

The Silver Lining



*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned
and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;
And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures,
which are able to make thee wise unto salvation
through faith which is in Christ Jesus. .*

January 2011

Sermon by Bro. Timothy Roecker, Peoria, IL

I Kings 3 and I Corinthians 9

Greetings to you all. It is good to be here. I was thinking, as these brothers were encouraging me in sharing, in I Corinthians 2, Paul came and he says, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." v.1,2. That is really why we come this morning, because of Jesus Christ and Him crucified and what He has done. We come to worship. Worship is a statement declaring that God is worthy. We come to praise God. That is what this day is about.

I Kings deals with Solomon and then the split of the kingdom with his son Rehoboam. But here in chapter 3, the heading says, 'Solomon chooses wisdom over riches'. This is an old story that we have heard many times. But it is beautiful.

The church of Corinth was in a tough area. It was known throughout the world as a wicked city. I don't know quite what the word was but to Corinthianize was to do wickedness. To do evil. The town was a synonym for evil. And the believers lived in this city. Paul writes to them and they had many struggles.

I thought of the first eight verses in I Corinthians 1. "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the

end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is a powerful start to the message of what he is going to speak to the Corinthians. That there are battles going on in their lives. There are battles going on in their church. There are divisions, disagreements. There are struggles with theology. He starts off with reminding them where they are. They are in Jesus Christ. They have been called to Jesus Christ.

Paul gets into this more in II Corinthians, where he defends himself. He speaks more to his authority and the reason he comes, the authority he has over the church and his care for them. But here in chapter 9, he addresses that also, for he is being challenged. There are leaders within their church that are false teachers. Super Apostles is what they would name themselves. They have all these mighty things going on in their lives. They mislead the church. Again, it was a church with a lot of struggles.

Going back to I Kings for a bit, the thing that strikes me, as I was reading I Kings 3, is we think of what Solomon did. He gave all these sacrifices and how God blessed him and what was available and how Solomon just poured his heart out to God. Then later on in life, his heart started to grow cold. The Bible speaks about all his wives and how they turned his heart.

It is interesting that they were told not to marry someone that was outside of their faith, but from Israel. And here Solomon did that at the very beginning. But Solomon's heart still sought the Lord. But it was the start of his heart turning away. God still blessed him. God still gave him this incredible wisdom. He gave him riches. It seems like Solomon had it all but his heart had started turning away early. He had not followed God's law. He had not listened to the commandments of God.

We can read about it even and it

Sermon continued on page 41

Cover Verses

Front: II Timothy 3:14-15

Back: I John 5:1-4

The Silver Lining subscriptions are due from the following churches. Please collect in:

February

1. Roanoke, IL
2. Taylor, MO
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5. Burlington, IA
6. Toledo, OH
7. Bay City, MI
8. Winthrop, MN
9. Elgin, IA

Suggested Donation: \$14/subscription

Next correspondence due:

For February Issue

(16 Dec. News - 15 Jan. News)

Due: 20 January 2011

The Silver Lining (Vol. 66, #1)

1389 County Road 1600 N
Roanoke, IL 61561

USPS 496780

Published Monthly By The Apostolic
Christian Church of America

Counselors:

Tom Stock, Rick Plattner

Official Apostolic Christian
Church Website

www.apostolicchristian.org

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866-737-3177 (fax #1)
309-923-7359 (fax #2)

Periodical non-profit - postage paid at Roanoke, IL 61561, and additional offices. The subscription rate is a donation. Send zip number with address. Remember to send changes of address. Send both old and new addresses (with both zips). Postmaster send address changes to:

The Silver Lining
1389 County Road 1600 N
Roanoke, IL 61561

*"A broken and a contrite heart, O
God, thou wilt not despise."
(Psalm 51:17)*

Light From The Word



Writings based
on God's Word

January 2011

Godly Sorrow Worketh Repentance

To be restored to our Creator, we must repent. God commands it (Acts 17:30). Christ taught, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Peter, inspired of God, preached, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out..." (Acts 3:19).

For generations, our church has taught and modeled a biblically-based process for bringing forth the fruits of repentance, including confession of sin, restitution and conversion to a Christ-centered life. This heritage is something to be treasured. Yet, our familiarity with what this looks like must not blind us to what repentance actually is. While visible changes in attitude and lifestyle will surely be evident as our hearts are conformed to the image of Christ (Matt. 3:8; Rom. 8:29), repentance is not simply the external aspects of a process or a checklist of tasks that we must do. It is the condition of a heart which mourns for sin as it turns toward God by faith in Christ (Acts 20:21).

Paul writes, "...godly sorrow worketh repentance..." (2 Cor. 7:9-10). Godly sorrow is that which is "poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3). The Greek word translated "poor" means to beg out of shame. It is the recognition of one's utter inadequacy to save himself from his sin, as expressed by Isaiah in his vision of the Lord: "Woe is me! For I am undone...for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Is. 6:5). It is the humility of the publican, who "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). Paul further explains that the godly sorrow of repentance brings a change of mind, with indignation toward sin and zeal for godliness that encompasses all aspects of our lives (2 Cor. 7:11).

We cannot will ourselves into godly sorrow; it results from fixing our eyes upon God's holiness and facing the dreadful reality of our unworthiness before Him. "O wretched man that I am!" exclaimed Paul. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). The answer is Jesus Christ, whose death we caused. We mourn for our part

in that and fall to our knees in repentance. Such is the godly sorrow of which Paul speaks. "To this man will I (the Lord) look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word" (Is. 66:2).

Having reflected on what repentance is, it is worthwhile to consider what it is not. First, repentance is not a focus on self like that which we see in the rich young ruler who asked Jesus, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus responded with a question, "Why callest thou me good?" (Luke 18:18-23). Had the man honestly answered this question and reflected on the goodness of God, he should have recognized his own sin and begged forgiveness from the Savior who stood before him. Instead, he justified himself, and when Jesus invited him to "follow me," the man went away sad. He felt sorrow, but not godly sorrow. Though he may have met the external requirements of the Jewish law, his heart was far from righteous (Matt. 15:7-9). The attachment of his heart to this world kept him from receiving the very salvation about which he inquired.

Second, just as repentance is not a focus on self, neither is it a focus on others. We must be careful not to compare ourselves to our peers rather than to God (2 Cor. 10:12). Christ told of a Pharisee who thanked God that he was "not as other men" (Luke 18:11). Such expression makes a mockery of sorrow. Godly sorrow laments not the faults of others, but the depravity of oneself (Matt. 7:3). True repentance comes from humble self-examination in light of God's Word, not by comparison to others. (Psa. 26:2; 2 Cor. 13:5)

Third, repentance is not legitimized by simply going through the motions. We all do well to heed the example of the Israelites. God provided the Law to Israel as a "schoolmaster" to point them to Christ, including detailed instructions for the sacrifices they were to bring as a symbolic covering for their sin. The Israelites faithfully performed these sacrifices, but they gradually began to focus more on the sacrifices themselves than the repentant hearts they were meant to represent. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit," wrote David. "A broken and a contrite

heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psa. 51:17). "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Psa. 34:18). In addition, there were those who, when confronted with their sins, rent their clothes, covered themselves with sackcloth, and lay in ashes to demonstrate their sorrow, but this was not what God wanted. "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God," He said (Joel 2:13). It is not outward rituals that God wants, but hearts that are fully yielded to His will (Ezek. 33:11, Rom. 12:1-2).

Finally, repentance is not just a one-time event in our lives. When we acknowledge that a soul has "begun his repentance," it is just as we say: a beginning. Repentance is a frame of mind which should come forth readily as long as we live. It is as descriptive of the believer as it is prescriptive for the lost. Christ said to the church at Ephesus: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent...or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick...except thou repent" (Rev. 2:5). As Christians, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). Recognizing any error (sin) in our lives, we want to respond as David did: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psa. 51:1-3, 10).

In summary, repentance is truly the working of the Holy Spirit in a humble heart. As we encourage its fruits in one another, let's be careful not to categorically define it by our personal or self-righteous standards (Rom. 10:1-3). May we wait on the Lord to mold each one of us, "being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in [us] will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

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@mtco.com



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN Mission Committee

...The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. Matthew 9:37-38

Apostolic Christian Publications

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. The committee consists of 17 brothers from various churches throughout the country. Brothers serve 10 year terms. All churches are welcome to be on a rotation to serve on this committee. If your church is not currently involved, please call or e-mail Apostolic Christian Publications and we will add you to our list.

Scope of services

- Provide retail distribution for approved Christian material sales.
- Maintain inventory for the Apostolic Christian brotherhood's needs.
- Preserve availability of doctrinally sound materials.
- Review potential additions to material offered as directed by the Communications Committee.

Sunday school materials

A few years ago a survey was sent to all churches to gather input on our Sunday school materials. As a result of this input we have just completed a revision of some of our teaching material. Many talented brethren helped in this project that involved graphical production as well as additional Bible story worksheets that align better with the Bible stories. There is also ongoing work on a second revision project as a result of this input.

Marriage, family life and mental health recordings

We stock recordings of topical presentations on marriage, family life and mental health. This is done in cooperation with Apostolic Christian Counseling and Family Services. These have recently been converted to MP3 format and are available on our website as a free download. You may also order a cassette or CD copy of them.

Froehlich material

The complete set of the writings of Samuel Froehlich are available as a free download on our website in searchable PDF format. We offer these in 11 different books as well.

Hebrews, Ephesians, Baptismal Truth, Two Mysteries-Matrimony, Phillipians-Revelation, Meditations on the Epistle of John, Evidence Demonstrating Truth of the Word of God, Old Testament Meditations.

We recently converted a number of cassette tapes of readings from various Froehlich materials to MP3. These are available on our website as free downloads or you can order them on cassette or CD's.

Silver Lining

Archived complete PDF's of the Silver Lining starting with the June 2010 issue are now available for free download on our website. These are complete copies of the actual Silver Lining publication.

Church practice booklets

There are eight booklets describing various aspects of church life:

The Holy Kiss, The Prayer Veil, Proving Candidates for Baptism,

Singings, Noon Fellowship Hour, Separated Seating, Closed Communion, & Making a Covenant.

The historical origins of each practice have been traced and explained. These are available in booklet form or as free PDF downloads on our website. These are great for teaching those who have a lack of understanding of some of our practices.

Spanish Materials

A number of Spanish materials have been made available as free downloads or can be ordered from the store.

- **Church Welcome Booklet**
Welcomes visitors to the Apostolic Christian Church. It lists basic beliefs with the intent of representing the church in a positive light. It seeks to give understanding to visitors about doctrine and practice.
- **Himnos de la Iglesia** - Hymnbook used in our Spanish speaking churches.
- **Statement of Faith**
- **God's Perfect Plan of Salvation** tract - This pocket-sized tract can be used to share God's plan of salvation with the lost or with those having a limited understanding of God's Word.
- **La Manana Gloriosa** - A CD of a cappella Spanish hymns from *Himnos de la Iglesia*.

Contact info and hours

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Hours: Monday thru Friday
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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

Your Opportunity to Help in Romania

The year of 2010 brought much progress with the work of assisting our struggling brethren throughout Eastern Europe. In this article we would like to report on the efforts in Romania, and how you can help to make a difference.

Teams made several visits and observed that economic conditions continue to degrade, like the situation worldwide, with financial insecurity, government debt, rising unemployment, lower pensions, and higher taxes. All of these put pressure on the people and make it increasingly difficult for families to cope with living costs.

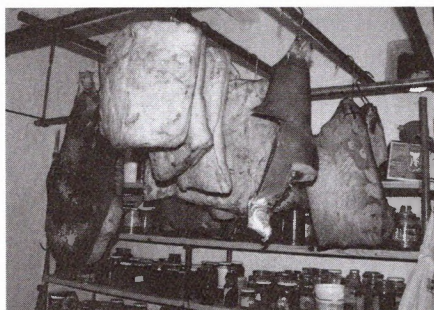
While the land is fertile, many are finding it impossible to farm the land due to input costs. One of our groups met with a government official who explained the deepening difficulty this is causing for everyone. They are considering opening centers where hot meals can be served at least once a day for the local poor. We are looking into the possibility of assisting in this program. Over the years we have learned to know the culture and people much better and try to grasp their view of the situation.

Churches are being rebuilt and repaired, plus we continue to help buy vehicles to bring the isolated brethren to church services. Brethren in many villages have no indoor plumbing and primitive heating. We help each year to see that no one is cold or hungry during the long dark winters. Typically, families heat only the room they are using, and sleep in chilly bedrooms. Comforters and blankets furnished over the years have helped them very much,

and are always in high demand.

By the grace of God and the help of generous donors, three full containers of new clothing have been shipped to Romania in the last couple of years. Only a small inventory remains, as brethren in many nations come to get this clothing.

Health care is a big problem, and we supply medicines through an excellent distribution system involving numerous countries. Our German brethren were able to acquire a large amount of medical supplies, including electric hospital beds, wheel chairs and bedside toilets. These are being loaned out, and then returned when the need no longer exists for others to use. There is a need for even more if funding were available for this purpose.



Antioch projects provide basic foodstuffs for many Romanian Nazarene families

Four times a year in conjunction with Christian Aid Ministries, a container of adult depends goes to Romania, the cost and goods shared 50/50. There is a huge need for these. In fact, in some villages the brethren dry them out after use and burn them in wood stoves for heat. When supplies get low, an appeal comes to us very quickly. Nursing homes as well as private individuals are the recipients. We thank God for this wonderful program.

Food packages are assembled at

our Antioch facility with various congregations taking their turn working each month. Iron Curtain Ministries of Holmes Co., Ohio has been a partner in this work for over twenty years. Constant efforts are being made to buy in volume and take advantage of special prices to keep costs as low as possible. This program is managed by Antioch, but funded by World Relief.

The Antioch corporation

The German brethren, our partners in this endeavor, have done much this year to improve the facility.

At this time Antioch has five honey projects in place, with processing equipment in our compound. This is just beginning to be profitable for them, and we hope to install a new project before spring.

Over 300 small livestock projects provide meat for brethren; garden tools and seeds are supplied along with school supplies. Two projects are underway furnishing dairy cows to families, with a third planned.

How you can help

As is always the case, particularly in these times of uncertainty, there are far more needs than resources. Since we depend upon our brotherhood for financial support, we need and appreciate your help.

You may contribute through your local World Relief fund, marking contributions for "Europe," or, if so desired, for "Antioch Projects."

For more information contact:

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Committee Chairman and Antioch member
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**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
HOME FOR THE
HANDICAPPED**
www.achh.org

“Go to now, ye that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”

James 4:13-15

A new year is upon us, a year perhaps of anticipated joys, but possibly also to be mixed with unexpected sorrows. We don't know what 2011 will hold for us, but God knows, and He is in control. As James states above, we need to seek to do God's will in our brief life on this earth.

This writer recently felt led by God to seek work at ACHH. My 11 months here have been a wonderful opportunity and experience. Although the Home has its financial challenges—waiting on state funding (which I've learned only provides revenue towards about 80% of the Home's expenses), always looking for cost-cutting measures (saving scrap paper and recycling soda cans are a couple), and depending on the generosity of supporters—it is a place that abounds with love and compassion, both for the residents for whom it is truly home, and amongst those who serve here. Coming out of the corporate world, during my first tour of the residential area after being hired, I commented to the staff member giving me the tour that it would be nice if we all wore name badges so that I could remember everyone's name more easily. Her response is still embedded in my brain: “Oh, do you wear name badges at your home?” I learned a quick lesson that ACHH is

not a type of temporary care facility; it is home for 150 of God's special people.

Getting to know the residents has been a blessing. Many, even with their disabilities, have such positive outlooks, that you are humbled when you think of the relatively small irritation(s) you've let sour your own mood at times. A visit to the residents' rooms reveals their individual and varied interests (Clark collects clocks, Jake is a Hawkeye fan), and lots of pictures of family and friends. A family member of one resident recently wrote “People who work here have a lot of compassion...they have a love of people and a love for their God.” Mark 12:29-31 tells us that these are God's two greatest commandments: loving the Lord thy God, and loving thy neighbor. It's a blessing to see these commandments in action every day.

I am thankful for the opportunity God has given me to work with such devoted and compassionate people. I'm not certain whose lives are the more enriched by the work performed at ACHH—the residents, or those who serve them. I pray that 2011 will find each one of us seeking and being open to God's will in our lives, and that we yet have time and grace in this earthly life to serve Him accordingly.

Thank you again for your prayers and support of the Home.

**GATEWAY WOODS
APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
CHILDREN'S HOME**
Mark Maibach

In Genesis 12:1, God told Abraham ‘Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.’ When Julie and I followed this directive and moved our family from Smithville, OH, to Atlanta, GA, in 2007, little did we know that was

not a final destination. Instead, it was just a step in our pilgrimage. God goes on to tell Abraham that He will bless him and bless others through him. That makes me think of the Gateway mission: ‘Our mission is to honor and obey God by providing help and healing to troubled children and families who then may bless others.’

As we continue on as pilgrims in this life (Heb 11:13), I am reminded of something my son Luke said earlier this year. Following our move to Gateway Woods and the Leo area, our home in GA did not sell right away and, in fact, still hasn't. God provided us with a nice rental home, and knowing that we are only living there temporarily, Luke commented, ‘I am trying to not put down roots here, but they keep trying to grab the ground.’ Can you relate to this? We are realizing just how tightly we hold to our things and our plans, even our loved ones. It is so easy to be comfortable in our place, and easy to plug our ears to what God is calling us to do. Rereading Isaiah 6:8, it struck me that God didn't call Isaiah specifically—He was simply asking, “Who is available to go for me?” Isaiah was willing and offered himself.

Following His call to Atlanta, and now moving to Gateway, has created an amazing bond in our family and is teaching us to trust in Him alone. When things don't seem to make any sense, we still have to trust Him. So many times in the Old Testament, the Israelites had to trust in impossible situations. They were up against the Red Sea with the Egyptian army coming on! Despite the difficulties, they were to trust in God. And for us, the only way we can trust Him has been to realize that He is good and He loves us. Psalm 34:8, “O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.” As I watch both the Leo church family and the Gateway staff open their hearts to

our family, I am humbled at God's provision for His people. As we seek to trust Him, we see that He is good and we are blessed indeed.

News:

- Gateway Woods welcomed three new residents to campus this past month. Please pray with us as these three young residents become accustomed to their new homes in the Maple and Pine Houses. It can be difficult for new residents as they discover a very different living situation than that which they have experienced before.

- Four families signed up for training to prepare to become foster parents this past month. It is encouraging to have such interest from such great families! We are so thankful that the Lord continues to provide qualified families for the foster children we place. From time to time our foster parents move on to adopt their foster child. It's a good way to lose foster parents as they become the permanent home for children. Just as the Lord is faithful to these children, He is also faithful to bring new Christian foster families to our ministry.

