midst, Christ welcomes us with even more love than we can fathom. With grateful and loving hearts we rejoice with our friend, Anne-Marie Yen, as she begins her repentance. What an encouragement it is for our congregation to see how God answers prayers and has added another convert in our fold. What a faithful and loving God we serve!

January, February and March are special months for our church as we look forward to our many winter visitors. We hope and pray each brother, sister and friend who comes to worship with us feels our ardent love as we

praise our Creator, our Redeemer and our Lord, who binds us together with His shed blood.

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### **KITCHENER, ONTARIO** **CANADA** **Kim Leman**

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end..."

*Isaiah 9:6,7*

On December 13, our Sunday School children presented their Christmas program to the church. What a blessing to hear the wonderful old, old story year after year.

We thank the ministering brothers who lent of themselves on our behalf this month. They were Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev, Detroit, MI), and Bros. Lucas Frank (Sis. Crystal, Detroit, MI) and Ron Palitto (Sis. Lynell, Akron, OH). May God ever reward the faithful ministers of the Gospel.

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### **COLORADO, DENVER** **Ann Gonglach**

Year after year, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (I Cor. 1:9)

We appreciate Bro. Jeff Bahr's (Kiowa, KS) willingness to share God's Word with us again.

We enjoyed an evening of fellowship at our annual Sunday school Christmas program. All the preparation of the children, teachers and parents was worth the effort as they presented the wonderful story of Jesus' birth to us from Scripture and song.

Our annual Christmas caroling and chili supper is always a blessing. We were again able to sing at local assisted-living homes. It's such a joy to be



able to join our voices to sing the story of Jesus.

Our prayers are with Jim Schrock as he recovers from hip replacement surgery.

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**CONNECTICUT  
ROCKVILLE  
Amber Rocke  
Laura Virkler**

What can I give Him, Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a  
lamb.

If I were a wise man, I would do my  
part;

What could I give Him? I'll give Him  
my heart.

*Children's Harp #111*

It's hard to believe that we are stepping into another year. We have been thankful for God's providence throughout last year, and trust that the Lord will continue to provide for us as this year unfolds.

We are thankful for the efforts of our Sunday school children as they work diligently on their songs for our annual Christmas Program. We look forward with great anticipation to see these children sing praises to our Almighty God. It warms our hearts, we shed some tears, and our prayers become more fervent for God's mercy and patience for these children.

We are so grateful that there has been one soul who has heeded the call to repentance, and given the Lord his heart. Our prayers are with Phil Schneider (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Tina) as he begins his walk as a child of God.

Many prayers have been, and will continue to be with the handful of brethren and friends who have been a recipient of hospital care. They include Bro. Roy Schneider (Sis. Joyce), Bro. Wayne Schneider (Sis. Maxine), Sis. Sharon Kloter (Bro. Eric), convert Jane Schultz (Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Lois), and lastly Justin Frenette (grandson of August and Sis. Linda Leite). We pray for their continued care

and recovery.

Several families in our congregation welcome new children. With much anticipation, Tory and Dawn Dombek's twins arrived! Their names are Jonathan and Andrew. Siblings are Michael and Samuel. Bob and Sis. Lorraine Dombek are the paternal grandparents. Bro. Burt and Sis. Cherinne Wheeler welcome home Katie Pearl. Bro. Darryl and Sis. Norma Luginbuhl (Philadelphia, PA) and Burt, Sr. and Margo Wheeler are the grandparents. Siblings are Courtney, Daniel, Christian, Samuel, James and Joseph. Bro. Melvin and Sis. Millie Gerber have a new great-granddaughter. Kenzie Laine was born to Bro. Brad and Sis. Deanna Wiegand (Congerville, IL). Kayleigh is happy to have a new sister. We are grateful for these families and pray that God will continue to provide for the needs of each.

We extend much appreciation to Bro. Shawn and Sis. Sandra Metzger and their children for making the effort to spend a weekend with us. It was a blessing to have Bro. Shawn minister to us and wish him grace as he continues to preach God's Word.

Let us continue to give our hearts unto our Lord for refuge and strength as another year spans out before us.

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**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
WASHINGTON  
Henrietta Meyer**

"I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men; For kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

*1 Timothy 2:1-2*

By the time this is read, the holidays will be past and the next event will be the inauguration of a new president. We need to remember and follow the instructions of the apostle Paul.

Our caretakers for November were

Bro. Brent and Sis. Charlotte Hoerr and family and Bro. Shon and Sis. Peg Haerr and family from Taylor, MO.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Dan Moser (Elgin, IL), Bro. Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL), Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) and Bro. Dan Stoller (Rockville, CT). Other visitors this month were from Smithville, OH.

Directions in the new Ministers' Book are good for those coming from the north or west. For those coming up I-95 from south of DC or from the eastern part of the area, you need to take I-95/495 to Exit 28A (New Hampshire Ave) for approx. 2 miles to Rt. 29 North. Go about 3 miles to Fairland Road and follow the directions in the Ministers' book.

If you are planning to visit Washington, D.C. area for vacation or business, please contact Bro. Joe and Sis. Holly Bohart at [jbohart@gmail.com](mailto:jbohart@gmail.com) or Sis. Henrietta Meyer at (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.

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**FLORIDA  
FORT LAUDERDALE  
Renee Mangold**

We were thankful to have with us visiting ministering Bros. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN), Bro. Tim Hohulin (Sis. Cathy, Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Dewayne Dill (Sis. LaRae, Minneapolis, MN). We pray that God would bless them for their efforts in His service.

Our annual Christmas caroling went to the Manor Pines Nursing Home where Bro. Harry Sutter now resides. It is a blessing and a privilege to be able to share the joy of Christmas with shut-ins at this time of year.

Bro. Harry Sutter fell and broke his hip. We're thankful that he is mending and has been able to return to his health care facility.



As our numbers increase during the winter months, it lifts our spirits to fellowship with friends and brethren that we haven't seen in a while. We encourage all to come and visit and share in the warmth of the sun as well as the warmth of God's Spirit at our little Ft. Lauderdale church.

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**FLORIDA  
NORTH FORT MYERS  
Naomi Vogel**

Several of our winter residents are up north with their families over the holidays. After hearing the weather reports, it's certain they will be glad to get back to the warmth and sunshine soon! We will be glad to have them back in our midst!

We were blessed by the sermon delivered by Bro. Dwight Stoller (Latty, OH) this month. Thank you, Bro. Dwight and Sis. Lori, for your visit and for your service in the ministry. May God bless you! Come again soon!

"Get Well Fast" wishes are in order for Bro. Don Kauffman after recent knee surgery and for Bro. Stan Hodel who had a hip replacement. Both are reportedly doing well!

A reminder for any who will be visiting the Naples/Marco Island area this winter that the Wednesday evening services at the Best Western Hotel in Naples will resume in January and continue through March. It is located just west of I75 on Pine Ridge Road and services are at 7:30 p.m.

In just a few days we will celebrate the birth of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As the song says, "It's the best time of the year!"

Then, in a few short months, we will commemorate His death and resurrection so we can find forgiveness for our sins and everlasting life in His presence. What an awesome God!

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**FLORIDA, SARASOTA  
DiAnne Brown**

Happy New Year Greetings! As I'm

writing this, we're still putting the finishing touches on our Christmas celebration and praying our daughter's flight will make it out of Chicago before the impending blizzard. By the time we read this, the celebration will be a warm and happy memory and we will be well into 2009. My resolution for the coming year is to seek Jesus as fervently as the wise men, as humbly as the shepherds and as faithfully as Mary. Won't you join me?

Recently, we spent an evening with friends from church, work, school and the neighborhood. It was a joyful evening of fellowship. Our family was amazed to see how God has blessed us by placing faith professing people in every area of our daily lives—a wonderful revelation to each of us.

The annual Sunday School Christmas program was held December 21 and what a joy it was! Each student helped to share the old, familiar story of our Savior's birth, brought to us shined up and polished, like a gleaming star of hope to those who will just BELIEVE. Thank you to our special angels, Stephanie, Kyra, Faith, Joshua, Caleb, Gabriel, Jeff, James, John, Olivia, Gideon, Taylor, Cassandra, Julia and Stephen, for their shining gift to our congregation. Thank you to the brothers and sisters who minister to these dear angels all throughout the year.

The Christmas program concluded with a sentimental singing of Happy Birthday to two dear sisters, Sis. Maria Bartoni and Sis. Edna Roscher. What a fine example of devotion each of these grand ladies set for us.

An enjoyable Sunday School wiener roast was held at the home of Bro. Jeff and Sis. Lynne Streitmatter on November 30. A potluck dinner was shared by all, and then the children held a bonfire and marshmallow roast while adults enjoyed hot chocolate and good conversation.

This would be a good time to mention the annual Sunday School Auction is scheduled for Saturday, February 7,

at the Fruitville Elementary School, just across the street from the church. Please give prayerful consideration to how you can help make it a success. Monies raised at the auction provide the lion's share of funding needed for many important Sunday School activities including local outreach ministries, support for our sponsored student at the CCCD in Jamaica and many more. Thank you for any assistance you feel called to provide.

Christmas caroling was held over three different nights and it is always hard to tell who is more blessed ~ the carolers or the seniors. It is such a sweet sharing of love when we stop at each home and offer a song of joy and promise of God's greatest gift. God bless Bro. Virgil and Sis. Suellen Kaeb for faithfully organizing this wonderful activity each year.

Visiting ministers are like streams in the desert and we thank Bro. Jim Vierling (Sis. Linda, Eureka, IL) for including Sarasota in their travel plans over the past month.

Please remember our dear Bro. Tom Miller as he bravely continues his fight against cancer. He is being kept comfortable and appreciating frequent visits from Sarasota brethren as he prepares for his final journey homeward. What a remarkable witness in grace he has been over the past year.

Lastly, we would remind our northern brethren that it is sunny and mid-70's in Sarasota and the welcome is just as warm. Consider visiting us for a week or a season, we would be happy to have your fellowship. It is exciting each Sunday to see the return of familiar visitors as well as new ones!

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**GEORGIA, ATLANTA  
Melinda Gramm**

Twenty-five vibrant voices filled the front of the sanctuary during the Sunday School Christmas program. It was wonderful to see how the Sunday School has again increased in size over the past year. Following a Christmas



recitation, the Pre-K through 1st Grade sang "Away in a Manger". The junior and senior Bible class combined singing "We Know Who He Is" and "The Son of God". The senior Bible class each selected a special Scriptural passage and explained why it had a profound meaning to them. One of the verses of this youthful insight was the immutable doctrine of Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." After services, there was Christmas caroling at a local nursing home and hospital followed by pizza at the church.

We want to thank Bro. Gary Anliker (Sis. Edith, Elgin, IL) and Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev, Detroit, MI) for their service this month.

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### **ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE**

**Jenn Johnson  
Doreen Moser**

Do not be distracted with the busy-ness of life,  
Losing your focus of Christmas, you will leave out Christ.

This time of year we are all always so busy with: shopping, baking, cooking, hosting, wrapping, giving, singing, traveling, and much, much more. Not all the busy-ness of this time of year is bad, but it can certainly be tiring and make us lose our focus. We need to remember to take time to STOP being so busy to remember the true significance of Christmas—God's gift of redeeming love.

One of the best parts of this time of year is having the opportunity to sing Christmas Carols. We have had several of these opportunities in the last month. The Madison Fellowship Group went one evening to sing at a nursing home in Madison. Even though it was a small group, the residents really appreciated it. We were also pleased to witness the Sunday School Christmas Program, and always love to hear the children proclaim

the birth of Christ. After the Christmas Program, we went Christmas Caroling at a couple nursing homes, and then we enjoyed a Chili Supper at church. What a wonderful time of fellowship! As we embark on a New Year, we wish you all God's richest blessings!

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### **ILLINOIS BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL**

**Betsy Zimmerman  
Alissa Kieser**

The Thanksgiving holiday has come and gone and we now look forward to celebrating the Christmas season, the celebration of our Savior's birth. With Christmas approaching, we are reminded to keep our hearts and minds focused on the true reason for this season.

We were blessed to have several visiting ministers this month. Bro. Tim Hohulin (Roanoke) was with us on Thanksgiving Day. We also welcomed Bro. Mark Gerber (Bluffton, IN) and Bro. Seth Gerber (Magdalena, Mexico) this month. We are grateful for their willingness to serve.

We are thankful that our congregation continues to grow as we have several new faces that have decided to make Bloomington their home church. We welcome Bro. Eric and Sis. Gina Hodel and their children, Ethan, Kara and Ty. Eric and Gina have recently moved from the Chicago area. We hope that you feel welcomed and at home in our congregation.

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### **ILLINOIS, BRADFORD**

**Philip and Donna Nenadov**

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

*Matthew 28:19*

This commandment was followed when our Bro. Loren Stoller (Bro. Nate Jr. and Sis. Sherill) and Sis. Heidi

Ehnle (Bro. Donn and Sis. Tracy) were proved and baptized. Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Sis. Judy, Forrest) was gracious to come and help Bro. Bruce with this important duty. It is times like these that help us as believers reflect on our own lives and examine if we are still walking in the faith.

Bros. Glen Braker (Sis. Audrey) and Matt Steffen (Sis. Deanna), both from Princeville, served us this month. We lift up these brothers in prayer as they exhort the church through ministry.

Bro. Kenny Dietz was our hospital patient this month.

When this article is read, the Christmas season will be over. The caroling will be done. Families will have gotten together for a wonderful time of fellowship, partaking in food, and gift giving. Now it is back to the normal routine of life. Do we still have the joy of the sending of God's Son to this earth to bring the good tidings of joy? Or have we packed it away with Christmas ware?

God be with you 'til we meet again.

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### **ILLINOIS, CHICAGO**

**Rachel Meyer**

Greetings from Chicago. We extend our prayers to Bro. George and Sis. Velda Foxe along with their son, Ken, as Ken is recovering from triple-bypass surgery. May they all feel the Lord's nearness during this time.

It was a joy to have our convert, Christine Eckel, back in church after recovering from hip surgery. We have missed seeing her and encourage her in her walk with the Lord.

It was with sadness that we learned of the passing of Sis. Ruth Schumacher from Morton, IL. Sis. Ruth was a part of the Chicago church for many years and leaves very loving memories. Condolences to her family.

Two other loved ones in our congregation have lost family members recently. Mildred Siepka's sister, Sis. Bertie Kieser from Princeville, IL, passed away. We send Mildred and her family our prayers. Our dear friend,



Diana Halfer (Gary), lost her father, Bro. Ralph Hauter from Morton, IL. We wish these dear ones special comfort now and in the future.

The weekend of December 13-14 was our annual Sunday School Christmas program and church Christmas caroling, respectively. The theme for the Christmas program was "Hope, the Greatest Gift." We thank them for this very timely message. We were also able to Christmas carol to dear ones who are seldom able to come to church. This was a blessing, as was the chili supper upon our return. Thank you to everyone who planned, sang, and cooked.

Alexander Stahl has come home to new parents, Bro. Blake and Sis. Christine Stahl! Blake and Christine traveled to Ethiopia December 3-12 to bring back their son. We rejoice with this dear family and welcome little Alexander to our church home.

On November 16, Bro. Nathan Rassi and Sis. Michelle Beery were united in marriage in Rittman, Ohio. Bro. Nathan is the son of our Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla Rassi and Sis. Michelle is the daughter of Bro. Walt and Sis. Lynda Beery. We wish them joy as they begin their life together.

Recently the question was posed, "When does the Bible say the first act of worship of the baby Jesus took place?" So my mind started rolling....ok, first the shepherds...wait, it was the angels...I know it wasn't the Wise Men....Well, I am happy to say I learned something that day that most of you probably already know. In Luke, Chapter 1, verse 41 the answer is found. It says, "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe [John the Baptist], leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost." This was to be a Holy birth with the subsequent salvation of every human being at stake. These two "men-children" already knew.

Merry Christmas to each reader and best wishes for the New Year.

## ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN Jackie Eisenmann

"And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD."

*Jeremiah 23:4*

Our congregation was blessed to hear the reading of the Memorandum on Sunday, November 16. We were thankful that Elder Bro. Wayne Anliker (Forrest, IL) was willing to come and be used in "feeding" our congregation in preaching the Word and assisting with the Memorandum. We are also always thankful for our loving shepherd, Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart; it often goes unmentioned all he and his wife, Sis. Charlen, do for our congregation. Let's all continue to hold up the leadership of our church in prayer continually.

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

*Luke 2:7*

On Sunday, December 14, we were taught by our Sunday school of the birth our Lord and Savior. After the program we were blessed to go Christmas caroling to area nursing homes. After the caroling, we gathered back at church to have our annual Christmas chili supper.

Our congregation is rejoicing that Aaron Walder (Bro. Art and Sis. Kim) has begun his repentance. May God be with Aaron as he seeks to serve Him. Our prayers are with Aaron and the others in our congregation who have recently begun their walk with God. It truly is a time of thankfulness! "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:32)

Bro. Neal and Sis. Kim Kellen-

berger are rejoicing over the birth of a precious daughter, Jaci Jo, born November 30. Jaci is welcomed home by big brothers, Cailer and Brock. It has been awhile since there has been a newborn in church, so she is getting much attention!

We are always thankful for visiting ministers! This past month we enjoyed having Bro. Brad Eisenmann (Chicago, IL), Bro. Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL) and Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL). May God bless each one for their willingness to be used in preaching His Word!

"The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it."

*Proverbs 29:7*

Our Sunday school students had the opportunity to consider the poor by assembling and delivering food baskets to some area families who could use some extra help this time of year. Many blessings were received on both ends of the annual project.

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## ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK Vickie Maul Janie Waldbeser

We gathered together on November 21 for our World Relief Family Night. Lots of helping hands working in the service of the Lord. What a blessing we enjoyed.

Representatives from the Morton Home for the Handicapped were here for a potluck and presentation on Saturday, November 22. We appreciate their efforts to express and make us aware of the many labors put forth through their services. May God bless each one who makes the Home what it is. An added blessing was that ministering Bro. Randy Mogler and his dear wife, Sis. Evie, stayed over and shared the day with us on Sunday. May God bless you for your labors of love.

We were thankful to have Bro. Les Kaeb (Francesville, IN) and Bro. Dan



Moser (Elgin, IL) share the Word of God with us this month also. May God bless them.

On December 6, we joined our voices together in Christmas caroling to our loved ones in their homes or nursing homes. It was a blessing for both the giver and receiver.

December 17 was our Christmas Program. Our hearts were touched by the Sunday School children bringing forth the Christmas story. It never grows old to hear of how our Lord came to earth in a lowly manger and became the Saviour of the world. May we always be thankful for this wonderful Gift that God has given us!

Be not content this Babe to know,  
Nor stay at Bethlehem,  
But go with Christ to Calvary's brow,  
Beyond Jerusalem.

'Tis there men learn to know the  
Christ,  
For there He bore man's sin.  
Then open wide the door of heart,  
And let the Saviour in.

*Hymns of Zion #36*

*Note of Thanks:*

With sincere gratitude, Bro. Elmer and Sis. Mary Lou Kaeb and family would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone for all the prayers, visits, cards, kind wishes and everything done on our behalf since Sis. Mary Lou's stroke.

May God be your Rewarder. (Psalm 27:14)

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**ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE**  
**Holly Zobrist**

We rejoiced with Bro. Jeremy Stickling (Bro. Scott and Sis. Jan) and Sis. Janae Schulz (Bro. Roger and Sis. June, Oakville) as they became one on November 23. We pray that they will feel God's nearness as they start this new chapter in their lives.