- In mid-December, the Gateway Woods staff gathered to celebrate the season with our annual Christmas Party. We enjoyed a potluck dinner, as well as some entertainment provided by the Staff. The dinner was a wonderful time to consider all of the blessings that we have received this year, and to remember the greatest blessing any of us will ever receive, salvation through Jesus Christ.

- It was a sad day for many on campus as we said goodbye to Sis. Kendra Baer. Sis. Kendra has decided to stay in the area and return to school. We are very thankful for her years of service here at Gateway Woods as an Assistant Houseparent and we wish her well and offer our support in her new ventures. We're glad she is not mov-

ing far and we can continue to enjoy her sweet smile.

- We praise God that He continues to provide us with the right Staff. We currently have two career positions open at Gateway Woods: Assistant Houseparent and IL Adoption Manager. Please see the notices in this month's edition of The Silver Lining for more information or visit the Career Opportunities page on our website at: www.gatewaywoods.org/supporters/career-opportunities. 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!

- You are an important advocate to help us spread the word about God's work at Gateway Woods. Please continue to lift us up in prayer, check our website www.gatewaywoods.org and our Facebook page at [facebook.com/gatewaywoods](https://www.facebook.com/gatewaywoods) often for updates, and make sure that you are on our mailing list. In an effort to be as efficient as possible we are gathering as many email addresses as we can for our E-Post. Please send a message to mail@gatewaywoods.org

**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
PRESCHOOL
Athens, AL
Louise Hall**

As we come to the end of another year, we been blessed to be able to teach these children about the love of God through the birth of His Son, Jesus. Happy Birthday, Jesus. We try to teach them that Jesus is the Reason for the Season!

The Bible verse for the month of December is "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11). We also like to sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus (to the tune of "Happy Birthday").

"On the first Christmas Day, from the Father above, came the little Lord Jesus, to show us God's love. Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you, I love you dear Jesus, Happy Birthday to you."

The children were so excited to have a visitor, as Sis. Cassie Bertsch came back to visit them this month. We all miss Cassie very much!

**ALABAMA, ATHENS
Louise Hall**

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Luke 2:13,14

On Wednesday evening, December 1, we had our annual Christmas Caroling in Athens. We are thankful for our church family that gets together to sing songs about the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Afterwards, we had our annual chili supper together, which we always enjoy. We also went Christmas Caroling to the Kelley family in Pulaski, TN, the following Wednesday, which is also an annual tradition. For those of you who remember the Kelley family, we still go to see John, Ray, and Avie each Christmas.

On Saturday evening, December 11, we had our church Christmas potluck dinner. We had special guests this year, as Bro. Gary Sinn, his wife, Sis. Paulette, and two of their children joined us. Bro. Gary was faithful in bringing us the Word of God on Sunday.

Our prayers go out to Janice Flannagan who has been having some health problems. She is the daughter of Bro. J.R. and Sis. Louise Hall. Liona, granddaughter of Bro. Dave and Sis. Barb Coulter, and Anna

Hall, daughter of Bro. Tim Hall, have also had illnesses.

Our prayers also go out to Sis. Mildred Wimmer's family, as she has gone on to be with her Lord and Savior. We also keep the Martin family in our prayers, as Steve Martin, the son of the late Albert Martin, passed away.

As we come to the end of the year 2010, we have been blessed with several visiting ministers this year. We encourage anyone coming this way to join us for services. We are a small church and enjoy the fellowship!

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Heather Hinrichsen

Elder Bro. Steve Ringger (Bluffton North) served us the Word of God this month and we thank him for his service and love towards our church.

We pray for Sis. Marilyn Roth (Bro. Earl) and Sis. Johanna Knochel as both spent time in the hospital. Dakota Thorpe (Bro. Chris and Sis. Heather) underwent surgery on her arm and we pray God sends His comforting angels to help her through the recovery process.

Steven Emch (Bro. James and Sis. Gina) was announced to the church as having found peace with God and man. A testimony/baptism date has not been set.

Note of Thanks:

Our 60th Anniversary card shower brought us showers of blessings, and as we opened and read each beautiful card we were overwhelmed by the kindness and love of our dear church family. Thanks from our hearts and may God bless you as you have blessed us.

In Christian Love,

Bro. Allan and Sis. Edith Freed

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT

Denise Steidinger

We are thankful for the following ministering brothers who came and preached God's Word: Bros. Darren Fehr (West Bend), Herbie Knochel (Phoenix), Keith Hinrichsen (Phoenix, twice), Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Phoenix), John Lehman (Wolcott) and Jim Meiss (Phoenix).

The Sunday School children had a Christmas program on Sunday, December 12, telling us the story of baby Jesus. We are thankful that Bro. John Lehman (Wolcott) was willing to have a Christmas Day service for us.

We are in the process of starting a horse ranch modeled after His Ranch in Taylor, MO. Anyone interested in bringing a work team out to help at the ranch and support our small congregation, please contact Bro. Rodney Steidinger at rodnetdenise@cablene.net.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp

Our friend, Bee Schmidt, has been able to go home after spending some time in a local nursing home recovering from hip surgery. Our prayers continue to be that God's will be accomplished in Bee's life. Her desire is to go home to be with her Lord, but we trust, as always, that God knows the desire of her heart and will grant her wish in His perfect time.

Many in our congregation were blessed to witness the wedding vows of Stephanie Bauer to Sean Keller on December 18. Stephanie is one of our Tucson babies and it was a joy to watch her join Sean in a three-fold cord with God. Stephanie is the daughter of Steve and Maria Bauer and the granddaughter of our Bro. Don and Sis. Gloria Bauer. Our love and prayers are with Sean and Stephanie for a long and happy marriage!

Our Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia) and his wife, Sis. Michelle, were with us again for a weekend visit. They were able to Christmas carol with us at our annual event at local nursing homes. It was a special evening enjoyed by all and hopefully a blessing to those we caroled for. Thanks to Bro. Chris and Sis. Sara Hattan for organizing the evening.

The following week, we enjoyed our children singing and praising God at our Christmas program. Their numbers were small but their spirit was in full force. The church joining the Sunday School after the first verse of Silent Night is my favorite Christmas moment all season, and it did not disappoint.

Bro. Jim Meiss (Phoenix) was with us for Wednesday evening services recently. Many thanks to him for sharing the Word on the pulpit that evening.

Our mid-December temperatures are well above normal as we try to get in the holiday spirit in 80 degree weather. We Tucsonans complain that it's hard to have the holiday spirit when it's this warm, but it does remind us that Christmas isn't really about snowmen and roaring fires, it's about our Saviour's birth no matter the weather outside. Christmas is indeed inside our hearts!

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Greetings from Altadena! We've had a beautiful, warm Fall, lots of color and clear mountain views! God has surely glorified Himself in Creation!

A small group from Altadena went on the 5th annual trip to Magdalena with the Denver group, and this year a number from Morris North joined the team, for a total of 70+ participants. There was plenty of love lav-

ished on the kids, of course! In addition, many projects were tackled including; cement work, sewer lines, brush clearing, church/dining room/dining hall cleaning, a room addition, retaining wall, several runs to town for parts...and preparation for a Thanks- giving feast! This year, over 370 guests were served, many from the local church there, many from the town of Magdalena who do not usually attend services, as well as staff, children and team members. Bro. Bill and Sis. Joan liberally invite friends and acquaintances, and now people start asking by mid-November if they can come to the Thanksgiving dinner again. It has become an "open house" for CVE to share the love of Christ with the community of Magdalena. Bro. Duane Wulf smoked 12 turkeys at his meat shop (which took a load off the oven space in the kitchen, needless to say) and all the turkey was gone in the end. 100 lbs. of potatoes were peeled and mashed, and 25 boxes of stuffing prepared....you get the idea...it was a feast! Thanks to all who participated in this ministry, through prayer and participation as well as financially.

Visiting minister this month was Bro. Dewayne Dill (Sis. LaRae, Minneapolis, MN) and we are thankful for his willingness to share the Word with us.

Our Sunday School planned and presented the Christmas story with the theme "The Gift" as the focus. The precious story, with sweet young ones speaking the truths that still stir our hearts. Our church also adopted two families from the local Salvation Army Christmas ministry, and purchased gifts of clothing, food and toys, to be delivered the week of Christmas. We also enjoyed caroling at two local facilities for the elderly in the area, both with whom we have ongoing relationship! It was a joy to watch

the residents join in singing the familiar hymns of Christmas praise. Thanks to Bro. Scott and Sis. Shayna Mangers for planning our Christmas events!

Our Wednesday evening services have been scheduled for the second and fourth Wednesday evening each month; however, there are exceptions to that. Any visitors to the area please contact one of the ministers to confirm that services are scheduled.

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO Yasmin Koehl

As we reflected upon the birth of our dear Savior and the spiritual gifts we can receive in Him this past Christmas season, we were blessed by the presence of several visitors. Amongst them was retired Elder Bro. Willis Enhle (Sis. Lois, Peoria, IL). We thank Bro. Willis for his enthusiasm in sharing the joy we can find in the Lord when we align our lives according to the scriptures.

May we all look forward to this New Year with abundant joy, for if we are obedient to the Word of God and love Him, we have the greatest joy and peace possible and a Savior who lovingly guides us. No matter what tomorrow may hold, what comfort we can possess when we have faith and the sustaining arms of our brothers and sisters in faith to encourage us. May God's grace be with each one of you in 2011.

KITCHENER, ONTARIO CANADA Johanna Fortenbacher

Out on the ocean of life we sail,
Battered by many a raging gale,
Yet we are sure that we shall prevail,
No storm can His ship o'rwhelm.

HHH #308

Many, many years ago I remember hearing this song in Detroit for the

first time. Then our whole church was invited to Detroit this month and we all heard it again. It was sung just as beautifully and as powerfully as the first time I heard it. We had a wonderful weekend in Detroit and almost all of us were able to go. The Detroit congregation were an example of demonstrating the second greatest commandment, "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Matthew 22:39)

Akron's old church benches from Rothrock road are now finished, recovered and were installed right in time for the big group of visitors that came from central Illinois. Bro. Jon Zeller and his wife, Sis. Christine, from Morton came that weekend and he had a Bible study Saturday evening about having a great desire for serving Christ. Thank you, Bro. Jon; and speaking of Bible topics, we would encourage any brother coming who had a prepared topic, to share it with us.

Our sympathy goes to Bro. Peter Pfeiffer who lost his sister, Rosina Loteret, who was from Mansfield-Middlebelleville, OH.

"Joy to the world the Lord has come! Let earth receive her King". Our church has been able to go to a Homeless Shelter and sing carols to them and help spread the news. The Sunday School children put on a Christmas Program for us with singing carols and reciting memory verses.

Bro. Doug Bradle and Sis. Eva Toth had a wedding shower with most of his family here for their Thanksgiving weekend. Ministers, Bro. Jerry and Sis. Martha Bauman (Rittman) and Bro. Clint and Sis. Magdalena Schmidt (Winthrop), came and held services. Thank you, brothers, for your time and extra effort you made to preach to us. It was announced recently that Sis. Eva and

Bro. Doug's wedding will be March 27, 2011, Lord willing.

Bro. John Kralt spent some time in the hospital and we're glad to say he is doing much better.

Sis. Esther Metzger's mother, Esther, has been diagnosed with cancer and she has since had surgery. May we pray that the Lord heals her of her cancer.

Bro. Bill Masters (North Fort Myers) was here for a few days helping Thierry Saint Felix find a home and job and get situated in Canada. Thierry was living in Quebec in his younger years so he has Canadian citizenship. He had been living in Florida with no papers to work so Bro. Bill kindly suggested this transition and was here to help him along. We're happy to say that he found a home and a job within two days. Everything went smoothly, thank the Lord.

Elder Bro. Mark Bahr was here last weekend to read and coach us along the Memorandum letter which has wonderful scripture references for some important topics. Thank you, Bro. Mark.

**CANADA
REGINA, SK
Myrna Shipley**

Haste and seek your soul's salvation:
Heed the Word of God today!
Haste to flee His condemnation:
Seek the straight and narrow way.
Evil are the worldly pleasures,
Leading to eternal fire;
Seek the everlasting treasure,
E'er the day of grace expire.
Zion's Harp #52

Elder Bro. Roy and Sis. Jenell Koehl were here one weekend along with Bro. Art and Sis. Sandra Nohl and eight young brothers and sisters. During that weekend it was announced that Bernhard and Angelika Kaiser have begun their repentance and are seeking the Lord. We are very

happy for their decision to be followers of Jesus Christ. We wish you much grace in your lives.

Uli Kaiser is presently in Germany and Switzerland visiting, and is planning to bring back his niece, Leonie, who lives in Switzerland. In January, Benjamin plans to fly to Europe and take Leonie home. We wish Uli and Leonie a safe return to Canada.

Merry Christmas to all and have a blessed new year in 2011.

We're thankful to have ministers scheduled to come in the new year. God be with you on your journey here.

March 20 - Morris
April 17 - West Bend
May 22 - Princeville

**COLORADO, DENVER
Lily Zarkovacki**

"O give thanks unto the Lord: for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever"
Psalms 118:1

We have so much to be thankful for.....especially this time of the year.

A group from our Denver Church was able to participate in the annual Thanksgiving Magdalena work team. Thanks, Bro. Rod, for organizing this — it was a true blessing!

We are also thankful for our local Elder and ministers and their wives. May God bless you.

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing...
Gospel Hymns #842, vs. 1

Thanks to our Sunday School teachers and Superintendent for preparing our children for a beautiful Christmas program. What a blessing

it was to be reminded by the children of God's gift to the world, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

God's richest blessings to all from Colorado!

**CONNECTICUT
ROCKVILLE
Laura Virkler
Bonnie Bahler**

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

Hymns of Zion #150

As we reflect on this past year, it is evident that the Lord has been with us in joy and in sorrow. As a new year begins, let us strive to live every day as it is a gift from God and that we serve Him with diligence.

Our hearts were saddened with the sudden passing of Russell Lanz. Our sympathy and prayers are with his dear wife, Vicki; his children, Bonnie, David and Jeff; his grandchildren, Julia and Kyle; and his sisters, Linda Galligan and Jackie Copeland.

We also bid farewell to Bro. Lester Heintz. We are thankful for the victory that has been won. We extend our sympathy to his children, Jeannie Vansickle and Sis. Margie Heintz of Champaign, IL, Russell (Laurie) Heintz and granddaughter Kate. May the Lord wrap His loving arms around these families.

Our prayers continue to be with our loved ones who are struggling with bodily afflictions. Bro. Dave Bahler (Sis. Peggy), Sis. Marilyn Bahler, and Bro. Ed Luginbuhl (Sis. Alma) have been hospitalized. May God provide His healing for them.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WASHINGTON

Henrietta Meyer

Our caretakers for the latter part of November were Bro. Keith and Sis. Joan Hanson from Champaign, IL. There are still several months needing caretakers in 2011. If you have a desire to support our small church in this way, please contact Sis. Doreen Steffen for more information at dkgsteffen@gmail.com or 301-681-1502. We have been richly blessed by our caretakers over the past four years, and we look forward to getting to know and fellowshiping with more in the coming year. We also encourage past caretakers to come again!

Our ministers this month were Bro. Gary Maibach (Sis. Mary Ann, Smithville, OH), Bro. Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA), Bro. Jerry Meeks (Sis. Christine, Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Steve Pamer (Sis. Arliss, Akron, OH). Other visitors were Smithville, Rittman, and Akron, OH; Chicago, IL; Rockville, CT; Ft. Lauderdale, FL; and Bluffton, IN.

Our visitors from Akron joined us as we caroled for our shut-ins, Ken and Roberta Belsley.

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 or Sis. Henrietta Meyer at (703) 904-8301 for assistance and to let us know how many to expect for Sunday services.

FLORIDA FORT LAUDERDALE

Renee Mangold

We are a few days from Christmas and the new year, and while the seasons are different in South Florida, the commemoration of the Savior's birth is a very special time. The many miracles that occurred at that time continue to fill men's hearts with

wonder. Even the commercialization of the season seems to cause many to stop and think about the birth of Christ and here and there, those special moments come to us as we listen to the carols and see the nativity scenes and hear references of His birth.

The Fort Lauderdale church had a special day of caroling and a potluck that was enjoyed by all. Many are expecting visits by family and friends over the next few weeks and this blessing is cherished by everyone. Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. Myron Knobloch (Sis. Beth, Lester, IA), Bro. Joe Braker (Sis. Shirley, Morton, IL), and Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN). We are grateful for their efforts and invite everyone to come visit as they can.

We recently met a man in a restaurant, who, forty some years ago, became friends with another young man while in the service over seas. As he was relating the story and describing his later visit to the friend's home, it turned out that the parents were Brother Henry Beer and his wife, in Milford, Indiana. He told how Bro. Henry came and talked to him while he was helping in the garden, and encouraged him to consider his soul and talked about salvation. While we don't know how he has responded to everything he heard in that brief visit, it's another miracle that all these years later, that conversation would still be in his heart.

"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.

FLORIDA NORTH FORT MYERS

Victor Beer

This is the season we rejoice with

our northern brethren and friends coming south to get into warmer weather. One activity was to join Bro. Don and Sis. Gladys Kaufman at the Wal-Mart, singing carols as they did their job of ringing the bell for the Salvation Army. The acknowledgment of many passers by was heartwarming.

Our church was blessed this last month by Bro. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo, IN) who brought us the Word with God's blessing. Some may remember Sis. Jane who for several years helped our church in Japan.

We were saddened to hear of the passing away of one of our long time winter residents, Bro. Bill Waibel, of the Peoria congregation. Our sympathy and love goes out to Sis. Joyce and the children. Bro. Bill always gladdened our hearts with his joy and enthusiasm in our fellowship.

We're glad to report better weather in Fort Myers now, as it did get pretty cold. That was enough to cover all the tender plants we depend on for color in our yards through the winter. It's short sleeve weather most of the time.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA

Kim Ott

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

Isaiah 9:6

What an extraordinary gift we have been given! A blessing beyond measure, this birth of Jesus Christ! Knowing how delightful a new baby is, how extra special it must have been to hold the Christ-child, the baby who would someday make the

way possible for all people to have the opportunity to work out their salvation. While the world spins around us, it is such a blessing that we can look to the manger and then to the cross for the message of true peace and forgiveness. Words cannot express our thankfulness and gratitude for such a marvelous plan!

We were able to pause for a time of reflection as our children sang songs and recited verses of Jesus' wondrous birth during our Sunday School program. Their voices rang loud and clear, telling us of the special night long ago in Bethlehem. The joy they expressed deep within their hearts was a reminder to all of the unfathomable love God has for each one of us, so much that He sent His only Son to live and die among us so that we could find freedom from our sins.

We were very thankful to have Bro. Nelson Beer (Sis. Minnie, Milford, IN), Bro. Szilveszter Kiss (Sis. Olga, Szeged, Hungary), and Bro. Jeff Fischer (Sis. Gloria, Fort Scott, KS) minister God's Word to us this past month. We pray that God would bless them for their time and efforts in giving of themselves to serve our congregation.