We also rejoice with Bro. Brad and Sis. Deanna Wiegand as Kenzie Laine made her entrance into this world. Big sister Kayleigh is excited about having

a sister. Also thankful for the safe arrival are grandparents, Bro. Rick and Sis. Sue Wiegand and Bro. John and Sis. Maureen Virkler.

We are saddened to hear that Sis. Emma Schieber has passed from this life. She is survived by her sister, Sis. Esther Troike.

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**ILLINOIS, ELGIN**

**Amy Gasser**  
**Miriam Gasser**

Our local brothers were thankful for support on the pulpit, and we also received a blessing from the ministry of our visitors. They were Bros. Brad Gudeman (Bradford, IL), Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL), Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), Ted Schock (Belvidere, IL), and Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO).

On December 6, funeral services were held for our dear Bro. Delbert Schmidt, who passed away December 2. He is survived by his wife, Sis. Jeanette; three children, Linda Meglin, Karen Freed, and Keith Schmidt; several grandchildren and great-grandchildren; one sister, and two brothers. We were encouraged by Bro. Delbert's faithful walk and appreciated his many years of willing service in the church kitchen.

Many enjoyed Family Christmas Caroling on December 7, and on December 14, the Sunday School presented their program. It was a heartwarming evening to hear the younger children recite their pieces and the older students sing and read from scripture. The reason for the season was clearly and beautifully portrayed.

December 14 was also Bro. Levi Wuethrich's last Sunday in Elgin, for at least six months. He will be moving to San Diego for a work rotation and may return to our area in the future.

**ILLINOIS, EUREKA**

**Dee Baer**  
**Jodi Blunier**

We are thankful for the ministering brethren who have visited Eureka recently. Those who have labored on our behalf include Bros. Dan Stoller (Remington, IN), Brian Huber (Francesville, IN), and Brad Gudeman (Bradford, IL).

We welcome Darren Matthew, new son of Bro. Alan and Sis. Angie Huber. His siblings are Kevin, Erica, and Lanae and grandparents are Bro. Gary Huber, Karen Huber, and Bro. Paul and Sis. Kris Schmidgall. Also arriving is Shane Robert Witzig, to Bro. Shannon and Sis. Sharon and Sheldon's home. His grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Elaine Witzig and Bro. Robert and Sis. Laura Kieser (Bloomington, IL).

Grandparents, Bro. Tom and Sis. Edie Stoller, welcome Kaylee Sue, daughter of Jon and Kathy Guth, and Kinley Renee, daughter of Bro. Darrell and Sis. Jennifer Stoller (Goodfield, IL). Also, Sis. Tammy Mayhall became first-time grandma with the birth of Addison Lane, daughter of Alex and Christine. Alex is serving in the United States Air Force in Japan. Bro. Ted and Sis. Donna Blunier also have another grandchild, Jack Vernon, son of Brian and Lizzie Blunier. Bro. Craig and Sis. Marilyn Martin's newest grandchild is Mitchell James, son of Bro. Brett and Sis. Jennifer Gutwein (Forrest, IL).

Our friends, Kyla Edelman (Bro. Keith and Sis. Nadine) and Caitlin Leman (Bro. Kent and Sis. Chris), answered the call to repentance. We rejoice with every soul who hears and receives the grace to humble themselves at the foot of the Cross.

Best wishes to Daniel Martin (Bro. Doug and Sis. Karen) and Megan Reese (Mike and Donna, Eureka, IL) in the joining of their lives in marriage. May the Lord be their guide and stay through life.

As joy comes, so must sorrow come in this life. Bro. Jim Ringger (Sis.



Lyola) mourns the death of his brother, Jake Ringger (Gridley, IL). Sis. Mary Baer grieves the loss of her sister, Sis. Bertie Kieser (Princeville, IL). Sis. Elsie Zimmerman (Bro. Earl) said goodbye to her sister, Gladys Carius (Morton, IL). Sis. Helen Fisher (Bro. Eli) also bid farewell to her sister, Sis. Ruth Schumacher (Morton, IL). Our Bro. Ken Huetter (Sis. Arlene) was called Home to be with his Heavenly Father. Their children are Sis. Donna Wyss (Bro. Bruce, Goodfield, IL), Sis. Rita Wettstein (Bro. Jon, Bloomfield, IA), Sis. Teresa Schock (Bro. Dale, Bloomfield, IA), and Sis. Marsha Koch (Bro. Earl, Tremont, IL).

Those we are praying for because of sickness include Sis. Evie Gudeman (Bro. Don), Sis. Jane Stoller (Bro. Jim), and Sis. Carolyn Hoerr (Bro. Mark).

Reminder to the Eureka congregation that January is the month for Silver Lining collection. Your timely contributions will be appreciated.

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### **ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY**

**Elizabeth Fehr  
Anna Schmidgall**

It was uplifting to hear the old, old Christmas story brought to us through song and verse by our Sunday School. Our prayer for each student is that they receive the most wondrous Gift ever given.

Our congregation was blessed with several visiting ministers this past month. They were: Elder Bros. Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL) and Kevin Ryan (Rockville, CT) and Bros. Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL), Nate Wieland (Goodfield, IL), and Kerwin Edelman (Athens, AL).

Marti and Zsuzsi Hejja from Budapest, Hungary, spent several weeks in our area. Marti works at a nursing home there and spent time learning and sharing at Fairview Haven along with her sister. They also had time for some traveling.

### *Note of Thanks:*

I want to thank all of you who remembered me with cards, visits, and calls while I was recuperating from knee surgery. William and I appreciate your thoughtfulness. May God bless you all.

*Helen Fehr*

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### **ILLINOIS, FORREST**

**Jill Wenger  
Lori Leman**

We rejoice with several souls who have answered the Lord's call and have turned to Him in repentance. Our new converts are Heidi Edelman (Warren and Sis. Cindy), Jamie Ricketts (Bro. Allen and Sis. Alisa), and Dick Rieger. We pray that they will build on the firm foundation so that they will be able to stand when the tests of life come.

God has blessed the home of Bro. Brett and Sis. Jennifer Gutwein with a precious baby boy, Mitchell James. His thankful grandparents are Bro. Jeff and Sis. Wendy Gutwein and Bro. Craig and Sis. Marilyn Martin (Eureka, IL). May God give them grace to raise their son to know Him and His ways.

Our prayers are with Bro. Brian Ricketts (Sis. Marie), Bro. Larry Bachman (Sis. Donna), and Josiah Gutwein (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Wendy) who have suffered in the flesh and spent time in the hospital this month. May God continue to heal as He sees fit.

Our prayers are also with the family of Sis. Emma Ifft as she recently passed away. We continue to keep her husband, Bro. Elmer, and children, Bro. Larry (Sis. Shirley), Sis. Janice, Bro. Duane (Sis. Mary), and Dave, as well as her brother, Bro. Frank Schmidt (Fairbury, IL), in our prayers and pray that God will comfort the family.

We are thankful for God's provision as the engagement of our Sis. Janice Ifft and Bro. Byron Nussbaum was made known to us. We pray for God's richest blessings to be upon them as they prepare for their life together.

December 7 was the wedding day for

Sis. Rebekah Wenger and Bro. Mark Klaus (Athens, AL). Their parents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Renee Wenger and Betty and the late John Klaus (Washington, IL). We will miss Sis. Rebekah as they will make their home in Athens, but we pray that God will be with them.

We are thankful for our many visiting ministers this month. Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan (Rockville, CT), Bro. Andrew Klaus (Tokyo, Japan), Bro. Daron Price (Milford, IN), Bro. Fred Funk (Morton, IL), Bro. Matthew Rassi (Chicago, IL), Bro. John Rassi (Tremont, IL), Bro. Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), Bro. Randy Mogler (Washington, IL), and Bro. Kerwin Edelman (Athens, AL) all assembled with us, and we pray that God will richly bless all of them for their labors in His vineyard.

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### **ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD**

**Rita Bauman  
Amber Grimm**

Another year of progress,  
another year of praise,  
another year of proving  
Thy presence all the days.

*Hymns of Zion #150*

Bro. Chad and Sis. Janelle Hillman along with their son, Tyler, welcomed home Jolin Leah born on December 5. We can sense God's presence in the birth and miracle of a new baby.

On December 14, we enjoyed listening to our youth for the Christmas program. Special thanks to the teachers and Sunday School students who put forth the effort to bring us the Christmas story.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

Our hearts and prayers go out to Sis. Donna Wyss (Bro. Bruce) whose father, Bro. Kenneth Huetter from Tremont, IL, passed away this month.



None of us know when our time on earth will be done, but may we all be ready to be with our Master on earth or else in heaven.

Another year of mercies,  
of faithfulness and grace,  
another year of gladness  
in the shining of Thy face.

*Hymns of Zion #150*

We rejoice with Sis. Jackie Steffen and Bro. Richard Martin (Gridley, IL) as they were united in marriage on December 28. Parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Joan Steffen and Byron and Sis. Katie Martin.

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

*Hymns of Zion #150*

We thank Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Steph Baner (Sis. Donnalou, Gridley, IL), Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL) and Bro. Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL) as they brought us the Word this month.

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

As a New Year begins to unfold, millions of people will make resolutions to improve their lives. A good many of these resolutions will last a few days or at best a few weeks. The converted believer in Christ Jesus, however, has a very important "resolution" to keep until he or she dies. This was made in the form of a covenant to God, while standing in those baptismal waters, to be true and faithful to God until life's end. Covenant-keeping is made possible by the grace and power of God. Certainly, the most important aspect of our lives is to utilize the God-providing power to be true and faithful; and to henceforth be thankful each day that such power is available.

Bro. Daren Metz was selected as our

new minister here in Gridley. We are thankful to God that the way was opened to provide help to our pulpit. We surely pray for him and his wife, Sis. Rita. And we surely extend our sympathies to them over the loss of Sis. Rita's mother, Sis. Shelby Beer (Milford, IN) who passed away soon after Bro. Daren was installed.

We were happy for several visiting ministers lately. They were Bros. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO), Brace Wieland (Leo, IN), Mark Wettstein (LaCrosse, IN), Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN), Ed Fritz (Washington, IL) and Elder Bro. Bruce Endress (Bradford, IL). Truly, we were blessed as God's Word came forth.

Bro. Richard Martin was married on December 28 to Sis. Jackie Steffen at Goodfield. He is the son of Byron and Sis. Katie Martin. Her parents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Joan Steffen (Goodfield, IL). We wish them well in their marital union of hearts, and thank God for the happiness they have experienced together.

Bro. Justin Wiegand was announced to marry Sis. Kirsten Sauder (Leo, IN). He is the son of Bro. Roger and Sis. Kathy Wiegand. Her parents are Bro. Tim and Sis. Jenny Sauder of Leo. The couple is planning a summer wedding.

Carson Edward Dohman was born to Bro. Michael and Sis. Candace Dohman. He is their second child. Grandparents are Bro. Lynn and Sis. Elaine Stoller and John and Sis. Judy Dohman, all of Gridley. Sis. Lucille Stoller is a great-grandparent along with Shirley Dohman, Fairbury. Carson has a sibling, Landon, 2.

Sis. Crystal Hodel was in the hospital for surgery. Bro. Joe Stoller also had surgery.

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### **ILLINOIS, MORTON** **Annette Tanner** **Julie Bahr**

We wish to thank our visiting ministers this month. They were Bro. Nate

Leman (Sis. Yvonne, Denver, CO), Bro. Glen Funk (Sis. Sally, Wichita, KS), Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla) and Bro. Matthew Rassi (Sis. Bridget), both of Chicago.

I would like to share a provoking thought. One's ego is described as Excluding God Out. A new year is here! Let God IN and let Him give you the rich blessing He has in store for you.

In recent weeks our church of Morton has experienced the deaths of many precious loved ones. Our prayers are continually with the families as they are called on to lean on God's everlasting arms.

Our sympathy is with Sis. Vilas Belsley's family. She is survived by her husband, Bro. Louis, and daughters, Sis. Jennifer Knobloch (late Bro. Don), Sis. Sallie Hoerr (Bro. Todd) and Sis. Wendy Kupferschmid (Bro. Matt).

Sympathy is extended to Sis. Debbie Braker (Bro. Brad) in the loss of her mother, Sis. Lee Pflederer (Bro. James) of Tremont.

We also extend sympathy to Bro. Jeff Kuykendall (Sis. Larissa) in the loss of his father, Gary Kuykendall. Gary is also survived by his wife, Ellie, and a sister-in-law, Sis. Jody Baum of Morton.

On December 13, Sis. Dorothy Barth met her Creator. Her husband, Bro. Richard, survives along with one son, Richard Barth, Jr.

On December 16, Gladys Carius went to be with the Lord. Gladys came to peace with her Savior the day previous to her death. She is survived by her husband, Don Carius, a brother, Bro. Bill Kaufman, from Morton, and many other close family members who loved her.

Sis. Anna Kaiser went to her Heavenly reward December 18. One daughter, Sis. Karen Kaiser, Morton, and one son, Gary Kaiser, survive.

On December 19, Sis. Ruth Schumacher passed on to meet her Creator. Sis. Ruth leaves many who loved her. Also on this date, Bro. Ray Huette lost his brother, Bro. Ken Huette, Tre-



mont.

On December 20, Bro. Ralph Hauter passed on. He leaves his wife, Sis. Lydia, a sister, Sis. Kathryn Kaiser (Bro. Orman) from Morton, and one daughter, Diana Halfer, from Chicago.

May God comfort each one in times of heartache and sorrow, for "in the sweet by and by we shall meet on that beautiful shore!"

Elder Bro. Ted Witzig gave our December Wednesday evening family worship topic entitled "A Christmas Quiz". We were challenged by Bro. Ted (a retired school teacher) to seek answers through the Word that told the Christmas story according to the scriptures and not just to the way we imagined the events to occur. What an interesting way to encourage us in worship leading up to the Christmas celebration!

Brothers who have been elected to serve in various capacities of church offices are Bro. Howard Leman, Bro. Keith Schick, Bro. Jan Neukomm, Bro. Ed Kaiser, Bro. Jeff Kaufman II, Bro. Lawrence Tanner, Bro. Brian Bahr, Bro. Andrew Rassi, Bro. Todd Sauder, Bro. Scott Warner, and Bro. Roy Bahr. Thank you to those brothers who are retiring and have faithfully served.

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### **ILLINOIS, PEORIA** **Pam Fritzenmeier**

We were blessed to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of five dear souls on the weekend of November 22-23. Our new brothers and sisters in Christ are Aaron and Hannah Roecker (son and daughter of Bro. Tim and Sis. Diane), Jesse Rieker (Bro. Jim and Sis. Jane), Leah Stickling (Bro. Craig and Sis. Jacki) and Rachel Streitmatter (Bro. Doug and Sis. Cindy). Elder Bro. Steve Ringger (Sis. Myra, Bluffton North) and Bro. Mark Zimmerman (Sis. Cheryl, Eureka) brought the Word to us on this special weekend.

Other visiting ministers during this month were Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger

(Sis. Peg, Goodfield), Bro. Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton) and Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary Ann, Fairbury). Thank you to each one for your service.

We praise God for six new converts. They include: Brett Hoerr (Bro. Carl and Sis. Debby), Danae Hoerr (Bro. Don and Sis. Jackie), Paige Kempf (Bro. Gary and Sis. Gina), Aubrey Leuthold (Bro. Steve and Sis. Lois), Chassi Scholl (Bro. Kyle and Sis. Jane), and Samantha Senders, friend of Sis. Rachel Streitmatter.

Bro. Dave and Sis. Jan Roberts welcomed their first child on October 29. Her name is Grace Elise and her grandparents are Bro. Mike and Sis. Cheryl Stratton (Taylor, MO) and Sis. Caroline Roberts (Bluffton North, IN).

We have two engagement announcements to report this month. Bro. Wayne and Sis. Carol Klopfenstein's daughter, Sis. Kyra, was announced Sunday, November 30, to Bro. Morgan Langhofer (Bro. Eric and Sis. Cynthia) of Phoenix. On Sunday, December 7, Sis. Julia Stickling (Chris and Sis. Marcia) was announced to Bro. Shane Suttor of Taylor. His parents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Kris Suttor (Taylor).

Brian David (Sis. Nanette David and Jim David) was married October 11 to Katie Wicks. Bro. Bob Leman and Sis. Dee Fehr were united in marriage Sunday, December 7, in Roanoke. May God richly bless you as you walk together.

Several from our congregation have said a final goodbye to loved ones this month. Sis. Vilas Belsley, mother of Sis. Sallie (Bro. Todd) Hoerr, passed away November 23. Sis. Rita (Bro. David) Sauder's mother, Ila Powers, passed away November 29. On December 11, Sis. Ruth Huthmann finished her earthly race. God allowed her and Bro. George to celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary on November 24. Their children are Sis. Kathy, Sis. Heidi (Bro. Ben) Hartter, and Susan (Rick) Scott. Sis. Bertie Kieser (Princeville), mother

of Sis. Janet (Mike) Weber, passed away December 15. May God give your hearts comfort.

Many in our congregation have been in the hospital and had health issues this month. Sis. Lois Ehnle, Sis. Clara Huber, Sis. Marge Powers, Mary Funk, Bro. Bob Miller, Bro. Ken Ober, Bro. Harlan Thomas, and Bro. George Huthmann need our prayers for healing.

With the Christmas season comes many special events. On Saturday, December 6, our Sunday School children gathered at the Fellowship Hall for the annual pizza party, play, and gift exchange. All the students enjoyed the Bible Class play. On Sunday afternoon, December 14, our children, pre-k through young group, told the story of Christmas through songs and verses at the Sunday School Christmas program. That evening many were blessed to participate in the church Christmas caroling, whether through singing or listening.

Please continue to pray for Bro. Tim and Sis. Joan Reinhard and family in Haiti, and Bro. David Sceggel and Bro. Jonathan Aupperle in Magdalena.

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### **ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE** **Connie Christ** **Linda Joos**

The weekend of November 29-30, we were blessed to have provings and baptisms for four dear souls: Adam Streitmatter and Sarah Alfon (son and daughter of Bro. Alan and Sis. Janet Streitmatter), Devon Knobloch (Bro. Keith and Sis. Lisa), and Katie Schick (Bro. Stan and Sis. Margie). Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Francesville, IN), Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL), Bro. Ted Hirstein (Morton, IL), Bro. Dale Banwart (Congerville, IL), and Bro. Craig Stickling (Peoria, IL) were with us that weekend, and we thank them for coming.

Other visiting ministers have been Elder Bro. Paul Messner (Winthrop, MN), Bro. Brad Eisenmann (Chicago,



IL), Bro. Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL) and Bro. Fred Witzig (Indianapolis, IN). May God bless them for their willingness to serve us.

New converts are Kelsie Stahl (Bro. Rod and Sis. Cathy) and Austin Knobloch (Bro. Keith and Sis. Lisa). May God continue to work in their hearts during the repentance and conversion process.

Hospital patients have been Bro. Duane Elsasser, Sis. Bertie Kieser, Sis. Doreen Meyer and Marvin Eberle. May God provide in all things.

Sis. Bertie Kieser (late Bro. Ludwig) moved to our Peoria Home and enjoyed a month in her new home before health issues changed that. God called her Home, and funeral services were held on December 20. Bro. Charles Hemmer (Peoria, IL) was here to assist in the services. Her daughter and son-in-law, Sis. Janet and Michael Weber (Peoria, IL), and her dear grandchildren will miss her love and godly example, but they are thankful she could go to her Heavenly Rest. May God comfort their hearts.

What a joy new life brings. We rejoice with Bro. Jared and Sis. Julie Hanson as they welcome a little daughter, Emily Jean, born on November 27. Thankful grandparents are Steve and Miriam Hanson (Princeville, IL) and Bro. Bill and Sis. Karen Ringger (Bradford, IL). Welcoming a precious baby boy are Cam and Samantha Blair. Little Ezra James was born December 4. May God bless these first-time parents.

## ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

**Jamie Hodel  
Judy Sauder**

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

*Genesis 2:18*

On November 16, the marriage engagement of Sis. Sara Fischer and Bro. Jim Byrd was announced. Also, Scott

Aeschleman (Bro. Steve and Sis. Jill) and Alisha Sanders (Bruce and Marcia) of Lee's Summit, Missouri, plan to be married January 3. Jeremy Hilton (Sis. Jane of Roanoke and Bob and Roxie Hilton of Kewanna, IN) and Amber McCann (Steve and Deb) of Roanoke are planning an April wedding. We rejoice with these dear couples and wish them God's blessings as they prepare for marriage.

Parks Remington was born to Bro. Benji and Sis. Kyle Leman on November 16. His thankful grandparents are Tina and Keith McKimmey of Morton and Bro. Ben and Sis. Janet Leman.

On November 19, Bro. Steve Baner (Gridley) presented our monthly Family Worship with the topic "Worship". I Chronicles 16:29 "...worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." We thank Bro. Steve for his timely and inspiring message. On Thanksgiving Day, Bro. Brad Metz (Bloomington) was our guest minister. On November 30, Bro. Ron Koehl (Sarasota) presented the gospel to our congregation. And on December 7, Elder Bro. Ben Walder (Congerville) was our visiting minister. We thank these brothers for their labors of love on behalf of our congregation.

On November 23 our annual Thanksgiving singing was held. It was an inspiring evening of worship.

Our church's annual business meeting took place on December 3. Bro. Curt (Sis. Denise) Knepp was elected as a church trustee, Bro. Tim (Sis. Peg) Stoller was selected as a fellowship hall trustee and Bro. Steve (Sis. Shirley) Leman was chosen as a nursing home trustee. We thank all those who willingly give of their time to serve our congregation.

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

*Proverbs 18:22*

Sis. Dee Fehr (Sis. Louise) and Bro. Bob Leman of Peoria (Bro. Milton and

Sis. Geraldine of Eureka) were united in marriage on December 7. Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Peoria), Bro. Craig Stickling (Peoria) and Bro. Marvin Leman (Bradford) were our guest ministers for the day. We wish Bro. Bob and Sis. Dee God's rich blessings as they begin married life.

Also on December 7, our annual church caroling and supper was held. It was a blessed evening.

Viola Presley passed away on December 3. She was the mother of Bro. Gordon (Sis. Karen) Presley. Also Sis. Jan (Bro. Bob) Sauder's father, Tino Monge, passed away on December 7. Sis. Ruth (Bro. George) Huthmann of Peoria went to be with the Lord on December 11. She was the sister of Bro. Mel (Sis. Shirley) Hohulin. We extend our love and deepest sympathy to these three dear families and pray for the Lord's comfort upon them.

David Leman (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Karen) suffered second and third degree burns on his face, neck, chest, arms, and hands on November 19. He is now home from the hospital and recovering. Bro. Morris (Sis. Ida Mae) Barth, Sis. Mabel Getz, and Bro. Steve (Sis. Joyce) Hodel have also been hospitalized recently.

"...Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

*Isaiah 7:14*

On December 14, our Sunday School Christmas program was held. We thank our youth and young adults for presenting the Christmas story in song. It was a blessed day.

*Note:*

On December 7, a woman's black coat was mistakenly taken from the Roanoke church. It had a small antique pin on the lapel and also had a black and gold scarf with it. If anyone knows of its whereabouts, please contact one of the church ministers to make arrangements for its return.



*Note of Thanks:*

I would like to thank family, relatives, and friends for the cards, gifts, visits, phone calls and most of all the prayers I received when in the hospital and since returning home. All was greatly appreciated. May God bless you.

*Sis. Dorothy Pfister*

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**ILLINOIS, TREMONT**  
**Teresa Rowell**  
**Janice Sauder**

As I sit down to write this letter, the snow is falling rapidly outside my window. I love snow, as long as I don't have to be out in it. It covers up the ugliness of the brown grass, and bare trees. It really reminds me of the saving blood of Jesus Christ. When we repent and seek Him, He covers our ugliness (sin) with His precious blood and makes us white as snow.

Lord Jesus I long to be perfectly whole,

I want Thee forever to live in my soul.  
 Break down every idol, cast out every foe,

Just wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

*Hymns of Zion # 210*

We had a number of visiting ministers this month. Bro. Akihiro Ito (Sis. Carrie, Shioda, Japan), Bro. Warren Zahner (Sis. Bonnie, Rockville), Bro. Lenny Meyer (Sis. Charlotte, Chicago), Bro. Scott Wegman (Sis. Dawn, Taylor) and Bro. Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Fairbury) all brought us the Word of Life and we are thankful for this.

Two families are enjoying new bundles of love from heaven. Bro. Greg and Sis. Julie Blunier welcome Lily Anne into their family circle. Luke, Sarah, Judah, Ethan, Isaac, and Silas are excited about a new sibling to love. Bro. Dean and Sis. Karen Beutel are grandparents for the second time this year as their daughter, Stephanie, and her husband, Nathan Ramquist (Stutt-

gart, Germany), welcome their first child, Elena Dorothy. We wish these couples God's wisdom as they raise these dear children.

Believing that it is God's will for their lives, Bro. Mark Sauder (Bro. Howard and Sis. Janice) and Sis. Ashley Hoerr (Bro. Scott and Sis. Anna, Taylor, MO) have announced their intention to be married. Also, the announcement was made to our congregation that Bro. Joel Cox (Bro. John and Sis. Ellen, Washington, IL) and Sis. Marcy Kaiser (Bro. Don and Sis. Sandy) are to be joined in Holy Matrimony. In this important step in their lives, we wish these dear couples God's many blessings.

As in the joy, we always have sorrow. The Lord never promised that it would be easy, only that it would be worth it. Sis. Lee Pflederer was laid to rest this month. Her death was somewhat unexpected, and our deepest sympathy goes out to her husband, Bro. Jim, and her children, Bro. Steve (Sis. Barb), Ron (Kathy), Sis. Debbie (Bro. Brad) Braker (Morton), Ted, and grandchildren.

There are also those who have been ill or in the hospital. We pray for Bro. Cleo (Sis. Nancy) Koch, and Sis. Betty Hild. May they feel the prayers of those who love them.

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**ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON**  
**Elizabeth Heinold**  
**Nancy Knepp**

"From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised."

*Psalm 113:3*

How would my life be different if I really lived this verse consistently, day by day? How about you? Wouldn't praise and thanksgiving push aside the worries and anxieties that come in life?

"And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the

day long."

*Psalm 35:28*

We're thankful for the visiting ministers we had this month. They included Bro. Nile Bucher (Sis. Phyllis, Bluffton North, IN), Bro. Garry Bucher (Sis. Lois, Valparaiso, IN), Elder Bro. Ervin Knecht (Sis. Sandy, Eureka, IL), Bro. Tony Manz (Sis. Denise, Junction, OH) and Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Sis. Karen, Kansas City, MO). We really appreciate these Brothers and their wives for serving us.

We rejoice with Bro. Will and Sis. Holly Kellenberger as they welcome little Trace William into their family. Grandparents of Trace are Bro. Randy and Sis. Ruth Kellenberger and Bro. Lynne and Sis. Elaine Stoller (Gridley, IL).

Our Bro. Kim Huber was hospitalized this month and we are thankful he is recovered and back on his feet.

We rejoice with Bro. Matt Gerber and Sis. Ruth Cervantes as they were married this month. Bro. Matt and Sis. Ruth are from Ixtlan, MX, but Washington church holds them very close to our heart. Parents of this couple are Bro. Neil and Sis. Leesa Gerber and Bro. Jose and Sis. Kathy Cervantes from Tecate, MX.

I will close with the news that our Bro. Joel Cox's engagement to Sis. Marcy Kaiser was announced. We are so happy for these families. Parents are Bro. John and Sis. Ellen Cox and Bro. Don and Sis. Sandy Kaiser (Tremont, IL).

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**INDIANA, BLUFFTON**  
**Stef Kipfer**  
**Jan Schwartz**

Our congregation has once again had several reasons to be on our knees this past month. We were prayerful for Sis. Jean Compton (Bro. Gary) in the loss of her mother, Sis. Edna Leman (Eureka, IL). Sis. Edna was laid to rest on Monday, November 17.

Our prayers and condolences were



also with Sis. Rosemary Hegerfeld as her husband, Bro. Edwin Hegerfeld, went to meet his Saviour on November 16. Our prayers were likewise with their children, Clark Hegerfeld and Crystal Lake.

Several of our members and friends have had to spend time in the hospital this month. We have been praying and will continue to pray for Bro. Jesse Terhune, Bro. Steve Reinhard (Sis. Renee), Bro. Ed Steffen (Sis. Denise), Sis. Evie Gerber (Bro. Bob), Bro. Bill Carrico (Sis. Heidi), Judy Huffaker (mother of Bro. Jon Magnin), Mat Groce (grandson of Sis. Colleen Landrum), and Derek Gephart (grandson of Bro. Arlen and Sis. Jeanne Gerber). We pray the Holy Spirit will minister to them as they face uncertain health issues.

In addition, our prayers were with Bro. Rich Pfister (Sis. Amber) this past month as he spent two weeks in Haiti. Also we had work teams traveling to Haiti this month and they were in our prayers. Likewise, Elder Bro. Ed and Sis. Jeni Schwartz spent some time in Ethiopia. Our prayers have been with them as well.

Werejoice with Bro. Jarin Tucker as he was engaged to Sis. Julie Widmer of Smithville, OH, on November 16. Parents of the couple are Jay and Julie Tucker and Bro. Jim and Sis. Karen Widmer (Smithville).

We were blessed with new arrivals this month. On November 27, Bro. Mick and Sis. Brooke Gerber were blessed with a boy, Guy Thomas. Little Guy was welcomed by his sister, Ali. Bro. Tom and Sis. Sue Neuenchwander and Scott Gerber are the excited grandparents.

Sis. Carla Girod welcomed her new grandson, Cole Lewis Howley, on December 3. Cole's parents are Aaron and Bobbie Howley.

Brian and Jennifer Stump greeted their son, Brady Russell, on December 12. Happy grandparents are Steve and Sis. Arlene Stump.

On December 7, our church had the

opportunity to hear the reading of the Memorandum. We appreciate the opportunity to be encouraged by our Elder brethren as we all strive to live for our Lord more completely.

It is truly a wonderful circumstance when we as a church are able to rejoice in the unity of a loving church family. At times we are filled with happiness and other times we weep in tears, but always we join together in the joy of the Lord. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)

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**INDIANA  
BLUFFTON NORTH  
Jessie Longenberger  
Sherry Pfister**

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

*John 3:16*

The holiday season is upon us once again, and with all the hustle and bustle that goes along with it, may we keep our eyes and hearts ever looking to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

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

*Matthew 1:23*

There is always much joy when a new life is brought into this world and we are excited to welcome several new additions to our church family. Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy Stoller welcomed another grandson into their family circle. Little Levi Andrew was born to Bro. Nathan and Leslie Isch (Bluffton) on October 10. Bro. Jameson and Sis. Sheena Ringger (Bluffton) were blessed with a boy, Halden James, on November 4. His happy grandparents are Bro. Kendall and Sis. Sandy Ringger (Bluffton) and Rob and Sis.

Tonya Troxel. On December 2, a sweet little baby girl, Emry Rae, entered the family of Kyle and Marci Lockwood (Fiechter) and joins a brother, Wrigley. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Tony and Sis. Peg Fiechter. Bro. Rod and Sis. Rosemary Mounsey greeted their granddaughter, Myah Raeann. Her parents are Ryan and Lennie Mounsey. She joins a brother, Porter, at home.

On Saturday, December 6, Loving Shepherd Ministries held a benefit concert at a local high school. It was a wonderful night of song for our church family and friends.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. Allen Stoller (Sis. Susan, Bluffton) and Bro. Mark Gerber (Sis. Barb, Bluffton). Thanks to each of God's servants for their labors of love.

December 14 we were treated to the Sunday School Christmas program. The children did a wonderful job sharing the good news about the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was good to be reminded again of the reason for the season through the simple message of the children's songs. We thank the children, teachers, song leaders, and parents for their dedication and hard work. It truly warms the heart to hear that sweet, beautiful singing. The love of a child is so pure you can't help but thank the Lord for His Son, so we can enjoy freedom from the guilt of sin and know His peace in our hearts.

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

*Hymns of Zion,*

*"The Babe of Bethlehem" #36 vs.2*

At this time of year as we gather with family and read the Christmas story, let us remember to pray for men, women, boys and girls who have yet to hear or read the story of Christ's birth. May we feel God's presence and peace



this Christmas and throughout the New Year. Perhaps 2009 will usher in the return of our Saviour.

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**INDIANA  
FRANCESVILLE  
Mildred Clauss  
Barb Huber**

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem, we have special reason for rejoicing if He is also our Savior and Lord! His greatest gift to us is "His Love" and from us He desires "our love" and faithfulness to Him.

On December 1, a lovely Christmas dinner was enjoyed at the Fellowship Center by the widows and their Secret Sisters. This culminates a year of kind deeds and thoughtful gifts; and it is a blessing to be remembered throughout the year.

Sis. Rachel Huber and Bro. Jason Klopfenstein were married on December 7. Their parents are Bro. Brian and Sis. Jacki Huber from here and Bro. John and Sis. Linda Klopfenstein from Leo. Jason and Rachel will live in the Leo area and we wish them much happiness as they serve the Lord together.

Sis. Mary Ann (Bro. Glen) Gutwein was in the hospital for surgery; and we thank the Lord she is now doing well. Bro. Harold Gutwein has also been hospitalized, but he is blessed to be improving.

Bro. Sylvan Wenger died on December 13 at Parkview Haven where he had lived for several years. Bro. Sylvan was baptized on October 24. He served in the Army during the Korean war and called upon the Lord Jesus for salvation during that time. But recently he had a strong desire to be baptized and to be a part of the brotherhood where he had worshipped for many years. The Lord works in marvelous ways in the hearts of His people.

Our Sunday School program was given on Wednesday evening, December 17. The praise and worship of the children and the youth of our church is

always inspiring. We want to sincerely thank our Sunday School teachers who are so faithful to instruct the children in the Lord's ways.

Soon a new year will be ushered in and no one can predict with certainty what the new year will hold. But we know Jesus holds the future and He will not fail us. We must leave to God all that depends on Him, and think only of being faithful in all that depends upon us.

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**INDIANA  
INDIANAPOLIS  
Sandy Lichtle  
Penny Schroder**

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."

*Isaiah 55: 6*

We rejoice with three souls: Megan Gudeman (Bro. Tim and Sis. Mim), Kaylin Leuthold (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Doreen), and Stacey Lichtle (Bro. John and Sis. Sandy). They have made known their desire to follow Jesus and trust in Him as their Savior. We pray for God's grace and guidance to be with them as they grow in their walk with the Lord.

On November 30, Bro. Makoto Inoue (Elder Bro. Akito and Sis. Marie, Tokyo, Japan) and Sis. Anna Bollier (Bro. Ron and Sis. Edie) announced their engagement. We are happy for them and pray for God's blessings to be with them as they plan a May wedding.

Our Sunday school Christmas program was held on December 7. It was a joy and blessing to hear the children tell the wonderful story of Jesus' birth through verse and song. On December 17, we enjoyed a chili supper at church, followed by Christmas caroling in the community.

On December 7, Katrina Baltic (Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty) was announced for peace. Lord willing, she will give her testimony and be baptized

the weekend of January 3-4 in Rittman, OH. We thank and praise God for what He has done in her life.

The weekend of December 13-14 we heard the testimonies and witnessed the baptisms of three precious souls: Bro. Seth Bollier (Bro. Ron and Sis. Edie), Sis. Ashley Bollier (Bro. Ron and Sis. Edie), and Sis. Teryn Leuthold (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Doreen). We pray that God's grace and nearness will be with them as they serve the Lord. Elder Bros. Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL) and Lynn Stieglitz (Sis. Leonda, Leo, IN) were with us for this joyous occasion. We thank them for their labors of love.

Additionally, we want to thank the following visiting ministers who also served us this month: Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Sis. Peg, Goodfield, IL), Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL), and Bro. Erik Givens (Sis. Deb, Princeville, IL). We appreciate their willingness to be used in the Lord's service.

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**INDIANA, LACROSSE  
Bethany Johnson  
Julie Rocke**

O come, all ye faithful,  
Joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem ...  
*Hymns of Zion #40*

The time is here when we remember and celebrate our Savior's birth, when our hearts go to Bethlehem like the shepherds of old, when we come to humbly worship our newborn King. Our Sunday School children and young members joyfully brought the story of Jesus' birth to us on December 14. We heard about the stable, the shepherds, the angels and the wonderment of "How much heaven, how much earth at this lowly baby's birth?" We enjoyed the program and thank all of the children, teachers and parents for their work to make it possible.

That evening, we were also able to



go Christmas caroling, followed by supper together at church. Thanks to all who were able to go and participate in sharing the good news and spreading the joy of Christmas to the shut-ins, the elderly and the hospitalized.

Our Sunday School also collected food for baskets to give to those in need. Many thanks to everyone who donated so generously - the boxes were full to overflowing. The students in 3rd grade and up helped deliver the baskets after we packed them Sunday afternoon, then met together for supper and an evening of fellowship and fun.

Several visiting brothers gave of themselves to minister to us this month. Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH), his son, Bro. Warren Schlatter (Sis. Cindy, Junction, OH), and Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) were used in God's service on our behalf. Many thanks for your time and service.

Several in our congregation experienced heartache this month. Carol Ailes lost a grandson in an automobile accident. Benjamin McClanahan (Drue and Diane McClanahan) passed away at the age of 25. Our prayers are with our dear Carol and Drue and Diane, as well as their entire family as they grieve the loss of their loved one at such an early age. Our prayers are also with Sis. Nicole (Bro. Owen) Gudeman in the loss of her uncle just before Thanksgiving.

Sis. MaryAnn Feller was hospitalized this month and continues to get treatment for an injury. Sis. Ruth Heinold was also hospitalized this month. Sis. Connie Knobloch continues to receive treatments. We pray that the Master Physician may heal and comfort all who are in need.

May God bless each of you and guide you in the new year.

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**INDIANA, LEO**  
**Elizabeth Schrenk**  
**Abigail Schrenk**

For the past couple weeks, our

Sunday school has prepared for our yearly Christmas program. On the afternoon of December 14, we heard a collection of songs and stories with the theme of heirlooms. Many of us have family traditions and things that we always do. Their message challenged us. Is Christmas just another tradition? Is Jesus more than an heirloom to you?

Bro. Jason and Sis. Heidi Pence had an eventful Thanksgiving Day. Asher Jason was born into their family on November 27. Welcoming him home are big brother, Levi, and big sister, Trinda. John and Marty Pence and Bro. Myron and Sis. Lorine Hackenjoos (Latty) also welcome Asher home.

Around the Thanksgiving holiday, our church gathered for Communion. Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Sis. Linda, Francesville) assisted Elder Bro. Lynn on Saturday night and stayed with us for church on Sunday. We want to thank him and his wife for lending their time and service to us.

As a church, we were able to visit Francesville on December 7 for the marriage of Bro. Jason Klopfenstein and Sis. Rachel Huber. We look forward to seeing Rachel's parents, Bro. Brian and Sis. Jacki Huber, as they come to visit. Bro. John and Sis. Linda Klopfenstein are happy to have a new daughter-in-law.

As the holidays come and go, we all want to remember that Christ is more than a tradition...He is the promised Messiah who is worthy of our praise and adoration.