We would like to extend an invitation to everyone to join us for our annual Sunday School Auction which will be held on Saturday, February 26, 2011, at the Fruitville Elementary School next to our church. Along with the main auction there will also be a silent auction, bake sale, and a delicious lunch.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA

A highlight of December for the Atlanta church family is our special Christmas caroling Sunday. After our Sunday School Program, we load into our vans and head to nearby nursing homes. The children love handing out Christmas cards and

small care packages as we sing. One lady told me, "I wish that all you Christmas carolers would spread yourselves out throughout the year!"

A small group of us were able to serve at the Operation Christmas Child Distribution Center here in Atlanta. Thousands of shoeboxes had been filled with small toys and health items for children in third world countries. At the distribution center, we were able to sort the boxes, remove inappropriate items, insert additional things so every box is full, and then pack the shoeboxes together into big shipping boxes. We were challenged to pray for the children, as we prepared the boxes. It is amazing to feel the love which grows in your heart for these dear children living somewhere on the other side of the world.

Just days before Christmas, a few of the "locals" gathered together and assembled bags of gifts for children whose parents are in prison. Over the next few days, we had the pleasure of delivering them to the children.

We rejoice with the angels in heaven! Haley West (Bro. Brad and Sis. Stephanie) has turned to the Lord in repentance and claimed victory in Jesus! May He grant her peace and strength in the days ahead.

Bro. Kent Mogler (Minneapolis) and his wife ministered to us this month. We really appreciate your willingness to serve!

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE

Shayla Steffen
Doreen Moser

Dear Lord, as this New Year is born
I give it to Thy hand,
Content to walk by faith what paths
I cannot understand.

Walking by faith and giving their
lives into His hand, Bro. Trent
Steffen (Bro. Dean and Sis. Carol)

and Sis. Kristina Rufener (Bro. Dave and Sis. LeAnn, Rittman, OH) announced their engagement on Sunday, December 5. May the Spirit they relied upon grant them blessings, contentedness and grace.

Whatever coming days may bring
Of bitter loss, or gain,
Or every crown of happiness;
Should sorrow come, or pain,

We experienced a crown of happiness the weekend of December 19 as our Sunday School children reminded us of the birth of Jesus. In a lowly manger the humble Christ was born and through this God sent us a way for salvation. Sometimes our hearts, like an inn, are too crowded. It is good for all to be reminded that we need to give our whole heart, not just a room, to Him.

Or, Lord, if all unknown to me
Thine angel hovers near
To bear me to that farther shore
Before another year,

Our church went Christmas caroling and had a Chili supper together the weekend of our Christmas program. Our caroling took us to souls who are maybe praying to be brought to that farther shore before another year. While we caroled, a favorite song was "Joy to the World". "Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room..." We pray that the hearts that sang the songs and those that heard are preparing Him room.

It matters not—my hand in Thine,
Thy light upon my face,
Thy boundless strength when I am
weak,
Thy love and saving grace!

I only ask, loose not my hand,
Grip fast my soul, and be
My guiding light upon the path

Till, blind no more, I see!

Another year is dawning. For those who have found room for the Savior, let Him continue to be your guiding light the remainder of this year and the coming year. For those whose hearts are too crowded and there is no room, ask Him to help you remove the sin.

**ILLINOIS
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL
Shelley Steffen
Heidi Rinckenberger**

“Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: Thou art my God and I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.”

Psalm 118:28-29

We do give thanks to the Lord for His everlasting mercy, and that we live in a country where we can openly express that thanks. What a blessing to be able to start Thanksgiving day, giving thanks to our Lord with our fellow brothers and sisters. Bro. Ron Heiniger had the service. He spoke from the Psalms and I Kings, chapter 17.

We were also blessed to have Bro. Mark Gerber (Bluffton, IN) with us, the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

One of the many joys this time of year is the gift of music through Christmas Carols. The Bloomington Church Choir has an annual Christmas Program. This year they sang carols focusing on the adoration of our Lord. All who attended were blessed and refocused on what the true meaning of Christmas really is.

**ILLINOIS, BRADFORD
Roseann Stahl
Sandi Joos**

Precious little miracles were born

into the homes of two families in our congregation this month. December 3 is the birthday of Lena Rose who was born to Bro. Matt and Sis. Becky Elsasser and big sisters, Brittany, Shelby, and Brookelyn. Lena's grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Ila Bradle (Eureka) and Bro. Jordan and Sis. Sharon Elsasser. On December 4, Bro. Brandon and Sis. Melissa Baer became parents to Tristan Lee. Grandparents of Tristan are Ron and Sis. Deann Baer, and Bro. Donn and Sis. Tracy Ehnle.

We keep a prayer upon our hearts for the family of Sis. Hilda Dietz, who passed from this life on December 6. She is the mother of Bro. Kenny (Sis. Mardell), Sis. Char, Sis. Betty Lou (Bro. Walt) Herrmann (Princeville), Sis. Joyce (Bro. Norman) Streitmatter (Princeville), Dwayne, Richard and Michael (Kim), as well as a sister to Bro. John (Sis. Lucille) Endress.

On December 10, Jean Ehnle passed away. Our thoughts and prayers are with her two sons and their families, Paul (Cheryl) and Alan, as well as her brother-in-laws, Bro. Roy (Sis. Donna) and Bro. Ed (Sis. Verla). May the comfort of the Lord be felt at this time of loss for both families as they mourn the loss of their loved ones.

We wish to thank visiting ministering Bro. Kevin Banwart (West Bend, IA) for sharing God's Word with us.

Sis. Bonnie Kieser was hospitalized for a few days but is now at home. May the Lord grant her strength as she recovers.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to Bro. Philip and Sis. Donna Nenadov for their time and labor spent in writing the Silver Lining articles these past few years. May the Lord richly bless them for their service.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.”

St. Luke 2:14

May we all remember to take time and have some quiet moments, reflecting on all the blessings received this past year, and in the year to come, may we serve the Lord with faithfulness.

**ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN
Jackie Eisenmann**

Greetings from Champaign-Urbana! Our congregation is once again blest by the birth of another baby boy. Grey Daniel Young was born November 29, 2010, to parents Bro. Brent and Sis. Janelle Young. We rejoice with them as they experience the joys of children. May God bless this family!

Our Sis. Margie Heintz said goodbye to her dear father, Bro. Lester Heintz (Rockville, CT), this past month. We have remembered Sis. Margie in prayer and we will continue our prayers for her as she adjusts to this loss. May God comfort us knowing that our loved ones are in the arms of Jesus and will be awaiting us in Heaven.

Several of our college students have graduated this fall semester and we want to congratulate them. Bro. Greg Eisenmann (Elder Bro. Brad and Sis. Cindy, Chicago, IL) and Bro. Tristan Herrmann (Bro. Roger and Sis. Darlene, Princeville, IL) received their Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering. Nathan Braker (Bro. Glen and Sis. Audrey, Princeville, IL) earned his Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering. Sis. Sydney Eisenmann (Bro. David and Sis. Jackie, Champaign, IL) received her Bachelor's degree in Interior Design. All of these students are continuing their education and working towards

Master's degrees in their fields. Bro. Justin Wiegand (Sis. Kirsten) received his Master's degree in Human Resources. Bro. Justin and Sis. Kirsten will be moving to Louisiana for Justin's employment. We were thankful to get to know Justin and Kirsten, but we will miss them and wish them God's nearness as they move to the next phase in their lives. Congratulations and blessings to all of our graduates!

Our visitors this month included Bro. Craig Stickling (Peoria, IL) on Wednesday evening, December 1, and Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) on Christmas day. We are thankful for each of these Brothers and ask God to bless them for their service to us.

The Champaign church is listening to the recordings of the Brotherhood General Conference that was held this past August. It is a blessing to listen to the encouragements given to the church by our Elder Brothers. It is also a good reminder that we need to continue in prayer for these Brothers.

Sunday, December 12, was our Sunday School Christmas Program. Our students taught us about the different witnesses to our Savior's birth. It was a blessing to hear their beautiful voices sing and the recitations of their pieces that told us of the witnesses. They left us with the challenge that now we are to be the witnesses of Christ's birth by spreading the news about Jesus to all we know, just as the various witnesses did in the time of Jesus' birth. After the program, our church went Christmas caroling to several area nursing homes and then enjoyed our annual Chili supper at church. It was a day of blessings enjoyed by all.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Rachel Meyer

Greetings from snowy Chicago! Last year I spent Christmas in Malaysia—amidst high humidity and heat! I longed for snow...and I am thanking God this year He provided.

On December 11, we were blessed to share in Christmas Caroling, a chili supper, and an inspiring Sunday School Christmas program, "Ring the Bells and Rejoice". The afternoon and evening was enjoyed by all and we thank all involved in the planning and execution.

Welcome Bro. Caleb and Sis. Olivia Zobrist to our Chicago church family! We are so thankful to have this couple with us. They moved from Congerville to Chicago for Bro. Caleb's schooling at DePaul University. We hope they feel at home.

We thank Bro. Dennis Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL) for ministering to us this past month. We appreciate each one who shares God's Word.

Our dear Bro. Chuck Stoller (Sis. Ella Mae) is slowly recovering from back surgery. We pray for a speedy recovery and that they both feel God's presence.

On Sunday I was very moved by the following thought from a minister. He referred to 1 Corinthians 13, specifically when the word charity is used (verses 4-8). If we substitute the name Jesus wherever the word charity is used, the passage still remains true. Because Jesus was perfect in every way. Then we were challenged to substitute our name wherever the word charity is used.

For me, the lump in my throat was large. How far, far, away I am from living up to these Godly attributes. Do I really suffer long? Can I say I do not envy or puff myself up? What about my behavior; do I seek the best for others; am I easily provoked or never think evil...? The comparisons go on. And as they do, I realize the

desperate need I have for God's mercy and help as I live my life on this earth.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth..."

ILLINIOS, CISSNA PARK

Vickie Maul Marilyn Maul

Shall I not then happy be?
Jesus loves me tenderly.
When my earthly days are ending,
With the angel host ascending,
In my Saviour's arms I'll be
Blest in all eternity.

Zion's Harp #17, v. 3

It is with deep sorrow we report the loss of our dear Sis. Joann Maul. Sis. Joann is survived by her husband, Bro. Fred, and children, Bro. David (Sis. Vickie), Sis. Andrea (Bro. Nick) Walder, both of Cissna Park, and Sis. Alicia (Bro. Lee) Fehr of West Bend. Twelve grandchildren survive Sis. Joann. Also, two brothers, Richard (Marla) Rudin of Plano, TX, and Bro. Gerald (Sis. Joan) Rudin of Cissna Park, and two brothers-in-law, Les (Sis. Marilyn) Maul and Bro. Stanley Maul. Prayers and sympathy are also extended to Bro. Roland and Sis. Mary Ann Young in the death of his mother, Marie Young; and Bro. Marvin and Sis. Carolyn Hari in the death of his sister, Anna Mae Frank.

We appreciate the messages brought to us by Bro. Dan Moser (Elgin) and Bro. Glen Braker (Princeville). We pray that God can

continue to give them the inspiration with which to teach us.

We have had a number of young people turn to the Lord in repentance. We again rejoice that Justin Kaeb (Bro. Todd and Sis. Valerie) and Anthony Kaeb (Bro. Eric and Sis. LouAnn) have heeded the call to repentance. May all these young ones build firm foundations for their faith.

Bro. Ken Weerts (Sis. Myrna) had knee replacement surgery. May he continue to gain strength so that he can once again be able to assemble with us. Sis. Bonita Frank (Bro. Bruce) also spent time in the hospital. She has been assembling with us as she recovers her strength. May God be with these two as they continue to fully gain their strength.

Note of Thanks:

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who remembered our family with prayers, cards, food, memorials, flowers and visits during the illness and passing of our dear loved one, Joann Maul. May God bless each and every one of you.

The Fred Maul Family

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Holly Zobrist

We rejoice with Obed Fritz (Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica, Nashville) and Kary Leman (Bro. Ed and Sis. Gail) as they've become engaged. May the Lord be near to them as they begin this next phase of life.

We were blessed with a number of visiting ministers this past month. They include Bro. Greg Lehman (Sis. Maribeth, Wolcott), Bro. Don Gudeman (Sis. Mary, LaCrosse), Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha), Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse), Bro. Tony Manz (Sis. Denise, Junction), Bro. Brent Kellenberger (Sis. Beth, Kansas City), Bro. Mark Rufener (Sis. Julie,

Mansfield), and Bro. Mark Zimmerman (Sis. Cheryl, Eureka).

Michael Roth (Bro. Mark and Sis. Tammy) became our brother in Christ this past month as he shared his testimony and was baptized. It is a blessing to see the joy and peace radiating from a converted soul's face the weekend of their baptism. May the Lord continue to lead, guide, and direct his steps as he draws closer to God.

Our hearts go out to Sis. Linda Knobloch (Bro. Jerry) as her dad, Eldon Stahl (Irene), passed from this life. Our prayers are with his family.

Malaya Faith was born to Bro. Andy and Sis. Erin Ott. She is welcomed home by her older sister, Sierra. Also thankful for her safe arrival are grandparents, Bro. Glen and Sis. Mardell Ott and Bro. Ben and Sis. Kathy Zimmerman.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Amy Gasser

Miriam Gasser

Thanks to Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Bloomfield, IA) and Bro. Scott Wegman (Taylor, MO) for encouraging and exhorting us through the Word. May God bless their labors.

On November 20, several went to Ottawa to hear Lillian Bohlin's testimony of faith and to witness her baptism by sprinkling. Due to her poor health, she has not been able to attend church. We welcome her as a new sister in the Lord.

Elder Bro. Ron and Sis. Nancy Schambach spent some time in Alaska visiting their daughter's family, of which the newest member is Roman John Douglas McWilliams. He was born on November 16 to Grant and Charlene and joins older sister Aria. Bro. Tom and Sis. Kathy Schifferer also have a new grandchild, Jada Lyn Hammer, born November 23 to Rob and Jodi. Her siblings are Tre and Kaia.

The engagement of Sis. Jenean Schambach (Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie) and Bro. Byron Gerber of Roanoke was announced on December 12. Our best wishes are with them, as they plan their wedding and life together.

There was a good turnout for Family Christmas Caroling December 12, which began and ended at the Fellowship Center. The Sunday School Christmas program was presented on the following Sunday evening. It was heartening to see Sis. Edie Anliker (Bro. Gary) there—another step in her recuperation following two knee replacements.

Sis. Julia Graf passed away December 7 at Resthaven. She had been a long-term employee and volunteer, as well as beloved aunt and Sunday School teacher. One brother survives, as well as many nieces and nephews.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Jim Krueger, who died December 11 at his home. Survivors include his former wife, Mary Moser Krueger, and their children: Scott (Darline) Krueger of Ft. Collins, CO, Derek (Kalan) Krueger of Rochester, MN, Sis. Heidi and Lindsey Krueger. May they turn to the best refuge at this difficult time.

Note of Thanks:

Bro. Elvis and Sis. Marilyn Kellenberger would like to thank the young couples who kindly and generously provide meals for many of the seniors in our congregation. It is very much appreciated!

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Dee Baer

Jodi Blunier

Faith has led Sis. Angela Martin (Bro. Craig and Sis. Marilyn) and Bro. Craig Dotterer (Bro. Joe and Sis. Rose, Bloomfield, IA) to announce their engagement.

We have been blessed by visits of visiting ministers, Bro. Tony Manz (Junction, OH), Bro. Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO), Bro. Dan Stoller (Remington, IN), Bro. Kent Getz (Elgin, IA), Bro. Curt Rassi (Tremont), Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville) and Bro. Ned Stoller (Alto, MI).

Sis. Jean Knapp (Bro. Bob) grieved the loss of her sister, Norene Wuethrich, of Eureka.

Remembered in prayer have been Bro. Dean Martin (Sis. Becki) and Sis. Helen Belsley. God is able to comfort and to heal according to His will.

Note of Thanks:

We want to thank all those who sent cards, gifts and words of encouragement on our 50th wedding anniversary. We feel so blessed and thankful. Surely the thought that "gratitude is the parent of all virtue" is so true. We love you all and may God bless you.

Bro. Elton (Dietz) & Sis. Loretta Wiegand

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY
Angela Herr
Kay Steffen

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

Luke 2:11-12

Once again we were reminded of the humble birth of our Lord and Savior as our Sunday School brought to us the Christmas story. May God bless each one who has given of their time to teach our youth of God's love for them.

God has blessed the home of Bro. Ben and Sis. Tessa Herr with a pre-

ciuous baby boy, Tyson Benjamin, born on November 25. His thankful grandparents are Sis. Cindy Herr and Bro. Terry and Sis. Deb Nussbaum (Forrest, IL).

We extend our love and sympathy to the family of Sis. Sally Schieler who passed away on December 22. She leaves behind four children: Bro. Harvey (Sis. Jan) and Sis. Sandra (Bro. Dale) Stoller of our congregation, Sis. Marlene (Bro. Orville) Kupferschmid (Forrest, IL), and Duane (Diane). She had several grandchildren and great-grandchildren that will also miss her.

Our thoughts and prayers are also with Sis. Thelma Slagel in the passing of her brother-in-law, Dan Slagel, of Fairbury. Our friend, Helen Gerber, passed away on December 21. Helen attended church here with us for a time, and we extend our sympathy to her family.

Our visiting ministers this month were Elder Bro. Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, KS), Bro. Kerwin Edelman (Athens, AL), Bro. Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL), Bro. Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Al Schambach (Remington, IN), Bro. Chad Leman (Kitchener, Ontario), Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA), and Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA). We pray that God will bless each one for their labors of love among us.

ILLINOIS, FORREST
Lynn Dotterer
Lisa Aberle

This month we've had many different situations to pray for. First, we are happy to report that we have more souls seeking to serve the Lord. Josh Coffey (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Denise), Reuben Leman (Bro. Fred and Sis. Brenda), Amber Stork (Bro. Reuben and Sis. Devra), and Jordan Zimmerman (Bro. Kent and Sis.

Paulette) are repenting.

Bro. Clint Steidinger (Bro. Ray and Sis. Shelly) and Sis. LeAnne Edelman (Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Carol) have announced their upcoming wedding. Troy Slagel (Bro. Lynn and Sis. Kathy) and April Kaeb (Will and Juanita, Arrowsmith, IL) also announced their engagement. May these couples feel the Lord's blessings as they prepare to be joined in holy matrimony.

December 19 was the wedding day for Bro. Dan Banwart and Sis. Kathy Dotterer. We pray that the Lord will grant them many years together.

Bro. Troy and Sis. Leann Brown welcomed their first child, Carter Troy, into this world. Carter's grandparents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Jane Brown and Bro. Martin and Sis. Trish Steidinger (Fairbury, IL).

Sis. Rosetta Stoller (Bro. Elmer), Bro. Pete Walter, Sis. Pauline Wiegand and Bro. Mike Zimmerman (Sis. Jeannette) were hospitalized this month.