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**INDIANA, MILFORD**  
**Carol Hurd**  
**Pam Beer**

With friends on earth we meet in gladness,  
While swift the moments fly,  
Yea ever comes the tho't of sadness,  
That we must say goodbye.

How joyful is the hope that lingers,  
When saved ones cross death's sea,  
That we, when all earth's toils are

ended,  
With them shall ever be.

No parting words shall e'er be spoken  
In yonder home so fair,  
But songs of joy, and peace, and gladness,  
We'll sing forever there.

We'll never say good-by in heav'n,  
We'll never say good-by;  
For in that land of joy and song,  
We'll never say good-by.

It is with sad hearts that we said good-bye to our Sis. Shelby Beer on December 11 when she went home to be with her Lord. She will be greatly missed by her husband, Bro. Nelson, and her children: Bro. Randy (Sis. Deb) Milford; Sis. Renee Lanz (Bro. Brett), Rittman, OH; Sis. Rita Metz (Bro. Daren), Gridley, IL; and Sis. Rachel Laukhuf (Bro. Chris), Latty, OH. We, as her Milford church family, will miss her caring attitude, serving spirit, and the many prayers she offered on our behalf.

Many in our church enjoyed our annual Christmas caroling on December 7. It is always a blessing to share our time with those who cannot get out and around as easily. After caroling we all met back at the fellowship hall for chili and fellowship.

On Wednesday evening, December 17, we had our Christmas program. Our Sunday school children blessed us with songs and verses they had memorized about our Saviour's birth. Many thanks to the teachers who work to make this a blessed evening for us all.

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**INDIANA, REMINGTON**  
**Jenni Honegger**  
**Marcella Tyler**

Greetings from Remington! It was such a joy to see so many families enjoying their time together on Thanksgiving. We have so much to be thankful for, so many blessings from our Father in Heaven!

We were grateful for the presence of



some visiting ministers this past month. Bro. James Knapp (Sis. Lisa, Congerville, IL) and Bro. Ken Weerts (Sis. Myrna, Cissna Park, IL) were both here recently, and we want to thank them for their efforts on our behalf. It seems we've been hearing a lot about our shepherds lately from the pulpit. Perhaps the Lord wants to remind us to be prayerful for them.

Our Sunday School presented the Christmas story to us once again in the form of verses and songs. It is truly a tale that we never tire of hearing! Afterwards several groups visited different homes around town to spread Christmas cheer with their caroling and singing. What a blessing to be able to sing His praises in the streets when so many believers around the world do not enjoy this privilege.

Bro. Clyde Waibel (Sis. Mary Sue) has recently had surgery. We ask for your prayers on his behalf for his healing and for comfort for his family during this difficult time.

We are grieving along with Bro. Mark and Sis. Benita Bahler for the loss of their tiny new granddaughter, Elaina Stoller, at the age of just 8 weeks. Elaina was the daughter of Bro. Ross and Sis. Joy Stoller of Latty, OH. It is difficult and painful to lose one so precious, but we pray fervently that her family will take comfort in the Lord's arms until they are able to see her again in Heaven someday.

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### **INDIANA, VALPARAISO** **Marguerite Hoerr**

On the last Sunday in November, a van load left right after church for Oakville, Iowa, to lend a helping hand with those who suffered damages from the local flooding. They were Bros. Lyle Zeltwanger, Ken Bucher, Garry Bucher and Sis. Lois Bucher. They returned home earlier than planned because of an accidental death in our community.

Our friend, Ben McClanahan, was killed in a single car accident on De-

cember 1. He had served in Iraq, achieving the rank of Corporal and was awarded the Purple Heart. Ben was 24 years old and was the son of Drue and Diane (Ailes) McClanahan of Wanatah, IN. His grandmother is a dear friend, Carol Ailes of LaCrosse, and his aunt is our loved Sis. Dawn Ailes. Dawn teaches Sunday school in our church at Valpo. Her kind ways reach the children and all of us. Ben's services were held at Wanatah on December 4. We express our deepest sympathy to all members of his family.

Ministering Bro. Tom Troxel (Sis. Luanne) and their son, Jackson, were visitors on the second Sunday of December. Bro. Tom willingly assisted our ministering Bro. Mike Thomas with the services. He and Louanne and any of their family are always a blessing when they visit Valpo. Bro. Tom is a large animal veterinarian. My husband, Bob, has been in touch recently with his WWII tent buddy, Paul, who was also a large animal vet. He related this to Bro. Tom, who immediately offered to take him on one of his trips to a big dairy farm near where Paul lives in Winamac. The kindness of that offer impressed both of us so much. We hope it comes to pass because it would bolster Paul's spirits. We call things like that love in action.

On December 21, we held our Christmas program after church services. Bro. Tim Bucher and Sisters Marsha Weiss, Dawn Ailes and Claudia Thomas are able to inspire the young people with the awe of Christ's birth. They portrayed it to us so clearly with readings and with song. Tasia Weiss sang a solo that stirred our hearts; the name of the song was "Labor of Love" and we felt Mary's discomfort at the inn and the wonder of the birth as she sang it. Sis. Dawn Ailes, who is a children's librarian, read one of her favorite children's books to us; about how the candy cane came to be when the candy maker wanted to do something special for the Lord Jesus. It showed us how we can do our best for the Lord in

so many ways. We had candy canes in the middle of our tables and we looked at them in a different way following her reading. We were served a delicious meal in our church fellowship area after the program and we thank Sisters Caroline Lester, Carol Bucher and Julie Bucher for their culinary talents and for their love.

"The Messiah" was written by composer George Frederic Handel in 1741. According to "Our Daily Bread", he was bankrupt when charities offered him a commission to write a musical work. It was for a benefit performance to raise funds to free men from a debtors' prison. He wrote the "Oratorio" in just 24 days and the beauty of it has been played and sung through the ages. The author said, when he recounted his experience: "I did think I did see all Heaven before me and the Great God Himself." This is a true example of God taking negatives and turning them into positives. Praise be to God we are enjoying the "Hallelujah Chorus" and all the songs that proceed it in this very day and time, nearly 340 years later. One of the songs familiar to us is in our church hymnal, "Hymns of Zion" # 253 "I Know that My Redeemer Lives". It's written by Chas. Wesley, but is arranged from George Frederic Handel.

By the time this news reaches you, Christmas will be past so we're sending out wishes from our hearts for a blessed New Year. These are times that try men's souls, and we all need to hold fast to our love for the Lord to see us through. Happy New Year from all of us in our Valpo church!

Please come to see us. Remember we're located on IN State Rd 49, just 2 3/4 miles S. of U.S. 30.

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### **INDIANA** **WEST LAFAYETTE** **Darlene Walder** **Hollie Meister**

Like many of you, we at W. Lafayette have enjoyed the extra time spent together because of Christmas pro-



gram practicing, caroling, and holiday services for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Our Sunday School students and our choir practiced extra hard to bring us a very touching Christmas program as well as the Purdue students at their Thursday evening program remembering Christ's birth. The students and church family were able to spend an evening of caroling and then return to the church for a meal afterwards also.

We want to congratulate some Purdue students that graduated from college this month. They are Bro. Darrin Eisenmann and Sis. Davina Schieler, and Sis. Ashton Steffen. We want to wish them God's direction for their future plans.

We will miss Bro. Darrin and his wife, Sis. Britni, as they have just recently accepted the call to move to Leo, IN, and serve/work at Gateway Woods.

Our visiting brothers this month were Bro. Jeff Niehouser (Francesville) and Bro. Bob Beebe (South Bend) who came on a Saturday evening to help Bro. Curt read the Memorandum. We thank these brothers for serving us.

We rejoice every time a soul experiences a need for a changed heart and life and we offer our prayer and support to Kurt Bahler in his decision. He is the son of Bro. Ed and Sis. Annette.

May we all move into 2009 with faith in God, knowing ALL things are totally in His control.

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## INDIANA, WOLCOTT

**Lynell Blume**

**Erica Blume**

We are always thankful for visiting ministers who share God's Word with us. Bros. Dwight Stoller (Sis. Lori; Latty, OH), Doug Harmon (Sis. Lanna; Toledo, OH), and Dale Banwart (Sis. Missy; Congerville, IL) were willing servants on Thanksgiving Day. Bro. Dale and Bro. Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandy; Alto, MI) each spent a Sunday with us this past month. May the Lord con-

tinue to bless these brothers as they labor in His vineyard.

Bro. Bob Pflederer (Sis. Eleanor; Morton, IL) spent a recent Wednesday evening informing us about the Crown Financial Bible Study that many of us will be involved in.

We wish for God's blessings to be upon Sis. Arles Kropf as she has moved to Parkview Haven Retirement Home in Francesville, IN. May she feel the Lord's presence and His faithfulness in her life as she adjusts to her new home. We miss her and look forward to her visits.

We are so thankful God is still calling souls unto repentance, and that Eric and Marissa Bahler (Chris and Sis. Teresa Bahler; Bro. Mark and Sis. Shari Schwab) have answered that call. We pray for God's grace, peace and direction in their lives as they begin this new walk of life.

On December 13, the outside air was chilly but our hearts were warmed as we sang carols to the elderly and shut-ins. What a blessed opportunity to bring joy and happiness to others!

The Christmas story was again told to us at our annual program on December 17. It was a joy to hear young, enthusiastic voices honor the birth of our Savior! We hope the story of God's great love for us will always be the most important part of Christmas for them.

We pray God will bestow renewed health and strength to our dear Bros. Gene Lehman (Sis. Verna) and Alfred Bahler (Sis. Frances) who were hospitalized this past month.

### *A New Beginning* Helen Kitchell Evans

Now comes the end of another year,  
Time to meditate on the past;  
What have we done worthwhile?  
What have we done that will last?

Do we recall milestones  
Of spiritual growth and gain?  
Have we finished our tasks  
Or does much remain?

Have we overcome the problems  
That we needed to resolve,  
Or is there more remaining  
That we know we must solve?

Let us ask God for His guidance  
That we may face without fear;  
The challenges we meet  
In the coming year.

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## IOWA, BLOOMFIELD

### Christy Wiegand

On December 13, Baxter Drew was born to Bro. Andy and Sis. Stacy Joos. Big brother Trevor was excited to welcome little Baxter to their home. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Christy Joos and Bro. Roger and Sis. DeAnn Wuthrich.

We are always thankful for visiting ministers who labor to share God's Holy Word with us. A special thank you to Bros. Dave Marquart (Sis. Lori, Taylor) and Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop).

Again this year we were blessed to have some of the Tremont single group come and carol with us. We enjoy meeting new and seeing again those that have come before. We thank them, along with those that were cheered up with the songs reminding mankind of God's love and gift toward us.

Our annual Christmas program was this past Sunday. We rejoiced as we listened to the young voices sing about the birth of our Savior and King. A special thank you to the Sunday school teachers for the extra work that goes into preparing for the program.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be on His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

*Isaiah 9:6*

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**IOWA, BURLINGTON**  
**Dixie Messner**  
**Karla Gerst**

As we have come into the time of year when we focus more on Christ's birth, "Christ in the Flesh" from the Zion's Harp has come to mind more than once. It is not a traditional Christmas hymn, yet it reflects the manner of Christ's birth and the purpose of His coming. It seems to be an appropriate summary of the past month in our congregation.

Forsake this world of vanity  
 And all its lewd deception!  
 Invite the Prince of Peace to thee,  
 Give Him a true reception.  
 Approach Him humbly, low, and  
 meek.  
 Childlike, His grace and mercy seek,  
 For surely He first loved thee.

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

His star lights up the darkest night  
 And He is ever near us;  
 Protects and shields us all with might,  
 Shares us His help so gracious.  
 He seeks the missing lamb that strays,  
 And with His life the ransom pays  
 For our sins and transgressions.

*Zion's Harp #107, vs. 1, 2 & 4*

We had the blessed privilege of adding a lamb to the fold in Burlington this past month as we witnessed the baptism of Bro. Matthew Schulz (Bro. Gary and Sis. Melody). We were reminded again of Christ's sacrifice for us and the ransom that He paid – the reason for His humble birth and life that we remember this time of year.

Elder Bros. Don Braker (Kansas City, MO) and Jon Schmidgall (Oakville) and ministering Bro. Myron Knobloch (Lester, IA) shared the Word with us for the weekend of the baptism. Also, ministering Bro. Chuck

Kellenberger (Elgin, IL) was able to spend a Wednesday night with us this past month. May the Lord bless each of them for their labors.

Several of the brethren have had medical care in the past month. We trust that the Lord will provide the blessing of healing as He sees fit.

As part of reflecting on Christ's birth during this season, a number of us enjoyed our church Christmas caroling together. We also heard the carols and the Christmas story from the Sunday School children at the annual Christmas program. We appreciated that retired Elder Bro. Ed Lanz was willing to add some thoughts after the program. Both the brethren and the students were given things to ponder in their hearts, as Mary did when she learned the news of the coming Savior.

**IOWA, ELGIN**  
**Gloria Frieden**

As we step into the beginning of a new year, we can't help but wonder what the next 365 days will hold. First breaths will be taken as newborns arrive and last breaths when souls come to the end of their earthly pilgrimage. Some will see changes in their health, occupational and residential status. Many different situations can cause changes in family settings. Hopefully, there will be many who will seek God's grace, to make a change in their lifestyle and will turn their backs on the ways of Satan and world and will seek to walk in the steps of the Saviour. For those of us who have already made that decision, may God grant us the grace to remain true and faithful to Him. Remembering that, though the path at times may seem hard to trod, our destination will be well worth the journey.

No matter what kind of changes 2009 will bring to us, may we remember that God doesn't change. He remains a "jealous God" and wants our first love and devotion to belong to Him. And though He remains merciful and longsuffering, the day of ven-

geance will come and "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:31)

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Phil Wyss (Sis. Kristen) in the loss of his grandfather, Bro. Ken Huette (Sis. Arlene, Tremont, IL). Also, to Sis. Jan Frieden (Bro. Floyd) in the loss of her aunt, Sis. Ruth Schumacher (Morton, IL).

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

During the Sunday School Christmas program the children sang of the Babe that was born long ago so that He could grow up to be our Savior. They also shared a fictional dream of Mary about people celebrating Jesus' birthday without giving gifts to Him or even knowing Him. "How sad..." she said.

Hymns of Zion #36 reminds us of the sad fact that many only know the Savior as a child. Let's point them to Christ on Calvary's brow... tis there men learn to know the Christ (worthy of our song and praise), for there He bore man's sin. Then open wide the door of heart and let the Savior in to stir our hearts, for in the man of Galilee we find the gift of peace!

**IOWA, LESTER**  
**Gloria Moser**  
**Polly Metzger**

We welcome little Mitchell Allen Bullerman, born to Janice and Lance on November 21. Micah is his big brother and his grandparents are Bro. Chuck and Sis. Vicki Leuthold. May God bless these dear parents as they raise their boys.

I don't know about tomorrow,  
 I just live from day to day.  
 I don't borrow from it's sunshine,  
 For it's skies may turn to gray.  
 I don't worry o'er the future,  
 For I know what Jesus said,  
 And today I'll walk beside Him  
 For He knows what is ahead.

*Melodies of Praise #112*



Bro. Denis Meyer (Sis. Jill), Sis. Marie Knobloch (Bro. Ezra), Bro. Paul Knobloch, Sis. Zelma Knobloch, Bro. Rodney Mogler (Sis. Lois), Sis. Sherryl Knobloch (Bro. Larry) and Sis. Esther Moser (Bro. Wes) have all either spent time in the hospital or are still there. We pray God will strengthen and uplift them with each new day.

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,  
That sav'd a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.

*Hymns of Zion #97*

What a blessing to have two week-ends of provings and baptisms. On November 22-23, Cassie and Tasha Metzger (Bro. Tom and Sis. Deb) and Crystal Moser (Bro. Rick and Sis. Lori), were proved and baptized. Elder Bro. Lawrence Luthi (Lamar, MO) was here to assist Elder Bro. Dennis. Then on December 12-13, Laura Knobloch (Bro. Myron and Sis. Beth), Janae Mogler (Bro. Dwight and Sis. Donna) and Chet Mogler (Bro. Brian and Sis. Bev) were proved and baptized. Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan (Rockville, CT) was here to help that weekend. We welcome these dear sisters and brother in Christ. May they always look to the Lord as He guides their path.

We had many more visiting ministers this past month, with the baptisms and Thanksgiving weekend. Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Bloomfield, IA), Bro. Rex Frieden (Lamar, MO), Bro. Roy Koehl (Morris, MN), Bro. Darren Fehr (West Bend, IA), Bro. Kent Mogler (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN) and Bro. Bernie Messner (Morris, MN) all visited here in Lester. We thank them for making the effort to be with us and appreciate their willingness to serve.

Be present, blessed Jesus,  
To join their loving hands,  
As thou didst bind two natures  
In thine eternal bands.

*Hymns of Zion #196*

On December 7, Sis. Maria Warner (Bro. Stan and Sis. Sue) and Bro. Drew Metzger (Bro. Marv and Sis. Joleen) were united in holy matrimony. May God bless their life and the home they establish together.

Our deepest sympathy to Bro. Si and Sis. Edie Knobloch and their family on the passing of her sister. Sis. Ruth Huthmann (Peoria, IL) passed away on December 11. Her family here will miss her very much. May God comfort them all in their loss.

With the Christmas season upon us, may we be ever thankful to God for His plan of salvation and all that He does for us each day.

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### IOWA, OAKVILLE Sharla Wiegand

Sis. Janae Schulz and Bro. Jeremy Stickling became one in the Lord on November 23. Parents of the happy couple are Bro. Roger and Sis. June Schulz and Bro. Scott and Sis. Jan Stickling (Congerville, IL). We will miss Janae as she makes Congerville her home. We were thankful to have visiting Elder Bro. Ben Walder (Congerville, IL), Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Fairbury, IL) and Bro. Beirne Messner (Morris, MN) for this happy occasion.

Tessa Anne arrived on November 21 to bless the home of Bro. Kyle and Sis. Kelli Knapp along with big brother, Drake. Tessa's grandparents are Bro. Brian and Sis. Lorna Knapp and Bro. Keith and Sis. Tonya Lanz.

On Thanksgiving Day, we were blessed with a visiting minister, Bro. Gary Endress (Bradford, IL). We all certainly have much to be thankful for.

On November 30, we welcomed a new brother and sister in Christ, Jacob and Katherine Montgomery. Sis. Katherine's parents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Vera Lindeen. Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Bloomfield, IA) helped with this special weekend.

### IOWA, WEST BEND

#### Janet Fehr Sue Schneider

On Thanksgiving Day we enjoyed the presence of Bro. Wayne and Sis. Kathy Fehr (Portland, OR) in West Bend. We appreciate each trip they make to join us in worship, and we thank him for sharing the Word of Life with us.

November 30 was a special day for Bro. Jim Meyer (Bern, KS) and Sis. Karol Banwart (Bro. Alvin and Sis. Phyllis) as they were united as one in the Lord. We pray for God's nearness and blessings in their lives as they adjust to the changes that lay ahead in their married life together. Bro. Leland Plattner (Sis. Mary, Zapata, TX), Bro. Dean Messner (Sis. Wanda, Winthrop, MN) and Bro. Dale Moore (Sis. Cheryl, Elgin, IA) were all present; and we thank them for their labors of love on our behalf.

We are happy to announce the birth of Otis Wayne, born to Bro. Kent and Sis. Joleen Fehr on December 1. Monika, Carter and Micah helped welcome him home. Grateful grandparents are Bro. James and Sis. Sharon Fehr and Elder Bro. Wayne and Sis. Rose Grimm.