Many in our congregation said farewell to loved ones this month. Bro. Mel Steffen (Sis. Leona) lost his brother, Bro. Dave Steffen, of Gridley, IL. Sis. Kathleen Lanz (Bro. Troy) said goodbye to her father, Dan Slagel, of Fairbury, IL. Sis. Marlene Kupferschmid (Bro. Orville) also lost her mother, Sis. Sally Schieler (Fairbury, IL). Our Sis. Irene Traub passed away on December 26. She leaves behind her daughter, Sis. Judy Anliker (Bro. Wayne), and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren in our congregation. Our Sis. Hazel Karcher passed away on December 29. She will be missed by her daughter, Joy Zimmerman (Maurice) and family.

Visiting ministers were Elder Bros. Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL) and Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA); and Bros. Joe Dotterer (Bloomfield, IA), Bruce Frank

(Cissna Park, IL), Jacob Kuntz (Croghan-Naumburg, NY), Dennis Rassi (Austin, TX) and Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL).

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

**Kayla Wiegand
Donna Wyss**

“For this God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.”

Psalm 47:14

Our dear Sis. Elsie Hohulin (the late Elder Bro. Ed’s wife) passed on to her eternal reward on November 21 at the Eureka Home. Our prayers and sympathy are with her three sons from Goodfield, Bro. Sam (Sis. Sandy), Bro. Bill (Sis. Lydia) and Bro. Jim (Sis. Joy Mae). Also, her daughter, LeAnn Bucher (Arden) from Fisher, IN, and her daughter-in-law, Sis. Carol Gerber (Bro. Dale) of Bluffton, IN. She was 99 years old, and was blessed with 17 grandchildren and 36 great-grandchildren. We are thankful for the many years that Bro. Ed and Sis. Elsie served our church.

Bro. Dan and Sis Kayla Wiegand were blessed with Bristol Lynn on November 21. Her excited siblings are Peyton and Ashley. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Lori Wiegand and Bro. Harvey and Sis. Debbie Joos (Morris, MN).

On December 1, Mark and Amy Sinn were thankful for the arrival of their daughter, MaKenzie Kay. Rejoicing are her grandparents from Eureka, Bro. Charlie and Sis. Karen Sinn and Bro. Kurt and Sis. Livy Blunier.

We are prayerful for Sis. Sarah Melton as she has spent some time in the hospital. May the Lord heal her according to His will.

May God bless Bro. Curt Rassi (Sis. Kathy, Tremont), Bro. Don

Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction, OH) and our counseling Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley) for being willing servants.

On December 12 our Christmas program was in the morning due to the wintry weather. “Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21) was on the front of our program. What a blessing to hear our youth sing and tell the wonderful story that never grows old.

Note of Thanks:

Thank you for the many prayers, cards, flowers, and fruit you gave me while in the hospital and the Eureka Home. May God bless you and I love you all.

Sis. Vi Wagner

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY

Perry A. Klopfenstein

In early December winter came to Gridley with a massive force. High winds and blowing snow prevented worship services on Sunday, December 12. On that morning I drove uptown to the gas station. On returning home, I drove through high winds, an icy road, and blowing snow flurries. The temperature was very low. Yet, I saw a squirrel dart out in front of my car as it quickly reached the other side of the street. I saw it run on ice. I marveled how a little furry animal can keep warm in such fierce weather. Then, I thought of the sparrows mentioned in Luke 12 — how God takes care of them and has equipped other animals to be protected against the elements. And He states we as His children are worth much more than the ravens (fowls), and perhaps other outside-dwelling animals such as squirrels.

We had Bro. Brace Wieland here as a visiting minister on Sunday, December 5. May God bless him for his

efforts. Also visiting us were Elder Bro. Bruce Endress (Bradford), Bro. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO), Bro. Mark Wettstein (LaCrosse, IN), and Bro. Kerwin Edelman (Athens, AL). Surely, we are thankful for their labors and were blessed.

Byron Martin had back surgery in early December, and we pray for a successful recovery. Sis. Marilyn Schieler has also had health difficulties.

We are thankful for the work of God and the Holy Spirit among us. As of December 11, we had a total of nine converts. It is comforting to know that even one soul is worth more than the whole world in the eyes of God, according to Scriptures.

The Christmas season was a blessing, but more and more the secular, non-spiritual emphasis wants to press down on society, and on everyone. Yet, the story of the Babe of Bethlehem far exceeds the materialistic aspects of the season. We should continually praise God, and thank Him with great intensity, for the gift of a Saviour to redeem us from our sins. May many friends of the truth awaken unto righteousness, and become converted. The Word is vivid in declaring that “except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

The Sunday School Christmas program was held December 19. It was a blessing. Not only were the young children’s recitations inspiring, but also the singing of the junior and senior high choirs was beautiful, and indicative of much practice and effort, both by the students and their directors.

We extend our sympathies to Sis. Mary Stoller over the loss of her daughter-in-law, Janice Stoller, 68, of Springfield, wife of Harry Stoller, who attended Sunday School here in his youth.

ILLINOIS, MORTON

**Annette Tanner
Julie Bahr**

For our December Family Worship Evening, Elder Bro. Ted Witzig Sr., a former school teacher, gave us a pop quiz on THE CHRISTMAS STORY. It was good to search together the Biblical TRUTHS.

The following Brothers served us in the work of the ministry this past month. Bro. Tim Roecker (Sis. Diane, Peoria); Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla) and Bro. Matthew Rassi (Sis. Bridget), both of Chicago; and Bro. Dean Steffen (Sis. Carol, Belvidere).

THE PROMISE was the titled theme of our Sunday School Christmas program. We were so very blessed and our lives enriched as we listened to the special numbers presented, in order to tell the precious story of THE PROMISED ONE - His name is JESUS!

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Roy Bahr in the loss of his sister, Sis. Anna Lou Aberle, Kansas City. May God be his Comforter.

December 26 was a special day for Sis. Amy Stephens and Bro. Tim Zimmerman as their engagement was made known. Sis. Amy is the daughter of Bro. Mark and Sis. Esther Stephens. Bro. Tim is the son of Bro. Doug and Sis. Jane Zimmerman.

ILLINOIS, PEORIA

Pam Fritzenmeier

Bro. Joel Stickling (Chris and Sis. Marcia) and Sis. Mindy Campbell (Bro. Mark and Sis. Marcia) were married in Gridley on November 21. Bro. Joel and Sis. Mindy will be assembling with us in Peoria and we gladly welcome them.

On Sunday, November 28, Bro. Fred Funk (Sis. Diane, Morton) was our guest minister. That following Wednesday evening, December 1,

Bro. Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign) was on our pulpit. Our sincere thanks for their willingness to teach us.

The annual Sunday School pizza party and Bible Class play was Saturday, December 4. The younger ones always so enjoy the play and we do thank all those who participated in this special Christmas ministry.

Bro. Dick and Sis. Gladys Binkle achieved a milestone not reached by very many couples. On December 16, they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary! God's blessings to this dear couple.

Our Sunday School Christmas program and all-church caroling scheduled for December 12, had to be rescheduled to December 19 due to a severe winter storm. The Christmas story was the same one week later... "God's plan fulfilled as He had willed, then came the Christ on earth." It is such a blessing to see the youth from pre-k through the young group speak and sing of the Baby in the manger.

We have many dear ones on our prayer list. They include Bro. Spark (Sis. Rhonda) Meister, May Thomas, Sis. Mary Swadley, Sis. Kathy (Bro. Dave) Obergfel, Sis. Ella Plattner, Sis. Barb Schafer, Dave (Susan) Diggle, Bro. Mel (Sis. Margaret) Getz, Bro. Dave (Sis. Rita) Sauder, Sis. Aimee (Bro. Matt) Moser, Sis. Elsie Eilers, and Sis. Louise (Bro. Wilbur) Triplett.

Many in our congregation have suffered the death of a loved one this month. Bro. Howard (Sis. Nancy) Herman, Sis. LouAnn (Bro. Jim) Funk, Sis. Mary (Bro. Dave) Ginzel, and Bro. Allan (Sis. Lois) Herman all saw their brother, Ron Herman, laid to rest. Bro. John (Sis. Wilma) Honegger's sister, Sis. Oleda Menold, Morton, and Sis. Ida Schwenk's sister, Sis. Elsie Hohulin, Goodfield, also recently passed away. Our dear Bro. Bill (Sis. Joyce) Waibel passed

from this life into eternity December 19. Please pray for his family: Dan (Karen), Sis. Debby (Bro. Carl) Hoerr, Sis. Jody (Bro. Jack) Hoerr, Jenny (Craig) Wieland, Sis. Jackie (Bro. Don) Hoerr, Bro. Mike (Sis. Rose), Bro. Matt (Sis. Lisa), and Jesse (Millie).

Please keep our local missionaries in your prayers. Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Bere Aupperle serve in Magdalena. Bro. Tim and Sis. Joan Reinhard and family serve in Haiti. There is much unrest and rioting right now, in the aftermath of the elections in Haiti. Also, Bro. Tim sustained a fractured collar bone and ribs in an accident. He has a six-week recovery period ahead and would appreciate our prayers for healing.

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

**Linda Joos
Connie Christ**

"Bethou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth."

Psalms 57:5

We thank Bro. Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL) for spending a Sunday with us recently. May God ever bless the Word spoken by willing servants.

Our prayers are with Bro. Vernon (Sis. Bernice) Stoller who was a recent hospital patient. May God be near Bro. Vernon and bless him.

Our love and prayers are extended to dear ones who have recently lost loved ones. Sis. Doris (Bro. Walter) Christ bid farewell to her brother, Bro. Ed Teubel (Washington, IL). Also, Sis. Marie (late Bro. Leonard) Menold lost a brother, Bro. Art Leuthold (Lester, IA). Saying a fond farewell to their dear mother, Sis. Hilda Dietz (Bradford, IL), were Sis. Betty Lou (Bro. Walter) Herrmann and Sis. Joyce (Bro. Norman)

Streitmatter.

Farewell, farewell, let me go on
That endless rest to share;
Be faithful till the Saviour calls,
Farewell, till we meet there.

Hymns of Zion #194, vs. 4

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

Jamie Hodel

Judy Sauder

We are so thankful for the "elderly" of our congregation. The young group hosted a wonderful dinner and evening of worship and fellowship for our elderly on November 20. We thank the young group for their many gracious acts of service to our church.

Wanda (Vernon) Schieber of El Paso passed away November 23. She was the mother of Jan (Bill) Rassi. Also, Bro. Wally and Sis. Marilyn Leman's youngest son, Matthew, of Queens, NY, passed away December 14. We extend our love and deepest sympathy to these dear families and pray that our Lord would comfort them in their sorrow.

Our annual Thanksgiving singing was held on November 21. It was a blessed evening of worship and song.

Bro. Matt Oesch (Alto) was our guest minister on Thanksgiving day.

Eph. 2:8,9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." On November 27-28 we were privileged to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of Daniel Stoller (Bro. Brent and Sis. Kay, Congerville). Elder Bro. Brad Eisenmann (Chicago), Bro. Justin Koch (Washington) and Bro. Matt Oesch (Alto) were our visiting ministers. We rejoice with Bro. Daniel and ask that God would continue to bless him in his walk with the Lord. We also thank our visiting ministers for their faithful service to us and pray for

God's blessings upon them.

We heartily welcome Sis. Virginia Blunier (formerly of Forrest) to our congregation. We pray that she will feel at home here and that the Lord will continue to bless and provide for her.

Our annual Christmas caroling and supper was held December 5. It was a blessing to sing for the elderly and shut-ins of our congregation, community and neighboring communities. We thank all who helped make it a successful evening.

"...if any man serve me, him will my father honor." St. John 12:26. We held our annual business meeting on December 1. Our new church trustee is Bro. Brent (Sis. Marge) Hodel. Bro. Norm (Sis. Kathy) Knapp was selected as our new nursing home trustee. And Bro. Curt (Sis. Jenell) Hodel was chosen as our new fellowship hall trustee. We thank all those who willingly give of their time and resources to keep our church running smoothly. May God be their rich rewarder.

"...that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Titus 2:10. Many of our congregation have participated in the book of Titus Bible study. On December 8, Bro. Tim Hohulin summarized what we have been studying. We thank him for his message.

Bro. Bill and Sis. Patsy Kaeb became grandparents again on December 15 when Maille Claire was born to Bro. Daniel and Sis. Kasey Messner (Chicago). Big sister Alea and grandparents, Elder Bro. Ron and Sis. Pam Messner (Washington), also welcome Maille home. We rejoice with the Messners and pray that God will bless them as they raise their children in the ways of the Lord.

Isaiah 7:14: "... Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." On December 15, the Prairie Choristers

presented a beautiful evening of Scripture and singing commemorating our Saviour's birth. We thank the Prairie Choristers for their time and effort in providing this inspiring program.

"...and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." Eccl. 4:12. On December 12, the marriage engagement of Sis. Jenean Schambach (Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie, Elgin, IL) and Bro. Byron Gerber (Bro. Rick and Sis. Shirley) was announced. Cassie Martin (Bro. Glen and Sis. Carol) was united in marriage to Dustin Schumacher of Washington on December 18. Dustin's parents are Karen Schumacher of Washington and Mike and Deb Schumacher of Roanoke. We rejoice with both of these couples and pray for God's blessing upon them, that they would build their marriages on the Lord.

Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:" Our annual Sunday School Christmas program was held on December 19. Our youth proclaimed the story of Christ's birth in Scripture and song. We thank them for providing a wonderful afternoon of worship.

We lift up Bro. Jim Leman and Bro. Rich (Sis. Janet) Knepp in prayer. They have been hospitalized or are facing health issues.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT

Teresa Rowell

Janice Sauder

What a joy it is to hear our Sunday School children sing the Christmas story to us. May each of us be inspired by that age old story and never get tired of hearing it. We actually had to move our program to the afternoon because of the weather here in Tremont that Sunday, but even on short notice, the children were wonderful.

We had the privilege of hearing the testimonies of two dear souls one Saturday night. Bro. Trent Koch (Bro.

Earl and Sis. Marsha) and Bro. Dale Beutel (Bro. Roger and Sis. JoAnn) were welcomed into the family of God. We wish them God's richest blessings as they journey onward toward that heavenly goal. Elder Bro. Ted Witzig (Sis. Cindy, Morton) and Bro. Dave Oberffel (Sis. Kathleen, Peoria) were here for the same weekend and brought the Word to us. We thank them for their willingness to serve us.

As always, we cannot have joy without sorrow. It is our earthly lot. Our sympathy is extended to all those who have experienced loss - Chris Allen (Sis. Sheri) in the loss of his grandfather, Delmar Smith; Sis. Valerie Steiner (Bro. Todd) in the loss of her grandmother, Sis. Hilda Dietz (Bradford, IL); Sis. Phyllis Lang in the loss of her brother, Ronald Herman; Sis. Misty Sauder (Bro. John) in the loss of her grandmother; and the family of Sis. Berniece Joos who ended her earthly struggle also. May these families be comforted by the Great Comforter as they experience the emotions of grief and loss.

Hospitalized this month was Sis. Sara Menold (Bro. Ron and Sis. Lynnette). We are thankful that she is again assembling with us.

Notes of Thanks:

Your thoughtful acts, words of encouragement and your warmth and caring have meant so much.

Thank you,

The Emma Aberle Family

We would like to express our appreciation to all of our church family for the deeds of kindness shown to us during the illness and passing of our dear wife, mother, and grandmother, Sis. Nancy Koch. We truly felt God's love through all of you. We pray that God will bless you for your love shown to us.

Bro. Cleo Koch

*Bro. Jim and Sis. Rachel Sauder
Bro. Nathan and Sis. Sandy Koch
Bro. Nelson and Sis. Mary Koch*

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON Nancy Leman Linda Folkerts

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

Luke 2:10

Especially during the Christmas season our hearts are filled with joy and wonderment at the miracle of Christ's birth. We have been reminded of the miraculous yet simplistic arrival of our Savior through our many Christmas activities, especially our Sunday School Program and church caroling.

Bro. Britt and Sis. Megan Steffen, along with big brother Mason, joyfully welcomed a sweet baby boy, Brayden Ray, on November 27. Brayden's grandparents are Bro. Stan and Sis. Jane DesCarpentrie and Bro. Larry and Sis. Sue Steffen (Denver, CO).

Elder Bro. Ron and Sis. Pam Messner also welcomed a new granddaughter, Mailee Claire. Mailee was born to Bro. Daniel and Sis. Kasey Messner (Chicago, IL) and welcomed, too, by big sister Alea.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the family of Bro. Andy and Sis. Freida Mogler as well as Bro. Randy and Sis. Evie Mogler. Alyssia, their granddaughter and niece, passed away suddenly at a young age.

We are grateful to the ministering Brothers and their wives that visited this month. Sharing the Gospel with us were: Bro. Joe Klotzle (Sis. Sue, Altadena, CA), Bro. Ken Wuethrich (Sis. Lyn, Indianapolis, IN), Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue, Morton, IL) and

Bro. Doug Wagenbach (Sis. Lillian, San Diego, CA).

INDIANA, BLUFFTON Suzie Fiechter Kim Meyer

It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is past and we are only days from Christmas. With all the events and happenings that have taken place in Bluffton, we definitely do not have to make a chain to count the days until Christmas like we did when we were children.

As I think of Mary giving birth to baby Jesus, I think of all the new babies that arrived this month. Welcoming a new child into this world, especially at Christmas, really brings the true focus of Christmas home. Bro. Micah and Sis. Rozanna Rauch welcomed Josie into their family. Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kathy Rauch and Bro. Jay and Sis. Ronda Grube would be her grandparents. Bro. Brad and Sis. Sonya Bertsch gave birth to another girl, Baylee. She will join her older sister Ashlyn. Bro. Mike and Sis. Carmon Bertsch and Bro. Bob and Sis. Barb Beer (Sis. Linda, dec.) are pleased to welcome their new granddaughter. Anna Marie was born to Bro. Jameson and Sis. Sheena Ringger on November 15. She will join the other grandchildren of Bro. Kendall and Sis. Sandy Ringger's family and also of Rob and Sis. Tonya Troxel. Aaron and Jill McCormick adopted Ivy McCormick who was born on November 7. Her grandparents would be Bro. Jim and Sis. Jan Schwartz.

Some babies will be having their first Christmas this year, but for Bro. Taylor Aschliman and Sis. Krystal Schwartz, they will be having their first Christmas together. Bro. Taylor and Sis. Krystal were married December 12. Bro. Derryl and Sis. Peggy Aschliman and Bro. Gary and Sis.

Barb Schwartz would be the parents of this young couple. Bro. Bill and Sis. Marge Ringger are still enjoying the blessings of Christmas together as they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. What a gift that keeps on giving!

We feel for the family of Sis. Lorene Geisel as she recently passed away. However, we are all comforted by the fact that she is truly having the best Christmas ever in the presence of Jesus Christ.