Surgical patients this past month have been Jerry (Joy) Metzger and his sister, Sis. Sharon (Bro. James) Fehr. We also have a number of individuals from our congregation who are convalescing at home due to various procedures and other health issues. We pray for God's almighty presence filled with His healing touch in each of these lives as they rest and regain strength.

Several West Bend church families have felt the loss of a family member. Bro. Ken (Sis. Ellen) Dahlhauser mourns the sudden death of his brother, Clyde. Dorothy Zaugg's sister, Sis. Bertha Kieser (Princeville, IL), was just recently taken from this life. Sis. Betty Wirtz lost a brother-in-law, Bro. Delbert Schmidt, who attended church at Elgin, IL. And the passing of



Bev Wirtz from the Crystal Lake, IA, area will be felt by her sisters-in-law, Sis. Hulda Wirtz, Sis. Betty Wirtz and Lucille Wirtz. We pray each of the "hurting" will feel the love and comfort of our Heavenly Father.

With the beginning of 2009, we look back over the year just past and know many individuals have suffered change and loss due to death, natural disasters, illness, old age, an unsettled world, disappointments and any untold number of personal happenings others may be unaware of. We have also enjoyed many real blessings. As a new year starts and a new group of leaders head our nation, may we look up, be ever prayerful, and in all things give thanks.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

*Number 6:24-26*

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## JAPAN, SHIODA

### Carrie Ito

Our little group visited the local hospital and delivered Christmas cards and a hand towel to each patient before we sang some Christmas carols. It was encouraging that a few of the patients could sing along with us. They most likely went to a Christian or Catholic school at some point in their life. Most Japanese people, though, don't know the Christmas story or Christmas carols. All of them, though (I guess due to popularity), know Silent Night. If only they could know the Holy Infant as their Lord and Savior! Please continue to pray for God's Spirit to work mightily in this land!

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## JAPAN, TOKYO

### Jana Klaus

During the Christmas season here in Tokyo, when we go out shopping or driving, we hear Christmas music and

see lights and decorations, which seems to be increasing more and more with each year. It has become a tradition for families to have a Christmas cake and for children to get gifts from Santa on Christmas Eve. Christmas day, however, is a regular work and school day. But, we are thankful we have the opportunity as Christians to share the true meaning of Christmas, during this season, with our friends and acquaintances. Our congregation had our special Christmas service, followed by our Sunday School program and supper on Sunday, December 21. It was a full church and we pray all who were present went away with a blessing. Four groups of children, from kindergarten to upper junior high, told the Christmas story each in their own way—through picture cards and verses, through flannel graph, through crossword puzzle, and then as a group, through song. Yuiko Kobayashi, upper Jr. high student, blessed us with a powerful and touching talk on her school for the blind, which she has attended for many years. Several adults participated in the program, too, with Bible reading, songs, a picture card Christmas story and Elder Bro. Akito's prayer for the children after they received their presents and treat bags.

We rejoice with Sis. Yoshiko Sakuta and her husband, Shoji, as they now have a second grandchild, born to their daughter Keiko and her husband, Masataka. Little sister, Momo, joins her big brother, Kiichi, who is 2 years old. May this family feel God's blessing upon them.

We had several guests from afar this month: Gabor Molnar came from Budapest, Hungary, for a business trip and was able to worship with us once again as it was his second time to our church. We welcome him back any time! And, we welcomed for the first time, Bro. Ryan and Sis. Becky Weiss and children, Kenton, Kaitlyn and Ethan, who came from Singapore on their way to America for Christmas with their families. It was such a plea-

sure to have them and we welcome them back any time also, but perhaps they will not be in Singapore as long as was intended with Ryan's work. May the Lord guide.

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## KANSAS, BERN

### Jill Meyer

### Rita Menold

We rejoice with those in our congregation who have once again been given the title of "grandparents"! Bro. Darell and Sis. Gloria Stoller are thankful for the safe arrival of little Elisabeth Marie, born to Bro. Gale and Sis. Belinda Kellenberger (Sabetha).

Keyston Lane was born to Bro. Kaleb and Sis. Angela Beyer (Sabetha). Keyston's happy grandparents are Bro. Earl and Sis. Donna Edelman.

Elder Bro. John and Sis. Connie Lehman welcomed another granddaughter, Tess Shalom. Little Tess was born to Bro. Tim and Sis. Amber Lehman (Taylor, MO).

We appreciate Bro. Greg Braker (Sis. Wendy, Lamar, MO) for sharing God's Word with us on November 30! May God continue to bless those who stand before us Sunday after Sunday.

We rejoice with Bro. James Meyer and Sis. Karol Banwart (Bro. Alvin and Sis. Phyllis, West Bend, IA), as they have been united as one in the Lord! We welcome Sis. Karol to our congregation and pray that she may soon feel at home!

Despite the frigid temperatures, we enjoyed our all church Christmas caroling the evening of December 14. What a wonderful way to spread the Christmas story!

We recently received an e-mail forward that I found very thought provoking, and hopefully you will to.....

### *Cell Phone vs. Bible*

Ever wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phone? What if we carried it in our purses or pockets?

What if we flipped through it sev-



eral times a day?

What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?

What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?

What if we gave it to kids as gifts?

What if we used it when we traveled?

What if we used it in case of emergency?

This should make us go....hmmm...where is my Bible?

Unlike our cell phone, we don't have to worry about our Bible being disconnected, because Jesus already paid the bill! There will be no dropped calls, and the battery will never be low on charge!

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### KANSAS, FORT SCOTT Martin Hohulin

We were blessed by a number of visiting ministers and their families this past month. This is truly a blessing we enjoy in our faith. Bro. Jeff Streitmatter (Sis. Lynne) and his entire family were here from Sarasota, FL, to celebrate Bro. Lyle Fischer's 85th birthday. Elder Bros. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS) and Gerry Hertzell (Sabetha, KS) spoke to us on the recent Brotherhood Conference letter. Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA) visited her sister and family, Bro. Larry and Sis. Julie Bahr. Bro. David Zehr (Sis. Vickie, Gridley, IL) blessed us with two heartwarming sermons on December 7. He has recently recovered from a serious accident. They were accompanied on their trip by Sis. Tina Gramm Banwart's parents.

On a personal note, my wife Edith and I traveled to Peoria, IL, to attend the funeral of my younger sister, Sis. Ruth Huthmann. She closed her eyes in death on December 11 to meet her Saviour. This brought to a close a long fight with cancer. She leaves behind a husband, Bro. George, and three daughters, Sis. Kathy Huthmann, Su-

san Scott, and Sis. Heidi Hartter, as well as three grandchildren. How special to go home in the arms of Jesus!

We shall sleep, but not forever,  
there will be a glorious dawn!

We shall meet to part, no, never  
On that resurrection morn.

From the deepest caves of ocean,  
from the desert and the plain,  
From the valley and the mountain,  
countless throngs shall rise again.

*Hymns of Zion #125*

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### KANSAS, KIOWA Janice Bahr Jenny Stewart

The blessed story of the Christ  
The Babe of Bethlehem,  
Is worthy of our song and praise,  
And stirs the hearts of men.

The fullness of God's love divine  
Surrounds the Christ so mild  
Alas, how many only know  
The Saviour as a child.

Our saving hope is all in vain,  
If here our love should cease,  
For in the man of Galilee,  
We find the gift of peace.

'Tis not the Babe, but Christ the man,  
Who walked in Galilee;  
'Tis not the manger, but the cross,  
That sets the spirit free.

Be not content this Babe to know,  
Nor stay at Bethlehem,  
But go with Christ to Calvary's brow,  
Beyond Jerusalem.

'Tis there men learn to know the  
Christ,  
For there He bore man's sin.  
Then open wide the door of heart,  
And let the Saviour in.

*Hymns of Zion #36*

The first weekend of December we here in Kiowa had the blessed privilege of following the steps of Jesus from the manger to the cross as our children portrayed both in our annual Sunday

School program. It brought tears to our eyes to think that our great God cared enough to send His only Son to be born, not as a King on a throne, but as a baby in a lowly manger, so all people could feel accepted, not just the rich. And then to think that only 33 years later He went to a cross to die so we might live forever with Him in a place we cannot even begin to imagine the peace and beauty of. To add to this wonderful weekend, young people from Kansas, Colorado, Ohio and Indiana, joined us for caroling on Saturday, and shared Sunday services and the Christmas Program with us as well as sharing some songs at the end of our program. To watch the young ones and the young adults and we older adults all share in the fellowship gives us a little glimpse of what Heaven will be like as God is no respecter of persons and makes us all equal. God bless each of you who took time out of your busy schedules to share the weekend with us.

We would also like to thank ministering Bro. Jerry Meeks and his dear wife, Sis. Christy, for sharing a Sunday with us and helping Bro. Ronald on the pulpit as Bro. Jeff Bahr was in Magdalena with a work team at the time. We truly appreciated his loving words of inspiration.

Our loving thoughts and prayers go out to Bethany Hamilton and her mother, Sis. Sandra, as they are on their way to Mayo Clinic for surgery at this writing. May God grant them traveling mercies and a healing hand according to His perfect will.

We started Wednesday evening services this month and are listening to the General Conference tapes. We are so appreciative to our Elder brothers for working together to try to keep our Faith true to the coming of our Lord and Saviour, and pray that God will bless them and our congregations with the patience to keep on keeping on in the Lord!

As the New Year is upon us, may we look to the Author and Finisher of our Faith and lives as we walk in this life



and look ever forward to a better one to come.

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**KANSAS  
LAMONT-GRIDLEY  
Ester Knobloch**

As with gladness men of old  
Did that guiding star behold,  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright,  
So, most gracious Lord, may we  
Ever-more be led to Thee.

*Gospel Hymns #856, vs. 1*

The story of Christ's humble birth was told to us by the Sunday school students in their Christmas program. It is always touching to hear of the miracle of God's Gift from the lips of these young and tender souls.

We appreciate the labors of ministering Bro. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO) who brought forth God's Holy Word to our congregation.

We are thankful for the work of the Lord in the lives of our converts, Kara Kraft (Bro. Doug and Sis. Judy) and Corbin Knobloch (Bro. Tom and Sis. Jeri), and rejoice with them in their peace. We trust that God will continue to grant grace to their humble hearts.

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**KANSAS, SABETHA  
Rebekah Beyer  
Carrie Grimm**

Be not content this babe to know,  
Nor stay at Bethlehem,  
But go with Christ to Calvary's brow,  
Beyond Jerusalem.

'Tis there men learn to know the  
Christ,  
For there He bore man's sin.  
Then open wide the door of heart.  
And let the Saviour in.

*Hymns of Zion #36*

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us also reflect on the price our dear Saviour paid so that we may have the hope of life eternal with Him.

We rejoice with Bro. Gale and Sis.

Belinda Kellenberger as they welcome a little daughter in their family circle. Elisabeth Marie was born on November 19. Big brother Toby also welcomes her home. Grandparents are Bro. Darrell and Sis. Gloria Stoller (Bern, KS) and Bro. Gene and Sis. Marian Kellenberger. Great-grandmother is Sis. Lois Grimm.

We also rejoice with Bro. Kaleb and Sis. Angela Beyer as they welcome home a new little son. Keyston Lane was born December 1 and was also welcomed home by his big sister, Taygen, and big brother, Boston. Grandparents are Bro. Earl and Sis. Donna Edelman, (Bern, KS) and Bro. Martin and Sis. Karen Beyer. Great-grandmothers are Sis. Jeanette Huber (Morris, MN) and Helen Dettwyler (Silverton, OR). We pray the Lord will continue to bless these dear families as they raise their children in the Lord.

We were thankful to have visiting ministers, Elder Bro. Wayne Grimm (Sis. Rose, West Bend, IA) and Bro. Ron Isch (Sis. Jane, Lamont-Gridley, KS) as they ministered the Word on Thanksgiving Day.

We offer our prayers to Sis. Hannah Grimm (Bro. Kurt) and their family as they mourn the loss of a dear great-grandmother, Lillian Roberts (Morris, MN).

On December 7, our church congregation enjoyed the opportunity to Christmas carol followed by a soup supper and fellowship.

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**KANSAS, WICHITA  
Emma Miller**

A group of the children who make up our Sunday School meet on Wednesday nights as Kids Club. Often they share their activities with the congregation during the noon hour on Sunday. We are rewarded as we see them grow in their understanding of the Word.

It is our tradition in Wichita to use the December Wednesday nights to go caroling at the homes of our shut ins.

This year the task was almost on over-load so they added two Friday night sessions. Last Friday they went to Hutchinson to sing to Bro. Howard Warner and this week they plan to come to El Dorado for my benefit.

After a long absence due to surgery and the healing process, Sis. Lillian Bowers is able to be in church once again. Praise the Lord for His merciful goodness that endures forever.

On December 11, several from Wichita met with others of the Kansas congregations for a work day at the MCC Center in Newton, KS. The brother who offered the noon prayer mentioned what a blessing it was to work in harmony with those of like faith.

The words that follow were written by an unknown author and often appear in children's books. They help me imagine the night scene of Jesus' birth.

Winds through the olive trees  
Softly did blow  
Round little Bethlehem  
Long, long ago.

Sheep on the hillside lay  
Whiter than snow  
Shepherds were watching them  
Long, long ago.

Then from the happy skies,  
Angels bent low  
Singing their songs of joy  
Long, long ago

For in a manger bed  
Cradled we know  
Christ came to Bethlehem,  
Long, long ago.

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**MEXICO, IXTLAN  
Matt Gerber**

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from



embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.”

*Eccl. 3:1, 4-8*

Bro. Rudy, Sis. Rosario, and Nathan returned to Ixtlan after serving in Barra Vieja for several months. We're so thankful for the ministry they had there, especially to Cirilo and his family. Cirilo was diagnosed with terminal cancer about a year ago. His health deteriorated quickly. Many people who visited were able to share the gospel with him during the last year of his life. Several days before he died, Bro. Rudy was able to talk to him about the condition of his soul and his readiness to die. Cirilo gave testimony that he was putting his faith in Jesus Christ and not his own good works, and he was peaceful about dying. Though only God knows perfectly the state of Cirilo's heart, his testimony gives us comfort and hope to someday see Cirilo again with our Lord.

Bro. Spencer Lewis made the decision to return home to Bluffton to work for an extended period of time. School progress has been slow and confusing, as we continue to look for teachers and try to navigate the certification process. Please pray for wisdom, diligence, and perseverance, and for God's direction in each decision we make.

Bro. Matt and Sis. Ruth Gerber began their new life together in marriage. They desire your prayers that their marriage could joyfully reflect Christ's covenant love for His church, and for wise love to minister and share the gospel in new ways as a couple.

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## MÉXICO, MAGDALENA

### Carissa Schlipf

¡Saludos de amor en el nombre de Cristo, nuestro Salvador!

In November the CVE Board of Directors met here in Magdalena. We are thankful for the dedication of these brothers and enjoy their visits. Please continue to pray for our directors and that God would continue to give them wisdom and discernment in their decisions, that the name of Christ would be glorified in all that is done here at Casa Vida y Esperanza. Special thanks to Bro. Marshall Heinold (Ixtlán, México) for sharing the Wednesday night service with us.

“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.”

*Isaiah 6:8*

We give thanks that God has sent Sis. Kali Zobrist (Congerville, IL) to Magdalena to help in His work. We are thankful for Kali's servant heart and willingness to jump in and help wherever needed! Please pray for Kali's transition to Magdalena and this new chapter in her life.

We are grateful for a group of Elder brothers that were able to visit here this month. We are thankful that they could have an opportunity to see the Lord's work and for their safe return.

This month we were blessed by a small group who came from Phoenix and installed a fireplace in our dining room. We are very much enjoying the warmth and cozy atmosphere that a blazing fire adds. Thank you so much for your work!

The third week of November CVE hosted a work team which consisted of brethren and friends from Denver, Altadena and several other churches. The group was busy working on various projects including tiling in the sanctuary of the new church and installing sidewalks and landscaping around the outside of the church buildings. May God bless each of you for your heart to serve and give of your time and talents to the Lord's work.

We were happy that our Elder Bro. Mike and Sis. Deb Leman (Denver, CO) and their entire family could be with us during the week of the Denver team. We thank Bro. Mike for preaching the Word on that Sunday and Wednesday. May God continue to bless our Elder brothers and their families throughout our denomination, who so faithfully give of themselves to serve us!

“Dad gracias en todo, porque esta es la voluntad de Dios para con vosotros en Cristo Jesús.”

*I Thes. 5:18*

Even though Thanksgiving is a holiday with its roots in the history of the United States, it is a holiday that we have chosen to continue to celebrate here in México. We have made it a tradition here in Magdalena to share this day with the children, church family, and community, as an opportunity to remember and give thanks for all that God has given us. With the help of the Denver team, we had a traditional Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings. As we count our blessings, we find that they abound; may we be quick to remember that it is God who deserves the glory for each one!

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

*Eccles. 3:1,2*

We share our support and prayers with our Sis. Nicole Knobloch in the passing of her grandmother, Sis. Vilas Belsley (Morton, IL). We pray for God's peace and comfort to be with Nicole and her family in this time.

After a few years of reporting the news for the church and children's home's here in Magdalena, I am thankful that Sis. Kali Zobrist has willingly agreed to continue in my place.

“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I



will be exalted in the earth.”

*Psalm 46:10*

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## MICHIGAN, ALTO

**Rose Watson  
Terri Huber**

Visiting ministers in November and December were Elder Bro. Ben Walder (Congerville, IL) who with his wife, Sis. Juanita, and children was visiting over Thanksgiving; Bro. Matt Steffen (Princeville, IL), also visiting with wife, Sis. Deanna, and family; and Elder Bro. Jim Plattner (Sis. Marlene, Princeville, IL) who assisted Bro. Ted Steffen in reading the Memorandum.

The weather in December was quite unusual in Michigan. Tremendous snows and blowing drifts caused us to cancel church at least once, and we also had to cancel Christmas caroling, much to our dismay. Contrarily, just two weeks later the high temperatures caused massive snow melt and flooding. Some roads were even washed out, and while church was open, many people stayed home for safety.

We were able to gather for the annual Sunday School Christmas Program. The teachers and students worked hard to prepare songs and pieces depicting the prophecy and events of Christ's birth. We are so thankful that the simple truth is celebrated in our Church during the worldly, commercialized Christmas "season".

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## MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

**Sarah Knochel  
Janelle Ramseyer**

“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD:”

*Psalm 127:3*

We rejoice with Elder Bro. John and Sis. Peggy Jackson as their new daughter, Josie Joy, joined their family circle. Josie is also welcomed home by an older sister, Hallie. Josie's grandparents are

Bro. Richard and Sis. Yolanda Jackson and Bro. Bill and Sis. Carol Waibel.

Bro. Bill and Sis. Carol also have reasons to give thanks as they welcomed Baker Phillip Waibel into their family. Baker's parents are Bro. Jeff and Sis. Margo Waibel (Leo, IN). Older sister, Summer, welcomes Baker home as well.

Bro. Joe and Sis. Dort Ramseyer rejoice in the birth of another grandson, Wyatt Ramseyer. Wyatt's family is Clay, Jackie and older brother, Leo.

Even as we rejoice when three little ones enter into the world, our hearts are also saddened over the passing of Sis. Alice Wieland. Sis. Alice is survived by her sisters: Margaret Fierke, Sis. Laura, and Sis. Edith Meier, all from our congregation. She is also survived by many nieces, nephews and cousins.

We trust that health and strength come from our Heavenly Father and that His healing would be with Bro. Floyd (Sis. Marian) Knochel, Helen (Fred) Knochel, Sis. Esther Meister and Bill (Lori) Bateson.

By the time this article is published, it will be 2009. We know that God is faithful and will give grace and peace to all who call upon His name.

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

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

*Hymns of Zion, #150*

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## MICHIGAN, DETROIT

**Tamra Coughlin  
Manuela Denes**

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

*Matthew 1:21*

What a blessed time of year this is for us as Christians. So much turmoil surrounds us lately, yet it is so comforting to know that the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ so many years ago in that tiny manger has given us the hope of salvation! It was indeed a blessing to be able to gather together and listen to the children share the Christmas message with us along with songs from the choir. The season also brought the fellowship of sharing carols and hymns.

We were truly blessed to be able to host the National World Relief meetings. We'd like to especially thank Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL), Bro. Chuck Kellenberger (Sis. Debbie, Elgin, IL) and Bro. Virgil Kaeb (Sis. Suellen, Sarasota, FL) for ministering to us during that special weekend.

May the Lord grant healing mercies to those who recently spent time in the hospital. Special prayers go out to Sis. Sanche Denes, Sis. Anna Sabados and Bonnie Jermo. We also extend our sympathies to Sis. Perseda Wieland at the passing of her dear sister-in-law, Sis. Alice Wieland of the Bay City, MI, congregation.

It is also a special time for Sis. Kristie Meyer as her family celebrates the graduation of her daughter Stephanie from college.

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## MINNESOTA MINNEAPOLIS

**Mary Mogler**

“... For behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

*Luke 2:10-11*

As the glad tidings of the birth of a Saviour came forth in verse and song, we were once again reminded by our Sunday school how great a gift Jesus truly is. Although these may be times that try men's souls, as we go forth into



a new year, we pray our lives and tongues tell the message of salvation, that all mankind may know who it is we can place our confidence in.

Peace and goodwill to all nations;  
Ye the heirs of His salvation.  
Far and near, O sons of men,  
Praise the Lord with glad refrain,  
Praise the Lord with glad refrain!  
Hallelujah!

We were blessed with several visiting ministers this month. We thank our Elder Bros. Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA), Paul Messner (Winthrop, MN), Art Nohl (Morris, MN), and John Lehman (Bern, KS) for being willing messengers of God's Word.

A special opportunity is ours during this Christmas season to share Christ's message of hope in song to those of our congregation who find it difficult to assemble with us. All who gathered to join in an evening of Christmas caroling found a blessing especially as we once again shared precious moments with our dear Sisters Katie Blunier and Millie Schmidgall, who are no longer able to assemble with us. Sis. Vera Schmidt has also been missed for some time. We pray for her healing and return.

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### MINNESOTA, MORRIS

**Susie Wulf  
Sheila Reuter**

We were thankful to have Bro. Wayne Fehr (Portland, OR) and Bro. Todd Stoller (Latty, OH) here to minister God's Word to us. We trust the Lord will richly bless them for their labors.

Thankful for the safe arrival of their first child, Clayton Jon, are Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Mindy Joos. Grandparents are Bro. Harv and Sis. Debra Joos and Bro. Doug and Sis. Joyce Wulf. May God bless them as they raise their family.

### MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

**Julie Schmidt  
Lindsay Schmidt**

O, may the small flock be increased  
In grace 'neath His protection,  
And enter into heav'nly rest  
For this is God's direction.  
May all be child-like, loving kind,  
That we the path to heaven find!  
*Zion's Harp #173*

As a small church we are always eager to welcome visitors. We thank Bro. Duane Metzger (Sis. Ruth, West Bend, IA) for coming to labor on the pulpit on our behalf. May the Lord be his rich rewarder.

Thank ye the Lord!  
Give thanks to the Lord,  
For He is gracious,  
His mercy it endureth evermore.

Bless ye the Lord,  
O, Bless ye the Lord!  
My soul, remember His goodness  
and His gifts bestowed on thee.  
*Hymns of Zion #245, vs. 1, 2*

We're thankful our country has set aside a day for us to remember the blessings of our forefathers. Let us remember to be thankful not only the freedom we have in our country but more importantly the freedom from sin we can find in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our prayers go out to Bro. Elmer Schmidt (Sis. Hazel) and Bro. Darrel Schmidt (Darlene) in the loss of their brother, Bro. Delbert Schmidt (Sis. Jeanette) of Elgin, IL. May they be comforted with the hope of meeting again in Heaven.

Our hospital and surgery patients this month have been Jean Stresemann (Randy), Bro. Mike Messner (Sis. Joyce) and Sis. Lois Messner (Bro. Marlyn). We pray that God will continue to hold them in the palm of His hands.

*Note of Thanks:*

Thank you to all who have visited,

sent cards, food, and prayers while I had my shoulder surgery. May God bless you all.

*Sis. Lois Messner (Bro. Marlyn)*

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### MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

**Brittany Fehr**

We extend our welcome to Bro. Doug and Sis. Robin Wiegand, who are now worshipping with us! They and their daughter, Michelle, recently moved to our area from the Sarasota, Florida, congregation. We are thankful God has provided a welcome addition to our small church!

As the time approaches that our nation sets aside to specially remember our Savior's birth, our congregation has been spending time caroling together. Also, the annual Sunday School Christmas program took place on Sunday, December 14, followed by caroling and a chili supper. May God bless each one and help us all to remember to thank Him for the precious gift of salvation throughout the entire year.

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### MISSOURI, LAMAR

**Dana Braker  
Becky Luthi**

Among our visitors this past month were ministering Bros. Ned Stoller (Alto, MI) and Dan Stoller (Remington, IN). We appreciate their willingness to be used in the Lord's service.

We extend our sympathy to Edie Reiman in the loss of her father, Lester Reiman; and to Bro. Grant and Sis. Rachel Rinkenberger in this loss of her grandmother, Sis. Emma Ifft (Forrest, IL).

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### MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS

**Meagan Wuethrich**

We were blessed with visits this month from ministering Bros. John Baumgartner (Sis. Tammy, Bluffton North, IN) and Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Fairbury, IL) as well a special visit from our Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor, MO) and Elder Bro.



Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL). We greatly appreciate their efforts and thank God for them.

Bro. Loren and Sis. Betsy Schrenk are thankful for two new grandchildren. John Abraham was born to Peter and Liz Schrenk on November 5, and Gweneth Margaret arrived on November 25, welcomed by Joshua and Rachel Miller and big sisters, Madeline and Nora.

For the past few Sundays we have been missing Harold and Berniece Stuber as Berniece recently fell and broke her wrist. Thankfully, she seems to be recovering well and we pray that she will continue to do so.

With weather permitting, we welcome you to include St. Louis church in your winter travel plans!

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## MISSOURI, TAYLOR

### Kathy Eberhardt

We will all have different appointments in the new year. We always try to be on time and ready for them. An appointment that is coming that we will not be late to is our appointment with our Heavenly Father. Three questions for the new year are: Is anybody following you to church? Are we a good example to our friends? Who are we seeking after?

We would like to thank Bro. Craig Martin (Sis. Terri, Princeville, IL) for the Bible Study on Psalms 19:7, "the law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."

We are not promised tomorrow. Our sympathy goes out to the Lester Reiman family, in the loss of a dear father and husband. May our Lord be with Jane, Edie and Melissa during their time of sorrow.

A dear little daughter was born to Bro. Tim and Sis. Amber Lehman. Little Tess Shalom was born on November 26. She joins big brother Cade as part of the family. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Kent and Sis. Jan Heimer and Elder Bro. John and Sis. Connie Leman

(Bern, KS).

On Sunday, December 7, the following marriage announcements were made known. Sis. Ashley Hoerr (Bro. Scott and Sis. Anna) was announced to Bro. Mark Sauder (Bro. Howard and Sis. Janice Sauder, Tremont IL); and Bro. Shane Sutter (Bro. Jim and Sis. Kris) was announced to Sis. Julia Stickling (Bro. Chris and Sis. Marsha Stickling, Peoria, IL).

A hospital patient this month was Sis. Lisa Massner (Bro. Chad). May God add His healing hand.

A few comments to remember for the new year. A good day is a Godly day. The ten commandments are not multiple choice. God is a promise keeper. May we be grateful people.

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## NEW YORK CROGHAN-NAUMBURG Hope Graves

December 9 we assembled cheer baskets – it was a joy to watch the children eagerly participate as they learned the importance of doing for others.

We always look forward to this time of the year when we have the opportunity to go caroling together. Our first night was December 13 at Karcher Estates followed by the local hospital on the 19th. We were disappointed to have to cancel Sunday services and the Christmas program due to the winter weather. We are planning to listen to the Sunday School children present their program on December 28.

We were all saddened to hear of the sudden death of Sis. Anna Mellnitz's son, Warren, at the age of 47. May they feel the prayers that have went out to her and her family.

Our prayers have also been with Bro. Donald Farney and Ambrose Bush who have had surgery this month.

## OHIO, AKRON Mara Henico Rachel Pamer

His love in time past  
Forbids me to think  
He'll leave me at last  
In trouble to sink;  
Each sweet Ebenezer  
I have in review  
Confirms His good pleasure  
To help me quite through.

*Zion's Harp 87, verse 3*

There have been many opportunities for us to pray for one another this month and to trust that God will provide what's good and right for each. Our Bro. Richard Baumgartner (Sis. Evelyn) endured a hospital stay and now resides in Apostolic Christian Village. Also Ruben Hegedus (Bro. Sandor and Sis. Gyongyi) was injured and needed some stitches. We are glad to have Bro. Hans Heib assembling with us again, after a case of pneumonia took him to the hospital for a time. We also trust that God is providing for our Bro. Ned Spangler (Sis. Gail) after a recent knee replacement. We are also thankful that Elder Bro. Dave and Sis. Barb Graf returned safely from a trip to Mexico.

We rejoiced to hear the Sunday School students bring praise to God in our recent Christmas program. Our thoughts and prayers are with our many widows and widowers and those who feel a sense of loneliness through this holiday time. May it be that they would find solace in God's presence and feel our prayers.

We were very thankful to hear that our friends, Beth Pamer (Bro. Steve and Sis. Arliss) and Arthur Greenbank (Bro. Glen and Sis. Joan), have repented and God has granted them peace.

The Lord blessed us this past month with visiting ministering Bro. Tim Gerber (Sis. Wendy, Mansfield). Thank you for your message, Bro. Tim.

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## OHIO, COLUMBUS

### Sarah Rufener

Our congregation rejoices in the Lord for a soul that has turned from sin and darkness to walk with the Lord in the light. We are so thankful that our friend, Lauren Sauder (Bro. Dan and Sis. Pam, Mansfield), has been given the grace to follow Jesus. We pray that she may know the "peace that passes all understanding".

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

*Romans 5:1-2*

We are thankful for the following brethren who shared God's precious Word with our church this past month: Bro. Mike Baumann (Sis. Florina, Mansfield), Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction), Bro. Ben Manz (Sis. Carolyn, Junction), and Bro. Gary Maibach (Sis. Mary Ann, Smithville). The strength and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

## OHIO, JUNCTION

### Vicki Boroff

We are pleased to share that Chet Manz (Bro. Dave and Sis. Kathy) and Joan Bauer have peace with God and man. We wish them God's many blessings as they look forward to baptism in the near future.

We were also thankful to have Bro. Fred Domka (Sis. Connie, Mansfield) and Bro. Justin Koch (Sis. Marcia, Washington, IL) bring the Word to us.

Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz are thankful grandparents of Cody Kenneth, born to Bro. Chad and Sis. Cindy Indermuhle.

Our love and prayers go to the family of Rob and Barb Brink in the loss of Rob's father. We wish the entire family the Lord's comforting hand during this time of grieving.

## OHIO, LATTY

### Amanda Wenninger Carmen Eisenmann

We are thankful for Bro. Vic Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH) and Bro. Earl Beery (Sis. Susie, Rittman, OH) for ministering the Word to us. What a blessing it is to have faithful brothers come and preach the Truth.

Our congregation was shocked and saddened at the death of little Elaina Lynn Stoller (Bro. Ross and Sis. Joy Stoller) following a tragic accident. The Sunday after the accident, our own ministering brother, Bro. Dwight Stoller, prayed that God would "wrap his loving arms" around the family. May God provide comfort as only He can to the entire family.

Bro. Greg and Sis. Kristy Greutman recently returned from the Ukraine with six adopted children. They are Sasha, Victor, Andre, Sergei, Elizabeth, and Kate. May God provide for this dear family, and may peace, love, and joy reign in their home.

December 5 was the birthday for Mariah Grace, born to Jay and Andrea Klopfenstein. Bro. Keith and Sis. JoAnne Klopfenstein are grateful grandparents, and happy older siblings are Kara, Tyler, and Jalyn.

May God's healing be present in our recent surgery patients. They are Sis. Wanita (Bro. Dwain) Laukhuf and Sis. Jodi (Bro. Trent) Stoller.

## OHIO, MANSFIELD

### Esther Baumann

We rejoice with the angels in heaven as it was made known that Lauren Sauder (Bro. Dan and Sis. Pam) has begun her repentance. Continue to pray for her as she grows in faith.

May God richly reward Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH) and Bro. John Grimm (Sis. Julie, Columbus, OH) for their willingness to come and visit and be used in the minis-

try.

Our recently hospitalized brethren continue to appreciate your prayers. They include: Bro. Ed Dawson (Sis. Judy), Bro. Harry Bocka (Sis. Mary Mae) and Sis. Delores Hill (Bro. Mick).

Our annual business meeting was held in December. Bro. Curt Walter's (Sis. Elizabeth) term as trustee expired; he was replaced by Bro. Dave Baumann (Sis. Lucy). Sis. Dawn Ramsey (Bro. John) is replacing Sis. Joy Sauder (Bro. Dave) on the Kitchen Committee. Sis. Wendy Gerber (Bro. Tim) replaces Sis. Robin Beer (Bro. Marvin) on the Local World Relief Committee. Bro. Justin Miller was elected to be our new usher replacing Bro. Mark Rufener (Sis. Julie). Bro. Ron Rufener takes over the position of our Rittman Nursing Home Representative as Bro. John Ramsey (Sis. Dawn) completes his term. We thank all for their service this past year.

And though upon the raging sea  
By storms thou shalt be driven,  
Thine anchor, guard and shield is He;  
*Zion's Harp #107 v. 7*

As we face the dawning of an uncertain new year, let us find peace in the security that God will be our anchor, guard and shield.

## OHIO, RITTMAN

### Linda Zollinger Laurie Beery

"Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore."

*Psalms 37:27*

We rejoice with Greta and Maria Beery (Bro. Earl and Sis. Suzanne) and Kristina Rufener (Bro. David and Sis. LeAnn) who have turned to the Lord in humble repentance. May they feel God's nearness and direction as they go forth to build a firm foundation.

We are thankful to report several births and pray God will richly bless



these little ones and their dear families. Cody Kenneth Indermuhle was born December 5 to Bro. Chad and Sis. Cindy. Carmen, Courtney and Casey welcome their new brother along with grandparents, Bro. Dwaine and Sis. Joan Indermuhle and Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Gwen Manz (Junction, OH). Bro. Kurt and Sis. Kelly Gasser along with big sister, Molly, welcomed Bethany Rose born December 11. Her grandparents are Bro. Dan and Sis. Diane Gasser and Sis. Nancy Bauman. Bro. Joseph and Sis. Marian Stoller welcome a new granddaughter, Addison Mae, born to Bro. Jon and Sis. Karen Bauman (Smithville, OH).

Recent hospital patients were Fredona Shiffer, Sis. Martha (Bro. Jerry) Bauman, Bro. Bob (Sis. Mardell) Dotterer, Sis. Mary Ellen (Bro. Bill) Saylor, Bro. Andy (Sis. Lillian) Maibach, Sis. Autumn (Bro. Keith) Stoller, Sis. Diane (Bro. Tom) Hartzler, and Sis. Sharon (Bro. Tim) Hartzler. Many prayers are extended to those who are sick and suffering.

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to those in our congregation who have lost loved ones. We remember Bro. Bob and Sis. Marjorie Boltz in the loss of their step-grandson and Sis. Renee (Bro. Brett) Lanz in the loss of her mother, Sis. Shelby (Bro. Nelson) Beer, of Milford, IN. May God comfort each of them and be with them in the days ahead.

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### OHIO, SARDIS Faith Beard

We sorrow with those that sorrow, and we remember Rex and Krista Boltz as her oldest son, Robert Gatain, of New Martinsville, WV, was killed in a tragic car accident on November 27. He also leaves behind his wife and two young sons.

We cannot begin to understand the mind of God, so we leave our confidence with Him as we pray for those who continue in their grief.

“But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little...”

*Isaiah 28:13*

On November 30 we appreciated the Word spoken this month by Bro. Todd Graf (Akron, OH).

We have enjoyed the opportunity as a church to sing Christmas carols to different folks throughout our communities. We also had a wonderful evening on Sunday, December 14, when we gathered to listen to the Sunday School students present to us the Christmas story to the theme of “God’s Gift of Jesus”. Students from the ages of 3 - 17 used song and verse to the sub themes of “Baby Jesus”, “Truth”, “Joy”, “Peace”, and “Saviour” to tell us the story of His birth in humble setting.

Sweetly sleeping in the manger,  
Little Jesus, Holy Child;  
Love is guarding gentle Joseph,  
Holy Babe and mother mild.  
All around good shepherds lowly,  
While above in chorus holy  
Angels sing unto our Lord.

*The Children’s Harp, #104, vs. 1*

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### OHIO, SMITHVILLE Edith Miller Ruth Gasser

The Lord has again provided the Word of Life through His servants, and we owe our thanks to Him and to these brothers. On November 23, Elder Bro. David Graf, Bros. Ronald Palitto and Paul Gasser (all from Akron, OH), Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH) and Bro. Tim Ramsier (Rittman, OH) visited us. We also appreciate the ministry of Bros. Bill Brake (Sardis, OH), Joe Dotterer (Bloomfield, IA), John Hartman (Fairbury, IL), Dan Stoller (Remington, IN) and Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL).

Bro. Eric Miller (Bro. Larry and Sis. Edith) and Sis. Sharla Steiner (Bro.

Mark and Sis. Sue) were joined in Holy Matrimony on November 23. On November 30, Bro. Derek Nieman (Bro. Denny and Sis. Kay) and Sis. Juliet Dotterer (Bro. Dave and Sis. Luanna) were united in marriage. We pray the Spirit of Christ will abide in their homes and in their marriages.

May God grant a rich measure of grace to our convert, Dorrice Beery (Bro. Dwaine and Sis. Shelly), as she seeks Him in repentance.

We want to remember Elmer Zieker (Annabel) in prayer as he has been hospitalized in declining health.

The home of Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Karen Bauman was blessed with the arrival of Addison Mae on December 11. Sharing in the joy will be her sister, Kaylee, and grandparents, Bro. Steve and Sis. Connie Bauman and Bro. Joe and Sis. Miriam Stoller (Rittman, OH).

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### OHIO, TOLEDO Teresa Rywalski Rebecca Beard

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”

*I Peter 5:10*

Doug Harmon (Bro. Doug and Sis. Lanna) heard this call and answered. What a joyous time it is for him, his family and our church. May he always feel our love and prayers.

Let us rejoice with Jim Harmon (Norma) as he has found peace with God and man. He eagerly anticipates giving his testimony to the church and becoming a brother in Christ.

May God richly bless Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sis. Alice, Sardis, OH) for lending himself on the pulpit while visiting our congregation this past month.

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**OREGON, PORTLAND****Renee Angstrom**

Sharing the Word this month from Silverton was Bro. John Wiegand (Sis. Jane), Bro. Ed Knecht (Sis. Judie) and Bro. Todd Zollinger (Sis. Michele). We appreciate their support.