Christmas gives us a special opportunity to celebrate and share the love of our Lord and Savior. We were able to hear how the love of Christ has touched three souls and witness their baptisms. We lift Bro. Austin Gerber (Bro. Dean and Sis. Jaci), Sis. Jenna Neuenschwander (Bro. Rex and Sis. Becky) and Sis. Heidi Carter up in prayer as they fully embrace their walk with the Lord. We also welcome Nate Eichorn to the Bluffton congregation. Nate has been walking with the Lord for several years but would like to seek membership in the Bluffton Church.

As we take purposed time out of our busy schedule to pray, we can't help but pray on behalf of the Dailey children. Bro. Doug and Sis. Susan Dailey are in Fargo, ND, sitting at the bedsides of their grandchildren, Caleb and Lydia. Caleb and Lydia were traveling with their parents, Ben and Jackie, when they collided with a grain tractor. Ben and Jackie came out of the wreck a little sore, but Caleb and Lydia were both in PICU. Caleb is fairing better than Lydia and was able to have his ventilator taken out this past week. Lydia had some head trauma and swelling, but her vital numbers are becoming more normal and stable. The family prayerfully awaited the MRI tests for both children, and amazingly they were given a "normal reading". This is such an answer to prayer because

they were not sure what kind of damage was possibly done to Lydia's brain stem and spine. However, the children have a long way to go, but they have also come a long way too. Caleb is five and Lydia is 2 ½. The children were stable enough and flown to Riley Hospital in Indianapolis. Here is the address information:

Caleb or Lydia Dailey
Riley Hospital for Children
Room 2965 (for Caleb)
or Room 4835 (for Lydia)
702 Barnhill Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Bro. Linc and Sis. Catrina Rinkenberger had quite the scare with their daughter Hannah. After Thanksgiving Hannah was rushed to the ER and had everyone guessing the cause of her severe symptoms. Thankfully, she is home and healthy now; the doctors say she had a severe and aggressive virus. As parents, it's so hard to know when it's just the flu or time to head to the hospital. It makes us all the more thankful for the power of prayer and how we can take our cares to the ultimate Healer. Bobbie Studebaker, daughter of Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan Herring, was also admitted back into the hospital seven weeks after an extensive back surgery due to complications.

We are thankful our Bluffton work team was able to make it safely home from Haiti. Due to the riots that broke out after the presidential elections, it was not safe for Americans to be in Haiti. With the body of Christ working together from Haiti to Florida to Detroit, our team was able to make it home to Bluffton. However, we desperately need to lift up Haiti in our prayers, not only as a country, but also for those who would be trying to do good from within the country.

Sunday school ballots were handed out and we pray for all the

new positions that will be filled at the beginning of the year. The Sunday school started song practice and we are excited to hear them sing this coming Sunday.

The Bluffton congregation was able to hear the Memorandum from the August Conference. May God give us the humility to see where we need to change and the grace to change.

We were also visited by Bro. Arthur Ingold (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman) and thankful for their visit.

Many of us were blessed by watching the Apostolic Homeschool play *Through the Mist*. It was a great visual reminder that no matter where we are in life, Jesus is always with us and the only One we truly need.

May you all have a blessed Christmas season and find yourselves truly thankful for the most precious gift of all, the birth of our Savior.

**INDIANA
BLUFFTON NORTH
Jessie Longenberger
Amy Moser**

We spent a quiet afternoon together when we gathered for the reading of the Memorandum on November 14. How blessed we are to have Elders and ministers who are willing to listen to God and then instruct us in His ways.

Our prayers continue to be with Sis. Rochelle Gerber (Bro. Rodney). She spent time in the hospital this month. May the Lord heal and comfort as only He can.

Prayers have been requested for Elijah Sonnigsen. He is the son of Heather Sonnigsen and the grandson of Bro. Joe and Sis. Jan Schwartz. He is struggling with an infection and is at Riley Hospital. Please pray for medical guidance for the doctors toward a cure.

Among our visitors this past month was Bro. Ben Manz (Sis. Caro-

lyn, Junction). We appreciate his willingness to serve us in the ministry.

In this Thanksgiving season, though the times be uncertain, let us heed to God's timeless truth and "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name;" (Psalm 100:4).

**INDIANA
FRANCESVILLE
Jacki Huber
Mildred Clauss**

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

St. Luke 15:10

What a beautiful thought, that the angels rejoice over any one who repents and surrenders their life to Christ. We also rejoice with the angels as we hear the news of a soul turning to the Lord. Recently we listened to the testimony of faith and witnessed the baptism of Bro. Jesse Wuethrich (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Kathy). It was a blessed weekend. Bro. Neal Widmer (Sis. Kris, West Lafayette, IN) was here, and we were thankful to have him share God's Word with us on Sunday.

A new birth was celebrated on November 19. A baby boy, Tucker Reid, was born to Darin and Arial Gudeman. Bro. Dale and Sis. Peg Gudeman (Francesville) and Paul and Denise Hartwell of Rensselaer, IN, are Tucker's grandparents.

We also rejoice in answered prayer that Bro. Harold Fritz (Sis. Sherry) has had a successful kidney transplant. He has waited three years for this, and we are thankful that all is going well. We also thank God that Sis. Phyllis Wuethrich (Bro. Bob) is getting along well after a hip replace-

ment surgery.

Our dear Sis. Emilie Anliker passed away peacefully on Sunday, December 12. Sis. Emilie was preceded in death by her husband, Bro. Elmer Anliker, as well as a daughter, Sis. Linda Beer. We will remember her faithful life and kind words of encouragement. We extend our sympathy to her children, Sisters Shirley Furrer (Bro. Irvin) and Charlene Getz (Bro. Eldon), both of Wolcott, IN; her son-in-law, Bro. Bob Beer (Sis. Barb), of Milford, IN; and her dear sister, Eldora Bonges from here in Francesville; as well as her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

As I prepare this, it is the week before Christmas and we are spending time considering the wonderful Christmas story. Manger scenes depict the birth of Christ, but as believers, our thoughts also go to Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection, which give us true hope and peace as we celebrate this season.

It is always precious to watch the children as they sing and share verses in the annual Sunday School Christmas program which was shared on a recent Sunday. We also look forward to welcoming in the year of 2011 as we gather for services and the annual New Year's Eve Program. We know that God will provide for us throughout 2011 whether we have joy or sorrow, because we believe that His promises are true, and we know without a doubt that we can depend on Him!

**INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS
Penny Schroder
Gail Bradford**

**Special Note: Our remodeling project may be completed by the time this appears in the Silver Lining. However, although we plan to return to our "new" church building on

Sunday, January 9, 2011, please do contact one of our ministers to make sure we have actually made the move! Once back in our new church, Sunday worship will begin at 9:45 a.m. This time is different than the time printed in the Apostolic Christian Churches and Ministers book.

The new schedule will be as follows:

Sing:	9:45 - 10:00
Pulpit - Morning Service:	10:00 - 11:00
Lunch:	11:00 - 12:00
Sing:	12:00 - 12:15
Pulpit - Second Service:	12:15 - 1:15

In early December, many in the congregation sang Christmas hymns and carols at a local nursing home and distributed gifts to the residents. We also sang for our beloved Sis. Edye Mayer. Also in December, the Sunday school students presented a program of familiar hymns and scripture telling the wonderful news of Jesus' birth and the miracle of salvation.

The Indianapolis congregation is prayerfully considering the need for help in the ministry and seeking the Lord's guidance as we submit our ballots.

On a recent Sunday three visiting ministers blessed us with their preaching. Serving on the pulpit that Sunday were: Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Brian Huber (Sis. Jacki, Francesville, IN) and Bro. Jaye Rinckenberger (Sis. Peggy, Goodfield, IL). We appreciate all of our visitors, and especially those who lend themselves to bring forth God's Word.

A new year has begun and many people are making lists of things they want to accomplish in 2011. For a Christian, every day is a new day with the Lord. Let us first take every opportunity to express our gratitude to

Him for the many blessings He provides.

INDIANA, LACROSSE

**Bethany Johnson
Julie Rocke**

Greetings of love from a very snowy northwest Indiana! What a good reminder that Jesus' blood can wash away our sins so that we can be whiter than snow! The weekend of November 27-28 was set aside for the testimonies and baptisms of two dear souls. Sis. Lindsey Schneider and Bro. Reid Schneider (both children of Bro. Calvin and Sis. Jeannie Schneider) were taken into the fold. It was truly a day of rejoicing. Several ministering brothers attended that weekend and we thank each of them for their part. Elder Bro. Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandy, Alto, MI), Bros. Ken Schneider (Sis. Bernice, Remington, IN), John Lehman (Sis. Ruth Ann, Wolcott, IN), Virgil Metzger (Sis. Mary, Chicago, IL) and Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, St. Louis, MO) attended that weekend. Ministering Bro. Dean Messner (Sis. Wanda, Winthrop, MN) shared God's Word with us a different weekend.

Our hearts go out to Sis. Connie Knobloch in the death of her aunt, Aline Merkel.

Jackson Troxel (Bro. Tom and Sis. LuAnn) and Bro. Reid Schneider (Bro. Calvin and Sis. Jeannie) both had surgery this month. Sis. Sis Zimmerman (Bro. Richard) was hospitalized again this month and also underwent therapy. We are very thankful that she is recovering and back home.

Our Sunday School Christmas program was held December 12 in the afternoon. What a blessing it is to once again listen to the children from our preschoolers to our young group share the Christmas story in verse and song.

INDIANA, LEO Kirby Reutter

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

Isaiah 1:18

By the time this article is published, both Christmas and New Year's will be long gone...but there will probably still be plenty of snow on the ground as a reminder of a FRESH START. The first Christmas Day was a fresh start for humanity. Every year even the unbelieving, secular world celebrates a fresh start on the first of January. For the believer, every single morning is a fresh start in the Lord. “It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Over the course of the past year, there were many fresh starts within the Leo flock. Some individuals made a fresh start by relocating to the Leo area for employment at Gateway Woods. Other individuals made a fresh start by coming to live at Gateway Woods as residents. Some individuals made a fresh start by seeking their Savior in repentance. Finally, other individuals made a fresh start by joining together in holy matrimony. It seems that in every time and season of life, there is an opportunity for a fresh start.

We also had many visiting ministers this past year who expounded to us the good news—the great news—of a fresh start in Christ. We were again blessed with the presence of several of these dear Brothers over the preceding month. In no particular order, these Brothers and their

precious spouses include the following: Bro. William and Sis. Carol Waibel (Bay City); Elder Bro. John and Sis. Peggy Jackson (Bay City); Bro. Duane and Sis. Kay Reutter (Rockville); and Bro. Brian and Sis. Jacki Huber (Francesville). However, I could easily have overlooked someone, so please exercise some forbearance if you also labored among us, but were not mentioned above. Regardless, the recompense of God is far better than the recognition of man. “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Hebrews 6:10).

After living in Vermont for five and a half years, the imagery of fresh snow has left a lifelong impression on my mind of the glorious cover of Christ. However, even after six months of the harshest Vermont winters, eventually the snow thawed, and the ground was again laid bare. Only in Christ is there a cover which abides forever! How can scarlet blood turn scarlet sin into the whiteness of Christ's righteousness? Only God has the answer to that mystery. “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” (II Corinthians 9:15)

INDIANA, MILFORD

**Paula Haab
Pam Beer**

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.”

John 14:1-3

Two families in our congregation have lost loved ones recently and we pray that they feel the prayers of the church and God's comforting peace in the days ahead. Sis. Kate Price has said an earthly good-bye to her husband, Bro. Glenn Price. Bro. Glenn also leaves behind four children: Stan (Ginger), Sis. Sue Cockburn (Bro. Bob), Bro. Phil (Sis. Jane), and Kathy Kohl (Mike). He was preceded in death by a son, Bro. Glenn Price Jr. (Sis. Sandy). Bro. Bill Longcor (Sis. Judy) also said good-bye to his mother, Katherine Longcor.

Bro. Steve Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN) and Bro. Daren Metz (Gridley, IL) were our visiting ministers this past month. We thank them for traveling to Milford and teaching us from God's Word.

Bro. Bob and Sis. Barb Beer welcomed another granddaughter to their family when Baylee Grace was born to Bro. Brad and Sis. Sonya Bertsch of Bluffton, IN.

It always brings joy to our hearts and smiles to our faces to see our Sunday School children perform songs, scripture and poems at our annual Christmas program. We wish to thank the teachers who put time and effort into working with them to make this program special for all.

Later that evening we gathered at the fellowship hall and split into three groups to go out caroling. I always feel that there is a double blessing in being able to go caroling. One for the people who get caroled to and one for those who go out and carol. We all warm up with a chili supper back at the fellowship hall to finish off our day.

INDIANA, REMINGTON

**Jenni Honegger
Marcella Tyler**

We have had several hospital patients this month: Bro. Earl Kilgus

(late Sis. Arlene), Bro. Gene Waibel (Sis. Diane), Bro. Phil Isabell (Sis. Diane), and Sis. Jenna Kilgus (Elder Bro. Dan). We ask for your prayers for their health and comfort and healing. Sis. Esther Bahler (Bro. Walt) has not been in church recently due to health issues as well. We miss her and pray she will feel better soon.

After his surgery, Bro. Earl Kilgus moved to Parkview Haven. We pray this will be a smooth transition for him. We are so thankful to the Parkview Haven staff for the love and dedication they show to the residents there! Let us remember to uphold them in prayer as well. Bro. Earl's new address is:

Earl Kilgus
Parkview Haven Retirement Home
101 Constitution Drive
Francesville, IN 47946

Our Sunday School had their annual Christmas Program. It is truly a joy to hear young voices raised to our Lord in song and reciting from the Word about His holy birth! We pray that they can continue in the truth as they grow and mature, and that the words they hear and memorize will bear fruit in each heart some day. We are thankful for the dedicated Sunday School teachers as well.

As we think about the upcoming New Year, we are aware that we do not know what lies ahead. Only God in His infinite wisdom and power can know what blessings and challenges we each will experience. May we each one make the same "resolution" this year - to love Christ, to serve Him, and to cling to the faith He has given us no matter what the year holds in store for us.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

Rachel Langhofer

"Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies..."

Deut. 28:47

The Sunday after Thanksgiving we enjoyed verses and poems on giving thanks from our Sunday School children. What a blessing to learn thankfulness at a young age.

On December 8 we held our annual business meeting. For those who are ending their terms, we are appreciative for all their effort on behalf of the church.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sisters Sue Beebe (Bro. Bob) and Ernestine Meister who have had some health issues this month.

We are thankful to Bro. Nelson Beer (Sis. Minnie, Milford) for helping out on the pulpit this month when we were short handed.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Marguerite Hoerr

Probably many of you enjoy having a bird feeder outside your window so you can witness the colorful display of God's creatures and can marvel at the beautiful birds that are part of His creation. Recently we heard a bird hit our kitchen window. Bro. Lyle and Sis. Marilyn Zeltwanger had come to visit us with a big pot of soup and this happened while we were waiting for the soup to heat. We agreed it sounded like a bigger bird than a finch. When Bob checked, he found our mother Cardinal lying on the deck below the window. He saw she was still breathing so he gently picked her up with our dustpan, put her on the grill and covered her with a warm cloth. Later as Bob and Marilyn were checking on her, the father Car-

dinal flew to the feeder. When he did that, our injured mother wiggled out of the cloth and flew straight across the yard into one of our big pines. We all wondered at the communication between them and were in awe of God's perfection in Creation.

Sis. Marilyn Zeltwanger had surgery this past month and we're pleased to say she recovered so that she and Bro. Lyle could drive to Phoenix to their winter home. We thank God for her recovery. Bro. Ken and Sis. Carol Bucher will leave after their family Christmas to spend the winter near Ft. Myers. Bro. Art Heinold will also leave for the Ft. Myers area to spend the winter there. All of these folks bless our congregation to the fullest and we know their winter churches will enjoy the same blessings from their presence.

This past month I had a fall and fractured bones in both feet. God is helping me to learn patience as I sit and allow these feet to heal. We have been so blessed with help and cards and phone calls from family and friends, plus daily help from a loving husband. Tomorrow our ministering Bro. Garry Bucher and Sis. Lois are coming to visit and have offered to bring a meal with them. It's been a while since we could be in church and we're lonesome for everyone. We marvel at the love shown to us.

We had an interesting Sunday on the 12th of this month. Because we were home bound, we tried to access Peoria's services (our first church home after our marriage) and were unable to do so. Later we found they didn't have church that day because of severe weather. We then accessed Francesville in time to hear the latter part of Bro. Randy Gudeman's sermon. Later we reached their afternoon service and we enjoyed their Sunday School Christmas program. Because the time allowed, we then traveled to Morton via computer for

another afternoon service, and we heard their Sunday School Christmas program. We marveled at being able to travel that many miles on a very wintery day, even though we were home bound. This service which is offered by many of our churches is a Godsend to shut ins.

We've missed two important times in our Valpo church; our own Christmas program, which is always so inspirational, and so beautifully planned by the teachers. We were also not privileged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of Rachel and Hannah Feller, daughters of Bro. Joe and Sis. Jackie. These twin girls have been such a blessing to all of us and we rejoice to know we have added two dear young souls to our congregation. It will be such a pleasure to greet them as our sisters in faith. God has blessed our little Valpo church in this past year. We are grateful to Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lila, LaCrosse) and Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington) once again for their love and devotion and service to our church. Also blessing the weekend were ministering Bros. Tom Troxel (Sis. Luanne) and Calvin Schneider (Sis. Jeanne), both from LaCrosse.

Bro. Tim and Sis. Julie Bucher are grandparents for the first time! Their son Casey and his wife Ginelle have welcomed little Simon Andrew into their home. We ask for God's blessings on this little family as they experience parenting for the first time and as they raise little Simon to know his Lord.

As this news goes to press, we will be celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior. This event gains momentum in our hearts and minds the older we get. What a miracle that God sent this Holy Babe to live among mankind and to show by His example how we can live a life of devotion to our Lord and God.

We'd love to have you visit our Valpo church, but we ask you to check the weather report so you'll be safe. Remember we're just 2¾ miles South of U.S. 30, on SR 49.

**INDIANA
WEST LAFAYETTE
Katie Widmer
Beth Tonner**

A few weeks ago we had Thanksgiving service, praising God for what He has given us. Our family then also got to celebrate the gift of a brand new life. Little Jersey Rae Widmer was born to Bro. John and Sis. Brooke Widmer on November 28. She makes a perfect niece!

Kurt Bahler and Jaimie Oppermann were both announced for peace earlier this month. We look forward to their baptisms.

Christmas is around the corner, and we are beginning to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Today, November 19, we had our Sunday School Christmas program. Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein came and preached for the morning service. The PYG (Purdue Young Group) program was on the 9th. Our church also caroled recently at local nursing homes.

We are thankful that Sis. Madison Gutwein is safe after an accident this past Thursday. Keep safe and warm as the winter weather worsens!

**INDIANA, WOLCOTT
Donita Edelman
Lynell Blume**

On December 11, a group of all ages from our congregation traveled to Parkview Haven in Francesville to sing Christmas carols to the elderly and shut-ins. Our hearts were warmed to sing about the birth of Jesus and to fellowship with one another.

Our love and sympathy are extended to Bro. Irv and Sis. Shirley

Furrer and family in the passing of Sis. Shirley's mother, Sis. Emilie Anliker (Francesville, IN), on December 12. Also mourning this loss of a dear grandmother are Bro. Michael and Sis. Erica Wagenbach and family and Bro. Ryan and Sis. Kim Schleman. May God's promises and His nearness comfort this family.

We enjoyed a blessed evening December 15 when brethren and friends gathered together for our annual Christmas Program. What a joy it was to see and hear the children tell of the true meaning of Christmas in word and song! It is our prayer that as they grow older they will embrace the Lord as their Savior as they have the "Babe of Bethlehem".

What precious blessings are ours when we sit under the sound of the Gospel! We wish to thank Elder Bro. Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandy, Alto, MI) and Bro. Dale Banwart (Sis. Missy, Congerville, IL) for ministering God's Word to us.

We wish to extend a warm welcome to Claire French who has been assembling with us. Claire is in Grade 7 and is living in Bro. Jon and Sis. Wendy Schwab's home. We pray that the Bible teachings and the friendships she makes can always be a part of her life.

Little Evalynn Ross (Bro. Rodney and Sis. Jennifer) spent some time in the hospital this past month. We are thankful she has recovered and is back to being healthy and active. Sis. Verna Lehman (Bro. Gene) submitted to surgery recently. We wish her much grace and patience as she recuperates, and we pray the Lord will bless her with restored health.

IOWA, BLOOMFIELD Christy Wiegand

Heavenward, then take your journey;
Let your course in faith be trod;
face the crafty adversary

boldly as a man of God.
Go with courage to the conflict
as the sanctified to be;
and retaining still your treasure,
win the crown of victory.
Zion's Harp #52

We are so thankful for two souls that have surrendered their lives to Christ in repentance. We rejoice with Kendra Wuthrich (Bro. Roger and Sis. Deanne) and Jeff Wuthrich (Bro. Joel and Sis. Shirley) We pray for all our converts that God will continue to lead and encourage them.

We also rejoice with Bro. Craig Dotterer. His engagement was announced on Sunday, December 12, to Sis. Angela Martin from Eureka. Thankful parents are Bro. Joe and Sis. Rose Dotterer and Bro. Craig and Sis. Marilyn Martin (Eureka). Our prayers are with Bro. Craig and Sis. Angela as they make plans for their wedding day and their lives united as one in Christ.

We enjoyed our Sunday School Christmas Program the evening of December 12. The students did a great job singing about the birth of our Savior Jesus. Thank you to the students, teachers, and parents for their efforts.

And now we are looking at another year that has come and gone, how life as we know it slips by so fast. "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." (James 4:14). Our thoughts have been rekindled in memory of what transpired a year ago, in that our dear Bro. Henry Wettstein was taken somewhat abruptly from this life. It seemed that we all had plans and anticipations. But our Heavenly Father can see beyond years and life spans, and we are better pilgrims when we walk by faith. He touched many lives. We trust the Lord may be gracious to his dear wife, Sis. Wendy,

and his son, Tanner.

IOWA, BURLINGTON Marilyn Anderson Karla Gerst

Let us, like these good shepherds, then
employ
Our grateful voices to proclaim the
joy;
Trace we the Babe, who hath retrieved
our loss,
From His poor manger to His bitter
cross;
Treading His steps, assisted by His
grace;
Till man's first heav'nly state again
takes place.
Gospel Hymns #852, vs. 3

We had many visitors who came to listen to the children tell the story of Christ's coming at our annual program. Among them were Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall and Bros. Tom Lanz and Dale Frank (all of Oakville). We are thankful that Bros. Dale Banwart (Congerville, IL) and John Steiner (Oakville) were also willing to share the Word with us this past month. May the Lord reward them richly for their service.

IOWA, ELGIN Maria Rocke Brianna Strahm

There is a place of full release,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where all is joy and peace,
Near to the heart of God.
Hymns of Zion #175

Bro. Bert and Sis. Beulah Butikofer have relocated from their home to a nearby nursing home. They have been in our thoughts and prayers in this time of adjustment. May they continue to feel the Lord's nearness as they abide there.

Alex Callahan (Jeff and Tammy) spent some time in the hospital this

month. We are thankful he is feeling better.

Our congregation recently gathered together to assemble encouragement baskets for those in our community who've suffered misfortune during this past year. We enjoyed a meal together following the evening's activities.

The Sunday school held their Christmas program on December 15. Once again, the beautiful message of Jesus' birth and the plan of salvation was shared through verse and song. We thank the teachers and students for their time and efforts.

Note of Thanks:

We would like to thank everyone for their prayers, visits, cards and gifts. May God bless each of you for your love and kindness.

Bert & Beulah Butikofer

*Good Samaritan Society Room
501*

201 Hall St.

West Union, IA 52175

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE

Laura Funk

Bringing God's message to Garden Grove this month includes Bros. Kent Mogler (Minneapolis, MN) and Tom Lanz (Oakville, IA). We are thankful for those who visit our congregation.

We want to thank Bro. Brandon and Sis. Rhoda, Mason, Mischa and Malia Plattner who worshipped with us and contributed to our congregation the past five years. Bro. Brandon's work has led them to Canada. They will worship with the Kitchener congregation. "God be with you til we meet again."

In that little stable so long ago
There were no dazzling lights.
There was nothing to distract one's
thoughts
From that precious holy sight.

High above, the brilliant star
Was shining down from heaven.
And in the stillness of that moment
God's wondrous gift was given.
Shepherds came from near and far,
Their hearts were filled with love.
Their hearts were filled with love.
And watching o'er the Holy Child
Were angels from above.
The three wise men bearing gifts
At last on Him did gaze,
And as they looked in wonderment
Their lips were uttering praise.
So take a moment to recall
How this season did begin,
And make your heart a quiet stable
Where the Lord may enter in.

—*Peggy Haldeman*

IOWA, IOWA CITY

Diana Butikofer

We are thankful for our Elder Bro. Jon and Sis. Julie Schmidgall's (Oakville, IA) visit this month. May the Lord bless this couple for all their support and work on our behalf.

Bro. Larry and Sis. Emily Peterson have blessed us with their fellowship for many years; thus, we will miss them but wish them God's grace and blessing as they follow His leading back to the Lester, IA, area.

We were blessed to once again hear the blessed story of Christmas as told to us by our Sunday School children. They also reminded us of our position as the sheep under the loving care of our devoted Shepherd who was willing to lay down His life for His sheep (John 10:1-11).

IOWA, LESTER

Gloria Moser

Polly Metzger

Jesus loves me this I know,
For the Bible tells me so:
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak but He is strong.

Hymns of Zion #176

Two precious bundles arrived from heaven. Briggs Anthony was born on December 6 to Bro. Brent and

Sis. Priscilla Bosch. He is welcomed home by his sisters, Breyona and Brooklyn. His grandparents are Bro. Tony and Sis. Pam Bosch. On December 17, Calais Louise was born to Brett and Melissa Metzger. Grayson is her big brother and her grandparents are Bro. Marv and Sis. Joleen Metzger. May God continue to bless these dear parents as they raise their children.

Our visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bros. Doug Schock (Bloomfield) and Roy Koehl (Morris). God has blessed us so much through the years, with brothers prayerfully willing to share His Word. May they continue to preach the truth and never falter.

Prayer makes the darkened clouds
withdraw;

Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw;
Gives exercise to faith and love;
Gives every blessing from above.

Hymns of Zion #202

We have many in Lester and the community facing severe health issues. Prayers continue heavenward for them, and also for those in need of medical attention. Our hospital patients this month were Bro. Pat Meyer (Sis. Twyla), Bro. Gene Nester (Sis. Shirley), Bro. Donn Moser (Sis. Joyce), Kendon Knoblock (Bro. Marti and Sis. Martha), Bro. Howard Mogler (Sis. Lolly), Sis. Twyla Bajema (Elder Bro. Rod) and Taryn Besonen (Brant and Samantha). May God's nearness prevail in their lives.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Bro. Art Leuthold. He passed away December 14 at the age of 92. We appreciated Bro. Art's example. It's hard to see these faithful pillars pass from our lives. He leaves behind his children, Bro. Jim and Sis. Betty Leuthold, Bro. Chuck and Sis. Vicki Leuthold, Carl and Deb Leuthold, Mary and Jerry Ter Wee, Carol and Bob Molitor, Martha and

Jerry Kracht, Bro. Doug and Char Leuthold, Ken and ReNae Leuthold; 31 grandchildren, 30 great-grandchildren, and a sister-in-law, Sis. Martha Feucht. We also wish to extend our heartfelt sympathy to Bro. Andy and Sis. Freida Mogler (Eureka, formerly of Lester) and their family in the loss of their granddaughter, Elysia Mogler (Denver, CO). She passed away December 19 at the age of 30. These two dear souls will be dearly missed by their families. May God be near them all, as they journey through the days ahead without their loved ones.

The evening of December 19, our Christmas program was presented by 188 children. It was a blessed evening, and at the close they all sang together "Jesus Loves Me" and "Joy to the World". May we all feel God's nearness, not only in this special time of year, but all through the new year.

IOWA, WEST BEND
Janet Fehr
Leona Fehr

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

Proverbs 3:5-6

We are saddened to report that three dear families laid a loved one to rest on the same day in November. Bro. Leonard (Sis. Helen) Anliker lost a brother, Sidney Anliker, from Emmetsburg, IA. Sis. Alicia (Bro. Lee) Fehr's mother, Sis. Joann Maul, from Cissna Park, IL, passed away. Also, Bro. Bruce (Sis. Audrey) Messner's mother, Sis. Geraldine Messner, from Winthrop, MN, passed from this earthly life.

Our prayers of love went to Connie (Bro. Bill) Zaugg in the loss of her father, Donald Hohensee, in December.

Our sympathy extends to each one, and may God comfort the sorrowing hearts as only He knows how.

November 20-21 was a weekend of rejoicing when Heidi Zaugg (Bro. Pat and Sis. Julie) and Ervin (Sis. Nettie) Banwart shared their testimonies of how God works in young and old hearts alike, and were baptized in the name of the Lord. We are so thankful and pray God's nearness be felt in their lives in the days ahead. Elder Bro. Roy Koehl (Sis. Jenell, Morris, MN), Bro. Ken Schneider (Sis. Bernice, Remington, IN), Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA), Bro. Larry Bahr (Sis. Julie, Fort Scott, KS) and Bro. Gary Brown (Sis. Jane, Forrest, IL) were all present to share in this joy.

Sis. Pearl Anliker and Verdell (Eldon) Fehr both have spent some time in the hospital in the past month. We pray that God's healing touch may be present in their lives.

We were pleased to have Bro. Merlin Meyer (Sis. Marilyn, Lester, IA) here to minister the Living Word unto our hearts on December 5. May God richly bless him and his family for taking the time to share with us.

JAPAN, SHIODA
Carrie Ito

We went Christmas caroling at a local hospital and gave cards and gifts to the patients there. We were especially thankful for Bro. Andrew Klaus and his family who helped make the singing go good!

Later in the month, we enjoyed a visit from convert Tyler Knochel who is spending the month here in Japan with friends.

Elder Bro. Akito Inoue (Sis. Marie) and their son, Bro. Makoto (Sis. Anna) Inoue, visited us in Shioda the last Sunday of the month. As those in small churches well know, our visitors are so appreciated! God bless all!

KANSAS, BERN
Sheri Edelman
Jill Meyer

How blessed we have been to have several visiting ministers willing to labor on our behalf. We appreciate Bro. Greg Braker (Sis. Wendy; Lamar), Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. Lavonne; Sabetha), Bro. Kevin Banwart (Sis. Sandy; West Bend) and Bro. Clint Beyer (Sis. Kara; Sabetha). Also, Bro. Troy Leye (Bluffton), who was here to give a presentation on "Loving Shepherd Ministries".

Joyfully welcoming a new grandchild are Dave and Marci Reist. Alissa Ann joins the family of Thatcher and Ann Reist and big brother, David, in the Wichita area. God's blessings to them as they raise their little family.

Our church gathered to go Christmas caroling on December 12. It is always a special time and we enjoy our soup supper afterward as well. Our thanks go to all who helped host this event this year.

We listened to "the story that never grows old" as the Sunday School students presented Christ's birth in song for our Christmas program on December 19.

Many thoughts and prayers have been with Sis. Lois Hartter (Bro. Steve) as she has undergone different medical tests and awaits surgery. May she and her family ever feel God's nearness and faithfulness as they trust in Him.

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT
Martin Hohulin Sr.

This month the Fort Scott congregation was blessed with three visiting ministers.

Bro. Ron Isch (Sis. Jane, Lamont-Gridley, KS) visited Fort Scott for the first time since becoming a minister.

Over the Thanksgiving holiday, Elder Bro. Jeff Streitmatter III (Sis. Lynne) brought his family to visit relatives and delivered a timely and inspiring message.

Bro. Tim Hohulin (Sis. Cathy, Roanoke, IL) brought Sis. Valerie Wuthrich to Fort Scott so she could see her new granddaughter, Joanne Marie. Joanne is the daughter of Bro. Chris and Sis. Janelle Wuthrich. Bro. Tim is my second cousin, so being able to listen to him deliver a message was an added blessing to me.

Sis. Anna Lou Aberle passed away on December 16. She had moved to Fort Scott earlier this year from the Kansas City area where she lived with her son, Bro. Mark Mattix. Prior to that, she and her late husband, Bro. Ben Aberle, had lived in the Apostolic Christian Home at Sabetha, KS.

As we approach the end of 2010 and look forward to 2011, we must remember to give God thanks for His immense blessings and lean on His everlasting arms during times of trials and tribulations.

KANSAS, KIOWA **Jenny Stewart**

This Christmas season is truly a blessing! Celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior is always special. The Sunday school went caroling around the area. We also had several visitors to help out as well. We always appreciate the company and the fellowship when they come. The Sunday school also celebrated the birth of Christ with a Christmas program for the congregation, family, and friends.

The Senior Bible class traveled to Denver for the fall Sunday school fellowship. A wonderful time was had by all as they spent time with old friends and found new ones. We would like to thank the Denver

Sunday school for all their time and trouble for such a memorable weekend.

We were blessed to have Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS) with us to share the Holy Word, and also Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA). We appreciate and enjoy it when we have visitors.

KANSAS **LAMONT-GRIDLEY** **Ester Knobloch**

The Sunday school students shared the story of Jesus' humble birth with our congregation through their Christmas program. It's always touching to hear the account of this miracle from our young children. We appreciate the efforts of the teachers, students and parents to prepare for the program. We hope that the reason Christ came to earth can be impressed upon these tender hearts and one day bring forth the fruit of repentance.

KANSAS, SABETHA **Sally Strahm** **Carrie Grimm**

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;"

Acts 3:19

We rejoice with Bro. Will Eisenbise (Bro. Dave and Sis. Shari) as he gave his testimony and was baptized on November 21, 2010. May God richly bless Bro. Will as He leads him in His precious ways.

Bro. Kent and Sis. Molly Grimm welcome a precious daughter into their heart and home. Mylie Jo was born November 23, 2010. Big brothers are Micah, Kyle, Collin, and

Aiden. Grandparents are Bro. Doug and Sis. Joyce Wulf (Morris, MN) and Bro. Rodney and Sis. Arlene Grimm. Great-grandparents are Sis. Violet Wulf (Morris, MN) and Sis. Lois Grimm. We pray the Lord will continue to lead and guide Bro. Kent and Sis. Molly as they raise their dear family in Him.

"Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises."

Psalms 47:6

We had several opportunities to "sing praises unto our King" in the month of December. We had Sunday School Christmas caroling and all church Christmas caroling. The Sunday School children told us the story of our Saviour's birth at their Christmas Program on December 19, 2010.

We started mid-week services on December 1, 2010. These services are on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. This is a time change that is different than what is listed in the minister's book.

Bro. Ted Hirstein (Sis. Joyce, Morton, IL) and Bro. Dale Banwart (Sis. Melissa, Congerville, IL) shared the Word with us this month. May the Lord bless these willing servants.

Our prayers continue to be with Bro. Elmer Strahm (Sis. Phyllis) as he underwent surgery on December 2, 2010.

As a little child relies
On a care beyond its own,
Being neither strong nor wise,
Fears to take a step alone.
Let me thus with Thee abide,
As my Father, Friend and Guide.

Hymns of Zion #15 vs. 3

KANSAS, WICHITA **Emma Miller**

Bro. Troy Leyse (Sis. Kelly,

Bluffton) fulfilled the visiting minister schedule for December. He also explained the Loving Shepherd Ministries opportunity to work with rehabilitating Haitian homeless boys. We need Godly direction as we pray for guidance concerning the possibilities of becoming involved.

Wednesday night Bible Study for the month of December was cancelled so we could follow our traditional caroling for those who were home bound for whatever reason. Plans are for the carolers to come to my home in El Dorado on Christmas week. That will be a Christmas highlight for me but it does mean travel time for those who come.

The Sunday School teachers and children are preparing a Christmas program which they will share with the church on Sunday afternoon before Christmas.

Workers from Bern, Sabetha, Kiowa, Lamont /Gridley and Wichita met at the Mennonite Center in Newton. Packing cases of canned meat for overseas distribution is strenuous work but many strong workers finished the task by early afternoon, giving themselves time to return to their homes the same day.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON **Barb Huber**

“He satisfies the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.”

Psalm 107:9

We were grateful for our visiting ministers who came to labor and share in the preaching of the Word of God: Bro. Paul Kilgus (Sis. Carmen, Fairbury, IL), Bro. Dale Wulf (Sis. Becky, Lester, IA), and Elder Bro. Lawrence Luthi (Sis. Becky, Lamar, MO). We pray the Lord to bless you in His service to further His kingdom

here on earth. Other visiting brethren were represented from the following churches: Bern, KS; Bluffton, IN; Morton, Chicago, IL; Junction, OH; and Silverton, OR.

It was a joy to have the Germann family come back to visit as they were a part of our assembly for many years. They have felt God’s leading to move to Columbus. We really appreciated their fellowship and service given while here in Lexington and have many precious memories of their labors of love. May God’s special blessings rest upon their dear family.

We’re saddened that Sis. Marie Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, KS) has finished her temporary duties as a physical therapist assistant in Louisville. It was a blessing to have her assemble with us and we pray the Lord to bless and direct her as she travels to her next placement.

As we embark on another new year, let us continue to be the labourers God wants us to be, filled with the compassion Jesus had, to reach out and be a witness to a lost and needy world.

Christian fellowship is truly a blessing and encouragement, so we do extend a warm and hearty welcome to all who may be in our area or travelling through to worship with us. You may contact Bro. Lester Huber (859) 745-2541. Church services are held at 3938 Becknerville Rd., Winchester, KY. Directions to our church are in the 2010 minister’s book.