Linda Schulenberg (Miller), daughter of Bro. Bob and Sis. Pearl Miller, was involved in a serious accident. She has been hospitalized this past couple of weeks and undergone surgeries, but expects a full recovery. She appreciates all the prayers on her behalf.

**OREGON, SILVERTON****Cindy Metzger**

Sis. Tresa Zollinger (Bro. Jim) is back home recovering from surgery. May she feel God's healing hand upon her.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of our dear Sis. Alice Gehring this month. She had been unable to come to church regularly, but appreciated the visitors and encouragement very much. May the Lord comfort the hearts of her loved ones during this time of loss.

This month we said goodbye to Sis. Stefany Eldeman as she has finished her schooling in Portland. We wish her God's direction as she continues her studies in Denver, CO.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. Ron Jones (Sis. Liz) and Wayne Fehr (Sis. Kathy) of Portland and Bro. Tim Zimmerman (Sis. Barbara, Lamont-Gridley, KS). Thank you for being willing servants to us.

**PENNSYLVANIA  
PHILADELPHIA**

Our Sunday school recently had the opportunity to tell the story of Christ's birth. We trust these experiences will be lasting memories for the children and that they will have a desire in their hearts to spend their lives praising God for His gift of salvation.

On Christmas day, we enjoyed the

visit of ministering Bro. Pat Zaugg and his family from West Bend, IA. We appreciate each one that visits us at Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Church has embarked on a construction project and is reaching the end of Phase 1, the expansion and reconfiguration of the parking lot. This phase is in anticipation of a building expansion to better accommodate our Sunday school and generally improve the flow within the church. We ask for your prayers as we undertake this project.

**TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE****Mike and Monica Fritz**

We are thankful for the Living Word shared with us each week by our visiting ministering brothers. Our recent visitors have been: Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen; Champaign, IL), and Bros. Ken Wuethrich (Sis. Lyn; Indianapolis, IN), Brad Metz (Sis. Karen; Bloomington-Normal, IL), and Paul Zimmerman (Sis. Loretta; Forrest, IL). We have also been strengthened by the fellowship of brethren and friends visiting from Bloomington-Normal, Bradford, Champaign, Eureka, and Forrest, IL; Indianapolis and LaCrosse, IN; and St Louis, MO.

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: Kansas City, MO (1/18); Detroit, MI (1/25); Princeville, IL (2/1); Leo, IN (2/8); Chicago, IL (2/15); and Mansfield, OH (2/22). If you are planning to worship with us, please call ahead to confirm our schedule. Often we gather on Saturday evenings for fellowship, and all are heartily welcome. We also meet on Wednesday evenings for a song service at 7:15 p.m. and would welcome any midweek visitors. Contacts are Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz (615) 866-5543; and Sis. Gwen Leuthold (615) 356-5755.

**TEXAS, AUSTIN****Amy Ringger  
Serenity Ringger**

Hours and days and years are sinking in eternity's deep sea.

Let them pass! God never changes;  
He remains eternally.

Faithful Saviour, our dear Shepherd,  
Thou has led us faithfully.

Thou wilt journey with us further,  
this we know with certainty.

*Zion's Melodies #31*

The ministers this month were: Bros. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi, South Bend), Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cissna Park), Rich Gramm (Sis. Samantha, South Bend), Doyle Frauhofer (Sis. Jane, Bluffton North), Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Fairbury), and Elder Bro. Gerry Hertzell (Sis. Ellen, Sabetha). Some of us were also blessed by a brief mid-week visit from Bro. Andrew Klaus from Japan, who was in Austin for business. Other visitors we enjoyed were from Forrest, Eureka, and Bluffton North.

The following is the minister schedule for February: (1) San Diego, (8) Lamar, (15) Bluffton North, (22) Gridley, IL. We extend a warm welcome to anyone who may be in the area to worship with us, even midweek, though we don't have a regular schedule for midweek services. 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, perhaps even a month or more if possible, so that we can accommodate you more readily in our weekend gatherings. See the ministers' book for local contact information.

Directions to our church are these: from the intersection of Hwy 71 and 21 on the west side of Bastrop, go east on Hwy 71 about 1/2 mile and take the first exit (by the Ford dealership), proceed on the eastbound frontage road about 4/10 mile. The church is on the right. It is located about 18 miles east of the Austin airport. The address



is 1025 W. Highway 71, Bastrop, TX 78602. It is a one-story building with limestone siding and the church sign in the front. Quite a few people have tried using the GPS system to find the church; but they found out that GPS doesn't know where it is, and ended up getting lost. We advise following the directions instead of GPS.

In the church, there are two furnished bedrooms for the ministers to use when coming for services. When you contact someone about coming for services, please let them know if you would like to use the bedrooms during the time you are here.

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### TEXAS, McALLEN Sandy Kipfer

Greetings to all in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We thank our visiting ministers and their wives: Bro. Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton, IL) and Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla, Chicago, IL) for taking their time and effort in expounding to us the written Word of the Lord. May God continue to richly bless them.

We would like to encourage those who plan to come south for the season or a vacation to consider the valley for a Sunday of worship and/or making the valley your home while you are in Southern Texas. We are small in number and are happy to have visitors come and spend some time with us. The following churches are scheduled for services: (January 17, Peoria, IL), (February 1, Winthrop, MN), (February 15, Rittman, OH), (March 1, Silverton/Portland, OR), (March 15, Chicago, IL).

Our address is: Holiday Inn Express, 1921 South 10th Street. Turn 1½ blocks off the Expressway on 10th Street. Services will be held at 10:30 and 12:30. Please see ministers' directory for local contact information.

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### TEXAS, ZAPATA Mary Plattner

We are thankful for all who have ar-

rived in Zapata this winter to spend time and worship here. Over the Christmas holidays we enjoyed several families with their children.

We have had those who have had some hospital stays. Sis. Delores (Bro. Dan) Anliker and Sis. Lois (Bro. Marlyn) Messner were both surgical patients. We are thankful they are both able to be back with us again.

Anyone traveling to South Texas is most welcome to spend some time in Zapata and worship with us.

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### VERMONT CLARENDON/NORWICH Nathan and Miriam Reutter

Little baby in a manger,  
I love Thee,  
Lying there to earth a stranger,  
I love Thee;  
Wise men saw the star, and answered,  
I love Thee,  
Shepherds heard the angels saying,  
I love Thee.

*Children's Harp #100*

As we approach this beautiful Christmas season remembering the birth of our Lord and Savior, it makes us so thankful to know and love not only this baby Jesus but our resurrected Jesus! The one who gave His life so that we could have life everlasting through His precious shed blood! What more could we ask for. It was a blessing to be able to sing hymns of Christ's birth to the elderly in two of the local nursing homes this month. They always seem to enjoy the old hymns that they sang in their younger years and we pray that God could use these times to draw souls to Him.

We want to thank each and every one who has come to worship with us over the past year. The Christian fellowship that we have with our many visitors is such an encouragement. Our ministers this past month have been: Bro. Tom Bahler (Sis. LaNae), Bro. Dan Goric (Sis. MaryLou), Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Diane), and Bro. Warren Zahner (Sis. Bonnie), all of Rockville CT. May God bless you for your love and efforts.

If you are interested in fellowshiping with us here in Vermont, and would like information about service locations and dates, please contact Bro. Chad & Sis. Jenny Virkler (802-293-2724). We love to fellowship with believers whether it is during the week or on the weekend. Please let us know if you are planning on being in our area so we can accommodate you. Service times are as follows:

Mid-week services (Contact local brethren)  
Sunday Morning Service  
10:10 AM  
Sunday Afternoon Service  
12:15 PM  
Sunday school is held during the morning service.

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Inventory is available upon request. This is a wonderful opportunity to support those of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10).

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*\* Providing basic information about our church and linkage to other church-related sites is located at:*

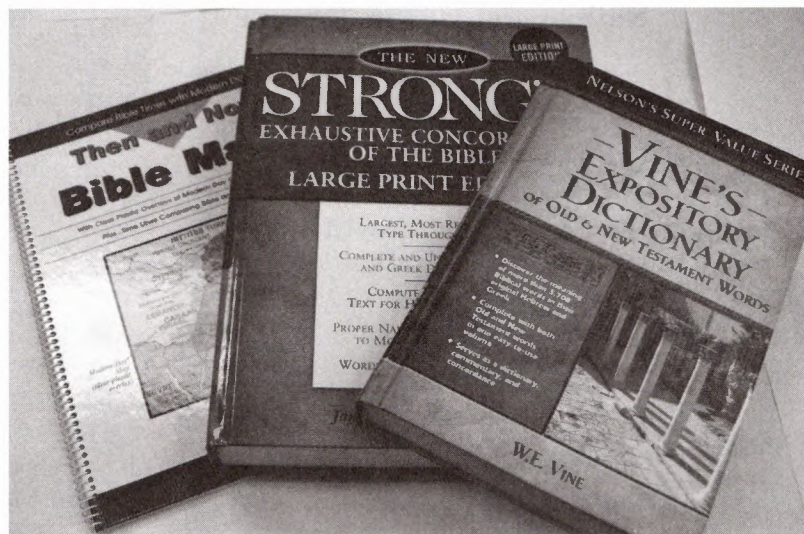
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### 25 Ways to Provoke Anger in Children

Anger is a unique emotion and is one of the most referenced emotions in the Bible. It can motivate to appropriate actions and causes (Mark 3:5) or diminish our effectiveness as a believer (Prov. 14:29). The Lord God expressed His wrath many times over people that chose idolatry and hardened their hearts towards His commands. Vine's Dictionary provides this insight: anger is a natural impulse, desire, or disposition, and is seen as the strongest of all passions. There is little doubt as to why the New Testament instructs believers multiple times to "put off and put away" the destructive side of this emotion (Eph. 4:31, Col. 3:8).

As parents striving to raise our children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, we are provided many opportunities to teach, model, and instruct our children in this principle. One of our goals is to help our children grow from self-centered and emotionally driven to a Christ-like example that incorporates a biblical thought and reasoning process. How sad the first set of parents, Adam and Eve, must have been when their own flesh and blood could not manage this emotion (Gen. 4:5-8). In one day they lost two children: one to death, the other to exile.

Solomon reminds us that there is nothing new "under the sun" (Eccl. 1:14), and therefore parents need to be proactive in the everyday task of helping their children learn the wisdom of how to experience the emotion (be ye angry), and yet make good choices (sin not). The context of this set of 3 articles will encourage parents to examine themselves first in how they can avoid "provoking their children to anger" (Col. 3:21). The author, Lou Priolo, outlines in his book on this topic, "The Heart of Anger", 25 ways that parents can unknowingly create anger and frustration in their children. The examples we should try to avoid are as follows:

#### 1. The Lack of Marital Harmony:

*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.* (Gen. 2:24)

It is easy to understand why this is

the first one mentioned. A painfully accurate overview is evident by the statement: "perhaps the greatest provocation of anger in children is parents who do not live with each other in the harmony that the Scriptures prescribe".<sup>1</sup> As Gen. 2:24 lays the foundation, a husband and wife who do not develop the "one flesh" intimacy as intended by God's will, over time, have various other problems develop. Additional correlations between lack of marital harmony and angry children are seen in the effect that bitterness has on the human spirit. As children observe the resentment that results from their parents' lack of harmony, they can be more susceptible to acquiring those bitter thoughts, motives, attitudes, and actions that have been modeled to them.

#### 2. Establishing and Maintaining a Child-Centered Home:

*The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.* (Prov. 29:15)

If parents do not know how to set up a Christ-Centered Home (which is defined as: each member understanding his/her biblical role in the family and is committed to place Christ above self), then the home is likely to be Child-Centered. It is a foundational principle that the husband and wife work at being closer to each other than to the child. If that does not occur, the child may view himself as equal and will tend to become angry when his desires do not get placed on equal status as the needs and desires of the parent. Parents must be cautious that their focus on rearing their children in the love and fear of God does not become a higher priority than their commitment to each other in the marriage relationship.

#### 3. Modeling Sinful Anger:

*Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.* (Prov. 22:24-25)

When parents model sinful anger, the child may accidentally be taught that the only way to solve problems is to win. There are many "teachable moments" to be had with our children in helping them observe how sinfully expressed anger by others can bring many negative consequences.

#### 4. Habitually Disciplining While Angry:

*O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* (Ps. 38:1)

When a parent is angry, it is easy to over-discipline. That anger may be perceived as a personal attack and the discipline seen as vindictive (revengeful) instead of corrective. Stress from work, finances, marital and family struggles can all add to the parent's frustration that is then passed on to the child.

#### 5. Scolding:

*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.* (Eph. 4:29)

By definition, scolding is to rebuke someone angrily. This is often done by using harsh language when complaining or finding fault. While scolding may make the speaker feel better, it does very little to biblically "train or instruct".

#### Conclusion:

Parents, or those that provide for the care and education of children, are indeed blessed with the heritage of the Lord (Ps. 127:3). Helping children learn how to discern and appropriately respond to anger is vital for healthy children, families and churches. An unresolved hurt and wounded spirit progresses down a path of destruction: from hurt to bitterness, then anger, then stubbornness and finally rebellion<sup>2</sup>. While this article does not address specific skills for children to use in learning how to manage anger and frustration, it does provide an outline for strengthening parent's awareness of possible trigger points in children. Some children's personalities and temperaments are going to require additional help from mom and dad in learning these skills. Those efforts for children needing to learn the balance and control of emotions and actions are going to be well-pleasing to God. Two more future Silver Lining articles will look at the remaining 20 ways.

<sup>1</sup> Lou Priolo, *The Heart of Anger*, (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1997) p.30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.21-22.



## Child Placement Manager Opening



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*For further information and a job description, please contact:*

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Administrator

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Leo, IN 46765

1-888-443-4283 (GATE)

jeff.schumacher@gatewaywoods.org

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*...This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.  
Isaiah 54:17*



*Sermon continued from page 2*

the dispersion.

Even Paul, who was an Apostle to the Gentiles, nevertheless, when he entered a city throughout Rome, would typically enter the Jewish synagogue of that city and would use that as a base. Often that Jewish synagogue was not only filled with Jews of the dispersion but also proselytes or Gentile people that were God-fearing. So, often his connections then to the Gentile world was actually through that Jewish synagogue.

Nonetheless, the point here is that James is not particularly writing to a specific person. He is writing a general epistle. In fact, the book has gained the title of 'The General Epistle'. I am not exactly sure how many epistles have that title 'General Epistle'. But we can see from who he is writing to, that this is essentially to everyone. The significance of that might be that if the concerns or the issues addressed in this letter had a broad application in that day, we might be left with the assumption that the points made here today and the things we consider, probably have a broad application to every generation and to every locality. I think we will find that to be the case.

James jumps right in by saying, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;" (James 1:2). We'll find that the major theme of this chapter one in James is dealing with the believer's attitude or reaction to or relationship to trials in life. Count it pure joy when you face multiple trials. We are so used to hearing that, I think, those of us who have been brought up in the faith, that it just sounds so Sunday-ish, right? It sounds so Bible-ish that it probably doesn't have the impact that it ought to have with us. But that is a pretty radical statement.

What would have to be true of someone, to take particular joy, to consider it pure joy, to run into various constant and unending trials in

life? Isn't really our whole effort in life pointed toward avoiding difficulties? I smile at this because I spend a great deal of my time at work trying to learn the best strategies for managing projects. Of all the body of information and writing that is on that topic, the whole thrust of it is, learn how to anticipate trouble and plan your way around it. Learn to respond quickly to difficulties and to lesson or mitigate the difficulties of the problems that arise from that. So the whole idea there is, the excellent project manager is the one who has anticipated the most difficulties, has planned around them, has taken the brunt of the problems away from it by his prior planning and those that remain, he quickly responds to and eliminates.

That whole mindset suggests that trials are bad. Difficulties are bad. You don't want delays. You don't want unsuspecting difficulties. James here is suggesting something very different from that. He is suggesting it ought to be a source of joy.

What kind of a view of the world would find joy in difficulties? Remember, we started in Deuteronomy with a passage that was suggesting that men of God ought to think of themselves differently. They have to think of themselves as completely unique from the rest of the world. In what way can we think of ourselves in such a radically unique way, that finding joy is something more than just what we talk about on Sunday morning? What kind of a life finds pleasure in difficulties?

Well, he gives us a hint of that, in verse 3, "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." I think that endurance probably would be more consistent with the vocabulary of our current vernacular. The trying of your faith builds endurance in life. So, the kind of person that would find pleasure in trials is the kind of person that elevates or thinks highly of notions of

first, living by faith and secondly, enduring in that faith.

Now let's step back a moment and let's think about what it means to live by faith. The common notion today of living by faith is that you kind of just meander through life with this strong sense of hoping and wishing and desiring a good outcome. So you are this perennial optimist. You just constantly think good is going to come from it all. You just keep quoting Romans 8:28. Romans 8:28 is indeed there and is indeed real and I am not trying to make fun of it. But faith goes far beyond a haphazard, happy-go-lucky, it's all going to turn out good. People who subscribe to that can kind of get disillusioned when too many difficulties come stacked up in a row. Suddenly you begin to think, well I didn't bargain for all of this.

But what really is Biblical faith? The writer of the Hebrews suggests that it is that absolute certainty that what God has said will come to pass is going to come to pass. So whatever God has said, we can take to the bank.

So James is saying here, being absolutely convinced that what God has said is going to come to pass is so valuable, that anything that comes along in life that affords you the privilege of reminding yourself that God's in charge and what He has said will come to pass is going to come to pass and anchoring yourself into that, is of great value. Now we might call it unfortunate, but a reality of it is that those thoughts aren't typically engendered when everything is going smooth. Those thoughts are more easily cultivated in the midst of difficulties.

James is saying, our life of faith is so entirely valuable, in fact it is so much more valuable than any other attribute in life, that we ought to be delighted by those things that may cause all kinds of difficulties and may make a mess of your life, but nonetheless, draw you closer to God's promises, to His declaration.

If a life of abject poverty, in a



sense, James is saying, nonetheless wins for you a kind of confidence in God that makes you just forever beholden to Him, so be it. James is saying, in essence, choose that over a good life - good being defined by ease and comfort and smoothness.

These are the kinds of thoughts that you are not going to hear espoused by a New York Times bestseller. These are not ideas you are going to find in the newspaper. This isn't the kind of conversation that is going to spring up around the drinking fountain at work. In fact, these kinds of ideas I only know of coming from Scripture. Because God wants a peculiar people. He wants people that are uniquely and specifically dedicated to one way of thinking, to one thought, to one aspiration, to one goal. That's to glorify Him and to exalt His name. To make Him the God of the universe and to exalt Him and praise Him as that.

So James says, because we know inherently that trials bring us back to those kinds of thoughts, count it joy! Every time you have a trial, what happens? We know what happens. We go scrambling back to God. 'Oh, God, sovereign Lord, save me. Help me through this difficulty.' I am not making fun of that. That is a good thing to happen. We certainly shouldn't begin to try to solve our problems on our own. But let's acknowledge that that scrambling back to God, if it becomes a habit, if it becomes a way of life, if we have sufficient difficulty in our life to drive us to what we know we should be doing to begin with, James says, eventually it builds a pattern. It builds a pattern of endurance or patience, as King James translates it. A pattern where we begin, not to anticipate and long for smooth sailing, but we begin to anticipate and long for life to be lived out before God, moment by moment.

So eventually we get to the point, whether it's smooth or whether it's rough, whether we are happy at the moment or whether we are in the pit

of despair, God still is huge in our thoughts. He still is the one that we long for and we love the notion that whatever is before us is an opportunity. Whatever is before us is one more opportunity to see God as the Eternal One. The Omnipotent One. The Creator of all. The source of righteousness. The source of meaning and purpose in life. The source of all joy.