MEXICO, IXTLAN **Matt Gerber**

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth... And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

John 1:14, 16

Christmas caroling is not a custom here in Mexico, but this year the young group visited several homes to sing the good news of Christ’s coming to earth. There was no snow on the ground, but we made a fire in the fireplace anyways. It may be hard to believe, but 50 degrees really does feel cold down here in Ixtlan!

The annual Church Christmas program is always a time to anticipate. First the Sunday school classes and the young group sing, followed by a devotional message. Later, everyone heads outside for some fun activities with the kids. We finish up by sharing a potluck meal together.

The first part of the school year for Colegio de las Américas de Ixtlán was very challenging and stretching. After an easy first year, we were expecting things to continue to go smoothly. Everyone was talking well about the school and was impressed with the initial results. But this year’s students have presented real struggles with discipline. Sometimes it seems that they are getting worse as the year progresses. However, God is in control, even when we feel like the kids are out of control! The “struggles” are really opportunities in disguise, designed to humble us and make us more like Christ, to teach us to depend on God for wisdom and strength, and to cause us to care more about loving the children and honoring God than about the prestige of the school. Would you please join in prayer with us for wisdom, that we could have God’s vision for the school, and let go of our own?

Many of the readers are probably aware of the increase in drug cartel-related violence in Mexico. While we don’t want to be fearful, we do want to be aware of reality. Recently it hit closer to home in Morelia, about two hours from Ixtlan, where we have

a small group of believers. The trip planned for services in Morelia that weekend was cancelled because of the situation. Please pray for our brethren there as well as for the God-ordained authorities as they work to maintain order. Please pray also for our American society whose rampant drug use creates a market for these drug-trafficking organizations.

"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. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. "

I Timothy 2:1-4

MICHIGAN, ALTO
Listyn Oesch
Melissa Blough

Through plastic, tinsel, parties and gifts,
 Shopping, planning, and Christmas lights lit,
 Can the simple gift be heard or seen,
 Or does it quietly fade behind holiday sheen?

Let us not forget that He loves us so.
 He loves us too much to let us go.
 He sent a plan with His sacrifice
 To forgive and cleanse and give us life.

Embrace the greatest gift of all;
 Don't let your sense of the manger wane.
 The gift of heaven is yours to receive.
 It was the true reason He came.

by Sandra A. Popp

It is so easy to get caught in the world's hussle and bussle this time of year so we, as a congregation, are thankful to see the little ones gather on an evening to sing praises and tell

the story of our dear Savior's birth. A story that will never grow old. Each soul present felt the blessings of the night. As a babe He came, as a boy He grew, as a man He died and as God's Son Heyet lives in the hearts of Christians.

Our love and prayers are with Bro. Lyman and Sis. Vivian Feldman as Vivian was hospitalized and is now at home recovering. We also lift in prayer Judah Oesch (Bro. Matt and Sis. Shelli) as he is home recovering from surgery and seems to be doing well.

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY
Sarah Knochel
Janelle Ramseyer

We are thankful that Bro. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo, IN) visited our congregation on Thanksgiving weekend to share the Word with us.

We rejoice with those who welcomed new grandchildren into their family circles over the past weeks. Rob and Sis. Maureen Weiss' son and daughter-in-law, Rob and Sarah, welcomed a set of twins into their home. The twins, Andrew and Mary, were born in September and were several weeks early. We are thankful for God's provision in their life and that they are now at home with their parents. Andrew and Mary's great-grandparents are Bro. Floyd and Sis. Marian Knochel.

Bro. Rod and Sis. Evelyn Wieland also are thankful for the safe arrival of another grandson, Gabriel Howard. Gabriel's parents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Tiffany Wieland (Detroit, MI), and he is also welcomed by an older sister, Lexi.

On December 19, our church gathered together for our Christmas program. The students shared the prophesy and fulfillment of Jesus' birth. The evidence that God foretold every detail surrounding Christ's birth should give us great comfort

that He is in control of all things in our lives.

Our prayers are with Bill Bateson (Lori), Sis. Marian Knochel (Bro. Floyd), Sis. Lois Wieland, Sis. Shirley Wright (Bro. Gary), and Bro. Norman Knochel (Sis. Leanore) as they have all spent time in the hospital and we trust that God will be their healing strength. We have many from our congregation who are confined to home and nursing home.

As we reflect over the past year, we can count our blessings as we have had souls come to the Lord in repentance and others who were baptized into the fold. Our congregation has experienced many blessings and we are thankful. God is good.

February is Bay City's month for Silver Lining dues and all dues should be put into the General Fund. If you have any address changes, please contact one of the correspondents.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT
Manuela Denes
Kay Rauhe

During this wonderful and blessed holiday season, amidst all of the wonder, beauty and excitement of being with family and friends as we joyously share gifts and, more importantly, celebrate the birth of Jesus, we always need to remember that there are those who are suffering, hurting, alone, grieving the loss of a loved one and maybe unable to attend church because of a hospital stay or other circumstances. So we should "pray without ceasing." *I Thessalonians 5:17*

We are so thankful for answered prayers and happy to hear that Sis. Florence Wieland is out of rehabilitation and now back home at Woodhaven where she is recuperating, and we will continue to pray for her. We also want to pray for Sis. Bev Bahr (Elder Bro. Mark) who has had surgery recently and for Sis. Krista

Wieland (Bro. Andy) who will be having surgery before Christmas. May they both personally know the comfort of His healing touch!

The Sunday School, along with the congregation, collected coats, gloves, hats, socks and other items to donate for Christmas to God's Storehouse. What a wonderful way to show God's love through our spirit of giving! Another Christmas activity that we enjoy is assembling Christmas baskets filled with food for those in need. It's another special way for our congregation to share the love of Jesus within our community.

We were privileged to have ministering Bro. Ned Stoller (Alto, MI) with us recently as he conducted a church service at Woodhaven. We certainly appreciated his willingness to drive the distance, to share the Word and to "serve the Lord with gladness." *Psalms 100:2*

We were surprised to learn that on a very icy and blustery Sunday morning Sis. Barb Johnson and her daughter, Kyra, were in an automobile accident. Prayers were definitely answered as they both were released after a short stay at the hospital with Sis. Barb suffering from a broken sternum. Let's remember to keep them in our thoughts and prayers!

As we set aside time this season to remember the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, our congregation always looks forward to the Sunday School Christmas program. Sunday, December 12, was a wonderful and blessed evening as we listened to the children as they recited their pieces and sang to God so wholeheartedly and with glowing, smiling faces.

As the children filed in, they were searching to see their Mom or Dad and to find comfort in knowing that they were there in the audience to give them a smile or a "thumb's up" for encouragement—just like all of us being comforted in knowing that

our dear Lord and Saviour is always with us as we walk with Him daily.

We were so blessed when Bro. Dan and Sis. Tamra Coughlin and their little Kaeb visited us from their mission work in Magdalena, Mexico. They updated us on the work at Casa Vida y Esperanza, shared some of their learning experiences, and asked that we pray for wisdom as they seek to fulfill God's will. We are so thankful for their work and will absolutely say many prayers on their behalf.

We joyfully announce that we have a new little one joining our congregation. Gabriel Howard Wieland was born on December 13 to loving and thankful parents, Bro. Steve and Sis. Tiffany Wieland. He will be welcomed home with lots of love, kisses and hugs from his big sister Alexa. Excited grandparents are Bro. Fred and Sis. Mary Gasser from our Rittman, OH, congregation and Bro. Rod and Sis. Evelyn Wieland from our Bay City, MI, congregation. May little Gabe always be cradled in love, surrounded by family, and blessed with happiness.

Sometimes with abounding joy comes sorrow as Sis. Mary Weigele (Bro. Ernie) is grieving the loss of her aunt, Eldeen Mitchell from Morton, IL. Sis. Mary Kaisner (Bro. Hartzell) is saddened by the death of her sister-in-law, Jean Ehnle, from Kewanee, IL. We would like to offer our love and sympathy during this difficult time, and may they find strength in His presence and comfort in His love. "Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." *Psalms 3:4*

"...If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."

1 John 4:12

MINNESOTA MINNEAPOLIS Tim McMillan

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:8) was the beginning of the month in Minneapolis. Those of us within the body walk in the Spirit and need to pray for those without the body that they too come to the Lord and all may please Him.

We are all rejoicing with the announcement of finding peace with God and man for two who attend here. Sandy Bentz (Craig) and Rae Lynn Leenderts (Aric) have been announced to the joy of all our ears! We look forward to baptism on the weekend of February 19-20 if the Lord allows. For those who wish to hear their testimonies, please contact us for accommodations.

On December 12, the Glory of the Lord showed in a blizzard. It was the day for the children to sing to the congregation. With the tools we have been given, many were able to 'visit' other congregations by phone in the morning. The lot was open in the afternoon when some were able to gather. "...Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children." (Deut. 4:10) It is a joy to watch the children grow and hear their voices singing hymns this time of year. Children's singing is a sweet sound to us and to the Lord. As all parents hope that their children will give their lives to the Lord when they become accountable, through prayer and examples of all the brethren the seed of the Lord will be planted in their hearts. May we all continue to teach the children in song and word!

"Go bury thy sorrow - the world hath its share. Go bury it deeply - go hide it with care." (Hymns of Zion #146). We mourn with Bro. Jim

Tilbury and his family in the loss of his mother on this earth. Please pray for the comfort of the Lord on their hearts.

If I have wounded any soul today,
If I have caused one foot to go astray,
If I have walked in my own willful
way,

Dear Lord, forgive.

Hymns of Zion #177, vs. 1

MINNESOTA, MORRIS
Kim Feuchtenberger
Susie Wulf

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

Bro. Greg Braker (Sis. Wendy, Lamar, MO) came to visit us this month. Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marian, San Diego, CA) was also in Morris to share the Memorandum with us. It was truly a blessing to have them here. We appreciate our visiting ministers as well as our home ministers that share the Truth without fear of man so feeble. May God reward them with strength and courage.

Sis. Violet Wulf, Bro. Harvey Koehl and Bro. Shane Jones have spent time in the hospital. May God provide healing and full recovery if it is His will.

Alissa Koehl (Bro. Randy and Sis. Shirley) was announced as having peace with God and man. May God grant her grace and strength to continue living an overcoming life. January 8-9 is the weekend set for her proving and baptism.

Sis. Eileen Nohl passed away December 12. May we continue to keep her husband, Bro. David, and her

children, Sis. Dawn (Bro. Doug) Moser, Sis. Shawn (Bro. Paul) Schmidgall, Sis. Shelly (Bro. Chris) Koehl and Sis. Jody (Bro. Trevor) Schmidgall, in our prayers.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

II Cor. 1:3-4

MINNESOTA
MORRIS NORTH
Lois Schmidgall
Wanda Gramm

"And the angel said unto them, fear not: 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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord..."

Luke 2:10-11

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Luke 2:13-14

As we consider Christmas, let us reflect on the "reason for the season". Let us celebrate the most remarkable moment, the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which is God's greatest gift to all...the Gift of Salvation.

We, at Morris North, are gracious for the visiting ministers who have blessed us with their presence and willingness to serve this past month whom include: Elder Bro. Paul Messner (Sis. Jan), Bro. Glen Steiner (Sis. Rachel), Elder Bro. John

Lehman (Sis. Connie) and Bro. Dan Beer (Sis. Deb). We appreciated visitors from the Minneapolis, Morris, Winthrop, Bern, Bradford, Belvidere and Milford congregations.

Dear ones hospitalized recently are Sis. Edna Zeltwanger and Jerry (Pete) Joos. We pray for God's healing hand in their recovery.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Doug and Sis. Dawn Moser and their family in the passing of Dawn's mother, Sis. Ilene Nohl, of the Morris congregation. Also, our dear Bro. Albert Joos has gone home to be with Jesus and our sympathy goes out to his family, Robert Joos, Jerry (Pete) Joos, Jan Knapp, and Sis. Barb Heimer. His presence will be missed.

We were excited to hear of the birth of Porter Angus Schmidgall born to Jeremy and Hannah Schmidgall. Jeremy is the son of Bro. Keith and Sis. Lois Schmidgall. We rejoice with them in this precious blessing.

On Sunday, December 19, our congregation spent a blessed day worshipping together, a Christmas Program was given by our Sunday School, Christmas caroling was enjoyed, and then we gathered together for a Appetizer Potluck in the evening.

Blessed be the name of the lord.

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP
Lindsay Schmidt
Heather Steiner

So once in every year we throng
Upon a day apart,
To praise the Lord with feast and song
In thankfulness of heart.

-Arthur Guiterman, The First Thanksgiving

Once every year our country acknowledges the Lord's blessings to us on a day we call Thanksgiving Day. On the first thanksgiving they cele-

brated with thankfulness for God's bountifulness in their lives. As we celebrated this holiday, hopefully we were thankful for the bountiful gifts God has given us. May we be thankful in heart throughout the whole year.

We want to thank the Sunday School children and teachers for serving and hosting the annual "55 and Over Supper". It's always a night of sharing and reflecting. Thank you to those who were willing to share.

Our congregation had the privilege of hosting a bus load of children, friends, and members from the Princeville congregation. Our congregation felt very blessed by their efforts to come here to visit. We send special heartfelt thanks to those that made the effort—many friendships and memories were made that weekend. We would also like to thank Bro. Craig Martin (Sis. Terri) for coming and being willing to share God's Word with us. May God bless these individuals for their thoughtful and kind hearts and spirits.

We are thankful that God guided the hands of the surgeons through Ann Lind's (Dan) surgery. She is now at home and recovering. We pray that God will continue to heal and work in her life.

The family of Bro. Ed and Sis. Ginny Stoll was blessed with a baby boy. Jacob Randall was born on November 19. Jacob was welcomed home by his siblings, Sis. Victoria, Trey, Sis. Stephanie, Michael, Thomas, David and Catherine. We are thankful for his safe arrival and pray that he will be taught of God's ways and someday become a child of God.

Our congregation was saddened at the loss of dear Sis. Geraldine Messner (late Elder Bro. Harold). Our sympathy goes out to her family and friends as they mourn her passing. Sis. Geraldine's children are Bro. Bruce Messner (Sis. Audrey, West

Bend, IA), Patti Jerabek (Harlan, Hutchinson, MN), Jenny Marohn (Michael, Oakdale, MN), Bro. Doug Messner (Sis. Sue, Minneapolis, MN), and Vernon Messner (West Bend, IA). May God hold them up in His arms and bring comfort and peace to their hearts.

As the Christmas Season approaches, our congregation was able to raise our voices and sing carols to some of the area Nursing Homes and Assisted Livings. It's such a blessing to be able to sing these songs that remind us of the true meaning of Christmas. We hope their hearts were touched too!

Sis. Deloris Messerli wanted to thank her family and friends for remembering and celebrating her 90th birthday.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY Brittany Fehr

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

James 1:17

Our Sunday School recently presented their annual Christmas program, which was followed by caroling and a chili supper for the whole church. Hearing the true meaning of Christmas spoken by young children is truly a blessing, and we would like to thank the students, teachers, and parents for their efforts in preparing the program for us. We have enjoyed Christmas caroling several times this season and are thankful for the opportunities to sing of the most precious gift ever given - God's perfect gift of salvation. May each one enjoy a blessed holiday season and give thanks for the gift of God's Son.

Bro. Glen Funk (Sis. Sally, Wichita, KS) was our visiting minister this

month. May the Lord bless him for his labors on our behalf.

MISSOURI, LAMAR Dana Kellenberger Rebecca Dotterer

Our thoughts and prayers have been with Sis. Jodi (Bro. Calvin) Luthi as she spent some time in the hospital. We are thankful she is at home recovering and trust the Lord will heal as He sees best.

We have had several visitors, including Elder Bro. Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA), and ministering Bros. Philip Schulz (Burlington, IA), Bob Dotterer (Sardis, OH), and Ron Isch (Lamont-Gridley, KS). May the Lord grant much grace that His Word would always be humbly brought forth.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS Kary Mangers

We hope that each of you had a joy filled Christmas celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior.

Bro. Loren and Sis. Betsy Schrenk had an addition to their family. Grandson, Andrew Lowell Schrenk was born on October 13 to Peter and Liz and big brother John. We wish all of them God's blessings.

At the beginning of December, our congregation enjoyed caroling and serving a meal at a local mission. It is always a good reminder of some of the blessings we have been given yet some times take for granted and to pray for those going through material hardship.

Thank you to Bro. Frank and Sis. Kathy Sauder (Roanoke) and Bro. Ed and Sis. Sally Fritz (Washington) for serving our congregation from the pulpit in November and December.

As the New Year begins, may each of us desire growth in our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR**Kathy Eberhardt**

As we enter the new year, we had the thought shared with us about relationships. Let us start the year with no bitterness or envy. Let brotherly love continue as bitterness can destroy our brotherhood.

We enjoyed having two visiting ministers to bring forth the good news of Jesus, Bro. Lenny Meyer (Sis. Charlotte, Chicago, IL) and Bro. Ron Joos (Sis. Christy, Bloomfield, IA). Thanks for traveling the many miles to our Taylor church.

We are rejoicing with Bro. Quinton and Sis. Heather Snyder on the birth of Zachary Eugene, as he joins two sisters, Emma and Allana. Grandparents are Bro. Greg and Sis. Kara Snyder (Kansas City) and Bro. Tom and Sis. Cindy Hitz (Detroit).

Seth and Jill Redd had a baby boy, Mason William. He joins brother Ethan. Grandparents are Dean and Gaye Redd and Jim and Nancy Schaefer.

Josh and Julie Redd had their third girl, named Olivia Grace. She joins big sisters, Isabelle and Emma. Grandparents are Dean and Gaye Redd and Mike and Judy Hartley. May God be with all these parents as they raise them in God's ways.

May God grant healing to all our hospital patients this past month: Bro. Roy Grimm, Sis. Judy Huber, Sis. Sally Haerr, Bro. Jim Sutter and Christina Rocke.

We express our deepest sympathy to the Albert Joos family of Morris, MN. Bro. Rod and Sis. Barb (Bro. Albert's daughter) attend our church in Taylor. Our thoughts and prayers are with your family.

Thanks to Sis. Erin Knobloch of Reynosa, Mexico, in sharing a presentation of the Isaiah 55 mission with our congregation. She answered many questions about how God is

working in Mexico at the deaf village. May we all continue to pray for our missionaries around the globe.

I'm passing the baton of writing the Silver Lining to Sis. Melissa Reiman. Thanks so much for all your support.

**NEW YORK
CROGHAN-NAUMBURG
Hope Graves**

With this Christmas season upon us we have been blessed with many opportunities to go caroling. December 3 we spent the evening at Karcher Estates. On December 12 we enjoyed caroling through the hallways at our local hospital and nursing home. It was special to have Sis. Louise Purvines, who is a resident there, accompany us as we sang and then gathered for pizza. Sunday evening, December 19, was our last caroling at the Steepleview Courts.