"But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire..." or complete, without lack of anything. (James 1:4) Now, that verse only makes sense if we take it in the context of what James is talking about here. We are not talking about having the stuff of this world in such abundance that we can't possibly want yet another thing. But a life that is just so thoroughly satisfied with his God, with his maker, with his source of joy, is complete, is perfect and wants nothing.

Now James is anticipating what might be the immediate response to that. I just don't have the wherewithal to think like that. I must not just have God's perspective. Well, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God..." v. 5. Don't forget now, this God that we are asking this of is the God who gives liberally. Gives lavishly. Gives indiscriminately. Prodigiously. Can't find any more words to just describe the sense that God is desirous to give. Well, Jesus said, I came that you might have life and you might have abundantly that life filled with satisfaction (St. John 10:10). Satisfaction in Him with the reward of knowing Him. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally. And doesn't upbraid. Doesn't chastise you. Doesn't say, 'why are you back here asking again? You asked yesterday, isn't that enough?' Doesn't chide. But He gives to all men liberally.

"...and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man

think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." v.5-7. This has been a stumbling block to many people and it causes us to pull back. That's exactly not what James wants. James here, is not creating a status of Christian prayer warriors that we sometimes make this passage out to be. That there are certain people that just have this surreal kind of confidence where they just step in before the presence of God and boy, they ask and it happens. That's so deeply entrenched that I think we need to probably spend a minute just thinking about that. Because it probably takes us following those thoughts to a silly conclusion to make us realize how that can't possibly what James is speaking of here.

God is God, right? Is there any argument there? By that, I mean that He knows everything. You and I are something considerably less than that, right? You and I see things through our experience base and through our limited understanding and we just don't understand it all, do we?

Now, how should prayer work? God is in heaven, who sees all things and hears all things, knows all things and has all power to do whatever He wills and we are on this earth. We see something and we have a notion of what we want so we turn to God and we say, 'God, this is what I want.' How should it be? Should God unequivocally, immediately, say, 'yes sir' and do it? Do you want a God like that? Do you want a God that's tethered to your desires? Obligated to your opinion? If we have that kind of a God, He's a pretty small God, isn't He? Maybe He's huge, but He's just been constricted down to - well, the best that can come out of it is our limited understanding of what's good.

No, we don't want a God like that. We want a God that knows better than we do. We want God to respond, not according to our silly view of the world, but we want God

*Sermon continued on page 44*



*Sermon continued from page 43*

to respond according to His pure goodness and His love for us and His perfect understanding.

James is not setting up a criteria here where we go to God with a certain bold confidence that whatever we suggest at the moment comes to pass. Remember again, let him ask in faith. What is faith again? What did we say that was? It's knowing what God had said will come to pass is going to come to pass. So that if God has declared something to be good and right, we ought to pray. If what God has declared is going to come to pass, then when we pray for it to come to pass, we ought to be certain it is going to come to pass. That is what faith is.

If God says something is going to come to pass, like He's just declared, anyone that lacks wisdom, if he asks, God will give. Because God gives liberally and doesn't chastise or upbraid. (James 1:5) That has been declared. That has been revealed. Now, if you lack wisdom, God has said He will give it if you ask. So you ought to ask and you ought to be certain that He will respond and give.

You see the difference? If God has declared it to be so, if God has declared it to be good, then we dare not ask. And when we ask, we dare not fail to be absolutely certain that He will deliver.

But of course, if God has not declared it, if it's merely a desire on our part, that's a very different subject. That is not what James is addressing here. God is not what some people have referred to as a vending machine. You put in your prayer, you get out your merchandise.

But if we see it in its truth, then it becomes a beautiful thing, doesn't it? Because now we see that God is a good God. We see that God is dependable. He's faithful. If God has declared it, He will deliver. That's reassuring, is it not? Don't you want to live in that kind of a kingdom? In a kingdom where God says it and we can take it to the bank? He has

merely commanded us to ask for it and He will give.

"For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." v.7,8. Let's not be of those that shrink back. Let's not be of those that will hear the Word of God and one moment rejoice and the next moment hold it in reserve - I am not so sure. That, unfortunately becomes the plight of those who began to read this passage as if God is the cosmic giver of all things that we ask for. Because eventually, we are going to run into an unanswered prayer, aren't we, or what appears to be an unanswered prayer, a no. If we don't understand what God is asking of us here, our faith may be shaken if it is in the wrong thing.

"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away." v.9,10. Again, you see the beauty of this? We, as earth bound folks often fall into the trap of allowing ourselves to fit into the categories that the world around us has created. We don't live in the caste system of India, but we do live in the caste system, right? We all know who we are welcome to associate with and who we are not. We all know the certain social-economic levels where we fit and where we don't. We all that have experienced a public education, know the cool crowd and then the other crowd that is not quite as cool. The athletic types and those that didn't quite make that grade. The scholastic type.

Jesus is saying, isn't it delightful? In fact, all of us as believers ought to rejoice in the fact that those dissipate in the kingdom of God. All those stratifications dissipate. They mean nothing! The rich man looks at himself and says, what is this? I mean, in a few short years it is gone! I am not taking it with me. I face eternity just like everyone else. We say the ground is level at the foot of

the cross. Oh what a beautiful thing!

Let a man of low degree rejoice in the fact that this is nothing. This is insignificant. In a few short years I am going to be experiencing the joys of heaven right along next side of those people that right now look like in life they have it made.

Once again, life in the kingdom of God, it doesn't work unless we completely adjust the way we think. If we don't reject the world's system, the thought patterns of this world, it doesn't work. It falls flat. In fact, Christianity, when all of those worldly things are hung on to, it becomes actually kind of ugly. Christianity with the stratification of socio-economic status, actually becomes an ugly thing. Christianity, segmented by the beautiful and the not so beautiful is an ugly thing.

What drives you? Where is your passion? What excites you? Is it getting one more thing? Is it appearing a certain way in the eyes of those around you? Is it a constant clawing and scrambling to be just a little bit higher than those you associate with in some measure? Let's reject that. Let's together, as a body of believers, encourage one another to throw all that aside. Let's see the ugliness of that. Let's see the beauty. Let's see the beauty in God exalted as God and us as His subjects. Loyal. Loyal because He, as the good God, is the only one deserving of our loyalty. Of our adoration. But so worthy of our loyalty and our adoration that that loyalty and that adoration ought to be so tenacious, so cemented, so firm that nothing, nothing shakes it. Let's be children of the kingdom.





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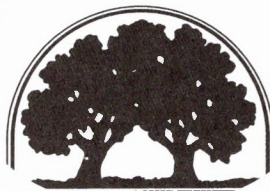
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Ed Graf  
Residential Program Director  
PO Box 151  
Leo, IN 46765  
1-888-443-4283  
ed.graf@gatewaywoods.org

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La Higuera - D/R Lifeline Construction	Jan 27-Feb 3	Ted Steidinger 815-867-6452 tsteid@route24.net	8	Les Cayes MEBSH Haiti Support	Feb 20-23	Rich Bertschi 309-467-2351 lemangm@mtco.com	Invitation
Puits Sales Palm Grove Construction	Jan 30-Feb 7	John Aberle 785-459-2423 jraberle@hotmail.com	10	Les Cayes SEED Agriculture Aid	Mar 13-20	Dale Frank 319-766-3661 dtfrank@louisacomm.net	12
Les Cayes MEBSH School Roof	Jan 30-Feb 6	Dean Pashak 989-662-7685 dwpashak@charter.net	12	Les Cayes MEBSH School Roof	Mar 20-27	Rich Bertschi 309-467-6110 lemangm@mtco.com	12
La Higuera - D/R Lifeline Construction	Feb 3-10	Eldon Steidinger 815-848-8988 eldonsteid@yahoo.com	8	Les Cayes MEBSH Maintenance	Mar 27-Apr 3	Jon Zeller 309-266-9009 jzeller@mtco.com	12
Les Cayes SEED Agriculture Aid	Feb 6-13	Dale Frank 319-766-3661 dtfrank@louisacomm.net	12	Les Cayes AWA Water Aid	Apr 24-May 1	Troy Stuber 309-925-2603 troystuber@verizon.net	4
Les Cayes FRW Vocational School	Feb 6-13	Rick Wuethrich 219-567-9488 topnotch@home.ffni.com	4	Les Cayes MEBSH Medical	May 1-8	Keith Knepp 309-467-4691 kknepp@mchsi.com	8
Croix De Bouquets Lifeline Medical	Feb 10-17	Glen Steidinger 815-693-3473	8	Haiti MEBSH Caribbean Eval.	May 15-23	Tom Hitz 734-454-9229 tchitz@sbcglobal.net	Invitation
Les Cayes MEBSH School Roof	Feb 13-20	Randy Kieser 309-695-6340 kieser84@geckoct.com	12	Les Cayes FRW Vocational School	Jun 5-12	Rick Wuethrich 219-567-9488 topnotch@home.ffni.com	4

### Haiti and Jamaica Work Team Code Definitions

**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



**JAMAICA**

Data updated from the Apostolic Christian World Relief web site as of January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 -[www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-caribbean/](http://www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-caribbean/)

Project	Year 2009	Coordinator	Capacity				
Kingston School CCCD Open to all	Mar 7 - 14	Roger Stoller 309-747-3228 rstoller@dtnspeed.net	40 (Open)	Jamaica Deaf Village CCCD	May 22 - 30	Ted Hirstein 309-266-8769 hirstein@mtco.com	40
Kingston School CCCD Gridley SS Only	Mar 21 - 28	Roger Stoller 309-747-3228 rstoller@dtnspeed.net	40 (Full)	Jamaica Deaf Village CCCD Goodfield SS	Jun 6 - 13	Andy Bauman arbauman@mchsi.com	40
Montego Bay School CCCD Bluffton SS	Mar 21 - 28	Gene Gerber 260-824-4601 ggerber@meyerbuilding.com	40 (Full)	Jamaica Deaf Village CCCD Akron, Rittman, Smithville SS	Jun 20 - 27	Jay Maibach jmmaibach@embarqmail.com	40

**MEXICO**

If anyone is interested in leading a team to Mexico, contact Bro. Mike Fiechter at 260-597-7330 or [mfiechter@onlyinternet.net](mailto:mfiechter@onlyinternet.net)  
Data updated from the Apostolic Christian World Relief web site as of January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 -[www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-mexico/](http://www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-mexico/)

Location	Year 2009	Coordinator					
Magdalena Construction	Feb 14-21	Steve Veins 860-871-8329 veins1@earthlink.net		Agua Prieta Construction	Mar 21-28	Aaron Beery 330-927-6926 beeryaaron@embarqmail.com	
Agua Prieta Construction	Mar 7-14	Kevin Gerber 260-565-3313 kevgerber@yahoo.com		Reynosa Medical	Apr 1-8	Cheryl Herrmann cherrmann@verizon.net	
Magdalena Construction	Mar 7-14	Dustin Huber/ISU Illinois State University 309-825-0864 dustin.huber@verizon.net		Magdalena Construction	May 30-Jun 6	Seth Beer Phoenix Bible Class 602-918-1722 sethbeer@gmail.com	
Agua Prieta Construction	Mar 14-21	Steven Sauder/ICC-Bradley Illinois Central College/Bradley 309-657-2067 stevensau@gmail.com		Magdalena Construction	Jun 13-20	Brent Knobloch 815-923-4736 bmknob@mc.net	
Magdalena Construction	Mar 14-21	Joe Darlington/Purdue Purdue University 815-245-7913 joedarlington@gmail.com		Agua Prieta Construction	Jun 20-27	Brad Leman 260-273-1953 crazyhorsebrad@gmail.com	
Reynosa Construction	Mar 21-28	Tristan Herrmann/U of I University of Illinois 309-712-6902 tristanherrmann@gmail.com		Magdalena Construction	Jun 20-27	Aaron Klopfenstein Indianapolis Bible Class 317-596-8739 aaronklop@sbcglobal.net	
Magdalena Construction	Mar 21-28	Pete Aberle Tremont Bible Class 309-925-5969 dpabfrms@hotmail.com		Magdalena Construction	Jun 27-Jul 4	Kent Mogler 651-452-8586 kent.mogler@comcast.net	
				Juarez Medical	Sep 16-23	Cheryl Herrmann cherrmann@verizon.net	

**USA World Relief Committee**

For area work or disaster projects, please contact the following USA committee member:

* Bro. Kent Heimer	<i>Counseling Elder</i>	Taylor, MO	Cell# 573-248-5701
* Bro. Paul Kaeb	<i>Chairman</i>	Bern, KS	Cell# 785-547-5269
* Bro. Chuck Kellenberger	<i>Sec/Treasurer</i>	Elgin, IL	Cell# 224-629-6531
* Bro. Les Schambach	<i>Administrator</i>	Elgin, IL	Cell# 630-247-5271
* Bro. Arnold Gerst		Taylor, MO	Cell# 217-242-8996
* Bro. Tom Neuenschwander		Bluffton, IN	Cell# 260-307-6026
* Bro. Ray Slagel		Fairbury, IL	Cell# 815-848-3714





# REMEMBERING

## *Our Spiritual Heritage*

*This is the last in a series of articles from the booklet, "For Where Your Treasure Is, There Will Be Your Heart Also." This is a booklet published in 1978 by the Gridley and Roanoke, Illinois, young groups consisting of interviews with elderly brothers and sisters in those congregations.*

It is interesting how the young groups from these two congregations benefited in conducting their interviews and research with the older brethren. In the Preface to their booklet, they wrote, "The privilege of learning from others by sharing experiences, favorite verses, and quotes captures the essence of fellowship. That the Gridley and Roanoke young groups could combine efforts to make this book a reality strengthens the Christian bond of love. Truly, "All things work together for good to those that love the Lord."

### **Roanoke Members**

Ethel Dorwin had a favorite saying: "Work and play for a year and a day. I was plugging away on a job that was tearful and lonely. But this year and this day my work is like play, for I am doing my best work only."

Jane Hodel gave her favorite verse: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Martha Perdlewitz's favorite

song was, "The Lord Is My Shepherd". She gave an interesting reason for this: "It's the first one I remember singing. It was in English, and the others were all in German."

Bina Bertsch also listed "The Lord Is My Shepherd" as her favorite hymn. Her favorite Bible verse was "He leadeth me beside the still waters" (Psalm 23:2)

Clarence and Mildred Aeschleman listed a favorite poem:

### Where There Is Love

Where there is love, the heart is light.

Where there is love, the day is bright.

Where there is love, there is a song  
To hope when things are going wrong.

Where there is love, there is a smile

To make all things more worthwhile.

Where there is love, there's quiet peace.

A quiet place where turmoils cease.

Love changes darkness into light  
And makes the heart take "wingless flight".

### **Gridley Members**

Several brothers and sisters listed their favorite hymns:

Walter Kaupp — "Jesus Lives"

Louise Gramm — "Morning Hymn"

Anna K. Miller — "As Pants The Heart"

Pauline Witzig — "Communion With God"

Hulda Yergler — "Rock of Ages"

Henry and Ruth Gramm — "God Of Unlimited Compassion"

William Gramm — "Jesus Lover Of My Soul"

Rudy Miller — "A Blessed Man"

Matilda Witzig — "The Image Of Christ"

Ella Cargill — "What A Friend We Have In Jesus"

Ezra Stoller — "Jesus Loves Me"

Lillian Witzig — "Trust In God"

A survey of the Gridley membership (in this 1978 booklet) indicated that 75 members were over 65 years of age. Leah Ringger had been a member for 76 years. Ida Kuerth was a member for 73 years, and Ollie Gramm, 71 years. Those who had been members for more than 65 years were William Gramm, Setta Klopfenstein, Mary Klopfenstein Martin, Rudy Miller, Bertha Moser, Matilda Stortz, and Minnie Stortz.

*By Perry A. Klopfenstein*

### Next Issue:

Statistics,  
re: church size and growth, etc.



# The Light Of Hope

## “Armageddon”

*Retired Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan*

On August 15, 1945, General Douglas McArthur, aboard the U.S. battle ship, Missouri, in Tokyo Bay, received the unconditional surrender of General Tojo, who was prime minister of Japan during World War II. At that time, General McArthur said to the news reporters present, “Unless men devise a more equitable means of settling their differences, Armageddon is just around the corner.”

Earlier that month, I believe it was on August 6, a lone B52 bomber appeared over Japan. Its mission was to drop the A-bomb on a city farther up the coastline from Hiroshima in southern Japan, but that city was clouded over so the bomber continued on to Hiroshima, its second city to be considered in case the first was clouded over. As the plane approached Hiroshima, the air raid sirens went off but upon the consideration that it was only one plane, not a formation of planes, the all-clear was given and people went about their business instead of heading for the air raid shelters. That plane dropped one bomb which exploded in mid-air, melting iron beams enough to cause them to change shape, and at the same time, killing about 100,000 people, plus the thousands of people who suffered and died later from the effects of the radiation. One taxi driver in Hiroshima said that he was a little boy on a school bus just outside the city that morning and the bus driver had the diarrhea and kept the children waiting on the bus while he went to the bathroom. This, the taxi driver told me, saved his life and the lives of the other children and the driver of the bus.

The Japanese government was in a state of shock and was slow in reacting to what had happened so a second atomic bomb was dropped a couple of days later, this time on Nagasaki, a

city still farther to the south. Then the emperor had a meeting with the government people and told them and the nation that they must surrender unconditionally. A photograph or painting of this meeting is famous in Japan. They expected to be slaves of America but America helped Japan, to their utter amazement.

General McArthur was referring to the destructive power of the atomic bomb when he said, “Armageddon is just around the corner.” He knew about that last battle to be fought between the forces of good and the forces of evil, from Revelation 16:16, “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

The last part of verse 14 in Revelation reads, “To gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” I do not pretend to understand the details of prophecy but it sounds as if God himself will be visibly involved in that final battle before Christ rules on the earth for a thousand years.

Scripture from Jude may be relevant, verses 14 and 15, “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all.” McArthur simply warned us that the end may be nearer than we think. His expression, “Just around the corner,” means, “You can’t see it but it is really very near.”

In the midst of all this, our Lord Jesus Christ tells us in Matthew 24:6, “See that ye be not troubled.” When I was on a troop ship headed for Japan during the Korean War, this verse was a great comfort to me. I also tried to comfort myself by pretending that I was just going along as an observer. I was assigned to Japan instead of Korea, but there, in the army hospital, returning service men with whom I had trained, told me what had happened to them in Ko-

rea. It wasn’t pleasant.

So Armageddon, the last great battle, which signals the end of this world as we know it, is just around the corner. What can we do about it? We can surrender to God and rest in Christ, making as sure as we know how that we are walking in the light as He is in the light, in which case the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. I John 1:7. This is no child’s play. The stakes are high in the game of life.

Some people may say that they know and understand prophecy in the Bible. This reminds me of what the Greek scholar, Socrates, said about the Greek teachers in the market place where he went to discuss the philosophical questions of the meaning and purpose of life. He said, “The difference between you teachers and me is that you don’t know but you think you know. I don’t know and I know I don’t know.” The teachers did not like Socrates’ ridicule and had him condemned to death, which was carried out by ordering him to drink hemlock poison, whatever that is. He drank the poison and died but he died admitting that there were many things he really didn’t know. He lived before the time of Christ, so I can’t say that he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ but it is possible that he believed on the promises concerning the coming of Christ, the Savior. I hope so. I consider Socrates to have been a good example regarding humility. Let’s just admit that we don’t know, but God knows, and we are glad to leave all those difficult matters in His hands. Armageddon is just around the corner. Be ready and let it go at that. Rejoice in the Lord.

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