Our Sunday School Christmas program was held Sunday afternoon, December 19. What a blessing we get from this each year as we hear the children share what they have learned about Christ's birth. We also enjoyed the opportunity to continue our annual tradition of sharing cookies and chocolate milk after.

We were glad to have visitors with us for the weekend of December 4-5. A potluck and singing was held on Saturday evening. We always enjoy having company but know it can be a challenge to travel here in the winter season.

We gathered together on Wednesday afternoon, December 15, to put together Christmas cheer baskets. The children always enjoy this and it is a great learning opportunity for them to help others.

Our prayers have went out for Loren Virkler, Tanner Millard and Kathleen Banning who have all had fractures of the arm or wrist. We are thankful that Martin Hirschey is now

home healing after being injured at work.

We ask the Lord to continue to provide comfort to those who have lost loved ones. Gayle (Bruce) Hirschey's mother, Roberta Lamoy, died on December 7. May God provide for her family in the days ahead.

As life passes we are reminded to be spiritually prepared to meet our God. We are so thankful that the Lord has called and worked in the hearts of two dear souls who have felt led to move to our area and begin worshipping with us. Peter and Kathleen Banning have begun upon the path of repentance and have been an added blessing to our congregation. We pray for God's nearness at all times in their lives.

**OHIO, AKRON
Erika Gal**

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."

John 12:46

This month we had the blessed privilege of listening to the testimonies of three dear souls. We are thankful to welcome Bro. Peter and Sis. Margaret Zarkovacki and Sis. Sheila (Mike) Carder into our congregation. The testimonies served as a vivid reminder of God's faithfulness and love to us as fallen mankind. We certainly want to thank Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic for being with us to share in the testimonies of his aunt and uncle. May God richly reward him for his efforts.

We are so thankful to have our Sis. Arliss (Bro. Steve) Pamer and Bro. Tom (Sis. Christine) Demrovsky back with us after several days in the hospital. God is so faithful to hear and answer our prayers. Our thoughts and prayers are also with

our Sis. Esther Boleratz as we miss her faithful presence at church. May God strengthen and provide for her.

We extend our love and sympathy to Sis. Marcy (Bro. Micah) Gherian in the loss of her grandmother, Jenny Van Wyhe, from Lester, IA.

It is always so heartwarming to listen to our Sunday School present the Christmas story to us during our annual Christmas program. We also want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the teachers for their efforts for this program and throughout the year.

OHIO, COLUMBUS

Esther Saurer

We are thankful for the visiting ministers we have had in the past month. Bro. Todd and Sis. Pam Stoller joined us from Latty, OH, one weekend and Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie Schambach from Elgin, IL, joined us another weekend. Bro. Ted and Sis. Stephanie Luginbuhl and Bro. Marvin Zollinger, both from Smithville, OH, also came to minister to us this month.

Bro. Scott and Sis. Hope are the proud parents of their new son, Elliot Chase Schambach. We are always thankful for growth to our church family.

We enjoyed listening to our Sunday School students during their Christmas program this year.

OHIO, JUNCTION

Vicki Boroff

Our prayers go out to our hospital patients. We wish a speedy recovery for Sis. Evelyn Manz.

Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz are thankful to have another grandchild. Bro. Chad and Sis. Cindy Indermuhle (Rittman) had a little boy, Curtis Dwayne, on December 7.

As we begin a new year, it is popu-

lar to think of this time as a new beginning. Let's not forget our beginning.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Genesis 1:1

OHIO, LATTY

Mindy Stoller

Carmen Eisenmann

Greetings of love! Visiting ministers this month included Bro. Mike Rinkenberger (Sis. Pat, Congerville, IL), Bro. Warren Schlatter (Sis. Cindy, Junction, OH), Bro. Nelson Beer (Sis. Minnie, Milford, IN), and Bro. Earl Beery (Sis. Susie, Rittman, OH). We are so thankful for the willingness of these brothers to preach the Truth to us.

We rejoice with Andrea Greutman (Bro. Greg and Sis. Kristy) as she has expressed a desire to repent and seek the Lord. May God grant her much grace and joy as she begins this important path.

We are also happy to report that our convert, Aaron Nuest (Bro. Lee and Sis. Paula), has professed peace with God and man. Our prayers are with him as he prepares to give his testimony and be baptized.

November 30 was the birthday for Witt Christian born to Bro. Reid and Sis. Amanda Stoller. Big brothers are Nyle, Jude, and Clay. His grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Barb Stoller and John and Pennie LaBounty. Bro. Brian and Sis. Mackenzie Wenninger welcomed Malachi Breason into their family on December 6. Big sisters are Breanna, Meagan, and Bella. His grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Deb Wenninger and Ed and Jackie Scarbrough. May God grant these dear families much joy and love as they continue to raise these precious children.

OHIO, MANSFIELD

Tami Griffey

We are always thankful for visiting ministers who share God's Word with us. Bro. Matt Steffen (Sis. Deanna; Princeville, IL) shared Thanksgiving morning with us. Bro. John Grimm (Sis. Julie; Columbus) has also visited recently.

Prayers are with Sis. Becky Vent and Sis. Clara Zimmer as they recover at home after hospitalization.

Our annual business meeting was held December 5. Receiving prayerful support for church positions include: Bro. Greg Sabo, Trustee; Bro. Marvin Beer, Treasurer; Bro. Wilbur Gerber, Assistant Treasurer; Bro. Ed Ramsey Jr., Usher; Sis. Bev Keever, Kitchen Committee; Sis. Marci Pfeiffer, World Relief Committee; and Sis. Robin Beer, World Relief Committee. May God bless each one who serves our congregation in the Lord's work.

We welcome Bro. Josh, Sis. Jenna, Aubrey, and Julianna Boliantz as they have relocated to the Mansfield area and our congregation.

The Sunday School Christmas program was held on December 12. The voices of our youth proclaimed the Christmas miracle of our Savior's birth in both song and verse.

Thankful for health, thankful for life,

Thankful for guidance in sorrow and strife.

Thankful for food, for ripe golden grain,

For all that is needful our life to sustain.

Thankful for friends who just stand by,

Upon whose help we can rely.

Thankful for home with comforts blest,

Where peace abides, with love, and rest.

Thankful for brethren, whose help does impart,

Strength for the journey, cheer for the heart.

Thankful to work in rich, moist soil,
Where roses bloom to compensate toil.

Thankful to hear the still, small voice,
Making our heart in life's sorrows rejoice.

"Thankful" by Henry Beer

OHIO, RITTMAN
Heidi Rufener
Marge Stoller

...Dearest child we bid thee welcome
In our blessed Brotherhood
From the wild tree thou art grafted
On this holy tree and root.

Zion's Harp #34

We are rejoicing with three souls who have given their hearts and lives to Jesus. Nick Lanz (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Darlene), Amber Vance, and Amanda Miller (Bro. Mike and Sis. Carol) have all recognized their need for a Savior and are beginning to walk in His ways.

Once again we have had several new babies born in the past weeks. Bro. Luke and Sis. Pam Steiner welcomed Truet Robert into their family on November 24. Older brothers are Aidan, Evan, and Emmett; grandparents are Bro. Matt and Sis. Gail Steiner and Bro. Dave and Sis. Connie Maletich (Smithville). Curtis Dwaine made his appearance on December 7 to Bro. Chad and Sis. Cindy Indermuhle. His siblings are Carmen, Courtney, Casey, and Cody. Grandparents are Bro. Dwaine and Sis. Joan Indermuhle and Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz (Junction). December 9 is the birthday of Kya Rose, welcomed home by Bro. Kurt and Sis. Kelly Gasser and older sisters, Molly and Bethany. Grandparents are Bro. Dan and Sis. Diane Gasser and Sis. Nancy Bauman. Bro. Steve and Sis. Tiffany Wieland (Detroit, MI) have a new son, Gabriel Howard, born on December 13. His older sister is Alexa and his grandparents are Bro. Fred and Sis. Mary Gasser and Bro. Rod and Sis. Evelyn Wieland (Bay City, MI).

On November 20-21 we witnessed the testimony of faith and baptism of Bro. Brad Hartzler (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Bev), Sis. Minnie Baltic (Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty, Columbus) and Bro. Greg Gasser (Bro. Jim and Sis. Janice). We are thankful for these new brothers and sister and wish them God's continued nearness in their lives.

The engagement of Sis. Kristina Rufener (Bro. Dave and Sis. LeAnn) to Bro. Trent Steffen (Bro. Dean and Sis. Carol, Belvidere, IL) was made known to our congregation on December 5. May God fill their hearts with love for each other and wisdom to make decisions as they plan their future together.

Sharing God's Word with us this month were Elder Bros. Andy Stoller (Smithville) and Ken Indermuhle (Sardis); as well as ministering Bros. Ted Luginbuhl (Smithville), Todd Stoller (Latty), and Matt Steffen (Princeville, IL).

Hospitalized recently were Emma Steiner (Bro. Ryan and Sis. Julie), Sis. Velma Rufener (Bro. Elton), and Eli Hartzler (Bro. Tim and Sis. Sharon). We pray for God's healing hand to touch each one.

OHIO, SARDIS
Faith Beard

Thankful to God, He sent His Son,
And for His kindness, His mercy begun.

Thankful for Christ, His humble birth,
Transferred from glory to live on this earth.

Thankful for star high in the sky,
Wise men would come and see babe Jesus lie.

Thankful for Christ, died on the cross,
His hope and wisdom, love never lost.

The words to this song were written by our high school Bible class to the tune of #480 in the Gospel Hymns. They sang it to the congrega-

tion at our Sunday School Christmas program following the other classes who each sang various aspects of the birth of Jesus Christ. Now with the Christmas season past, we look back on that time of the year that we remember Christ's first coming so extensively through gift giving and in song and in worship, and we wonder, do we put that much emphasis on His second coming?

We are so thankful for God's provision as Staci Indermuhle (Bro. Allen and Sis. Janet) is now out of the hospital and back living with her family. We also remember little Colby Maibach (Bro. Garth and Sis. Hannah) as he is now in extended care hospitalization to be treated for a childhood eating disorder related back to his premature birth. Cards of love and encouragement can be sent to The Children's Institute, Colby Maibach c/o Hannah Maibach, 1405 Shady Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217 or to their home address at 48725 SR 255, Sardis, OH 43946. Sometimes we wonder why we must bear the crosses of the flesh, but yet, this truly does make us have even a greater yearning for Heaven where we will all have perfect celestial bodies.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE
Gina Brake
Lydia Dotterer

"But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I Cor. 15:57

Thanksgiving weekend was a special weekend for two souls, Bro. Mitch Maibach (Bro. Steve and Sis. Dawn) and Bro. Todd Gasser (Bro. Ken and Sis. Sue Ellen Maibach and the late Bro. Greg) as they were brought into the fold. May God grant them the grace to serve Him "acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (Hebrews

12:28)

The baptisms brought many visitors, including Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Mansfield) and Bro. Doug Harmon (Toledo). We appreciate their efforts to serve us.

Bro. Don Riggenbach (Sis. Gail) was hospitalized recently for replacement of both of his knees. We are thankful that the surgery went well and Bro. Don is able to worship with us again.

OHIO, TOLEDO
Teresa Rywalski
Rebecca Beard

Greetings of love to each of you!

We are happy to welcome Bro. Luke Tucker from Mansfield and Bro. Brice Gasser from Detroit who have relocated here for their work. Our prayer is that God will bless them in their new employment and in their worship with us. We will certainly be blessed by their fellowship.

We were very thankful to have Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit) with us for a Sunday service. May our Heavenly Father bless him and his family as only He is able. After church the Gassers joined us for Christmas caroling to some of our home bound brethren and others. Carolers enjoyed a haystack meal that followed.

As we approach a new year, may we remember to look to our Lord for His guidance and the grace to do His will.

OREGON, PORTLAND
Renee Angstrom

On November 21, we rejoiced as Sis. Adriana Jones (Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz) was joined in marriage with Bro. Dwayne Sinn (Bro. Don and Sis. Linda, Silverton, OR). We will greatly miss Sis. Adriana and pray that God's blessings will be with them as they assemble with the Silverton congregation.

It is always such a special occasion when we listen to our precious children tell the story of Christ's birth through song and verse. We appreciate all the efforts that went into their program and the beautiful job they did.

OREGON, SILVERTON
Kris Luthi
Deb Roth

O God of wisdom, life and love,
Thine is the blessed plan.
In holy bonds of love to join,
The twain created man.

Hymns of Zion #286

We witnessed the vows of Bro. Duane Sinn (Bro. Don and Sis. Linda) and Sis. Adriana Jones (Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz, Portland) on November 21. We thank Bros. Mike Leman (Sis. Lisa) and Ron Jones (both from Portland) for ministering to us that day. We wish Bro. Duane and Sis. Adriana the Lord's richest blessings as they begin their lives as one.

Our Sunday School children presented the Christmas story to us on Sunday evening, December 12. We appreciate their eagerness and efforts in telling of Jesus' birth. May we all remember Christ's coming as the real reason for the season.

Bro. Ryan Kuenzi (Sis. Kara) was elected as Sunday School teacher for the 6th grade class, replacing Bro. Eldon Metz (Sis. Alice) who is now assembling with the Portland congregation. We thank Bro. Eldon for his time and efforts and give Bro. Ryan our support. We also thank Bro. James Schneider (Sis. Tonya) for filling in for Bro. Eldon until a new teacher was elected.

Bro. Ben and Sis. Carolyn Bolliger celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this month. A union in the Lord is truly a blessing and we wish them many more years together in

service to Him.

Sis. Megan Walter (Bro. Chad) is recovering from a torn cornea and Sis. Marie Jensen (Bro. Paul) suffered a broken foot this month. May they both experience a speedy recovery.

Thank you to both Portland and Silverton congregations:

Words cannot express the gratitude upon our hearts for the love and kindness that was shown unto us over the past 38+ years. The farewell singing was truly an example of God's love. It is our prayer that God will bless everyone for their kindness now and in the days ahead.

*Your Brother and Sister,
Ed and Judie Knecht*

PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA
Emily Wiegand

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

Matthew 2:1-2

Just as the wise men came to worship their Savior at the telling of His birth, so do we have the same opportunity to worship Him during this wonderful Christmas time. The Sunday school had the chance on December 12 to tell the story of His birth, and to remind us of our need to be lights in this world. We were also able to go caroling to those in nursing homes in our church community on the 12th - spreading "good tidings of great joy" (Luke 2:10).

Finally, it was a blessing for our church to welcome Bro. Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO) and his wife,

Sis. Betsy, on December 12. We truly appreciated Bro. Loren's willingness to share the Word.

gmail.com); and Sis. Gwen Leuthold, (615) 356-5755.

TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE

Mike and Monica Fritz

By the time you read this, the World Relief work project in the Nashville area will be well underway. We are thankful for these efforts to help with the rebuilding of homes and lives for families who suffered loss during the major flooding here this spring. We appreciate the love of Christ shown through this effort to the hurting in our community.

We are thankful for the power of the Living Word, so ably shared with us by our visiting ministering brothers: Bros. Ned Bahler (Sis. Anna; Fairbury, IL), Warren Zahner (Rockville, CT), and Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane; Leo, IN).

We have also appreciated the fellowship of brethren and friends visiting from Congerville, Fairbury, and Morton, IL; Leo, IN; Bay City, MI; Junction, OH; and Austin, TX.

If you are traveling to or through the Nashville area, please plan to worship with us. The following churches are scheduled for services in the near future: Sardis, OH (1/23); Bradford, IL (1/30); Chicago, IL (2/6); Bluffton North, IN (2/13); Latty, OH (2/20); and Tremont, IL (2/27). 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. During the World Relief work project (Jan-Mar), our Wednesday evening services are at Bethany Hills Camp in Kingston Springs, TN, where the work teams are staying, and we are not yet aware of a finalized time, so call ahead. (Typically our Wednesday evening services are at 7:15 p.m.). Contacts are Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz, (615) 866-5543 (fritzmbfamily@

TEXAS, AUSTIN

Serenity and Jasmine Ringger

The weekend of December 5 brought many visitors when the World Relief Committee held their annual meeting here. It was a blessing to see so many faces, familiar and unfamiliar.

We were also served by visiting ministers, which were Bros. Jeff Waibel (Sis. Margo, Leo), Virgil Kaeb (Sis. Suellen, Sarasota), Earl Beery (Sis. Suzanne, Rittman), Leland Plattner (Zapata), Vic Baumann (Sis. Brenda, Smithville), Elder Bros. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington), John Laukhuf (Sis. Marcia, Latty), Kent Heimer, (Sis. Jan, Taylor), and Duane Farney (Croghan- Naumburg). We also had other visitors from Forrest, Altadena, Tremont, Akron, Congerville, and Morton, and probably some others that we forgot!

We extend a warm welcome to anyone who may be in the area to worship with us, on Sundays or mid-week. Please call ahead to help us plan for serving lunch. Also, because visitors add much to our local fellowship times, it helps if we know about your visit well in advance, so that we can accommodate you more readily in our weekend gatherings. Directions to our church and contacts are now in the 2010 minister book.

In the church, there are two furnished bedrooms for the ministers and others 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.

TEXAS, MCALLEN

Gloria Walder

We appreciate our visiting minis-

ters and wives taking the time and effort to serve us. May the Lord bless them and the Word brought forth by Elder Bro. Steve Sauder (Sis. Mary, Tremont, IL) and Bro. Arlen Leman (Sis. Denise, Forrest, IL). We also enjoyed other visitors from Congerville and Forrest.

The tentative schedule for February is: Feb. 6 - Wolcott, IN; Feb. 13 - Eureka, IL; Feb. 20 - Latty, OH.

We also meet on Wednesday evenings at the home of Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Joyce Nohl, and appreciate visitors whenever it fits into their schedule.

Sunday services are held at 10:30 and 12:30 at the Holiday Inn Express, 1921 South 10th St. Take the 10th Street exit off Expressway 83 and go 1½ blocks south. Please see the ministers' directory for local contact information. We are small in number and appreciate and welcome anyone spending time in south Texas to worship with us.

Advance notice will help us plan for meals and fellowship.

TEXAS, ZAPATA

Mary Plattner

We are thankful for the visitors that have included Zapata in their travel plans. We are grateful that Bro. Duane Metzger and Sis. Ruth (West Bend, IA) were with us for a visit, and he was willing to share the Word.

Also retired Elder Bro. Art Nohl and Sis. Sandy (Morris, MN) are with us again.

We certainly welcome anyone traveling to South Texas to spend some time with us.

VERMONT NORTH CLARENDON/ NORWICH

Nathan and Miriam Reutter

“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

This past month we remembered the humble birth of our Lord and Savior; how He was born, not with the royal fanfare that this world could offer, but in a lowly stable. It is such a reassuring inspiration for us to know that God is not a respecter of persons, but that He came for ALL men, no matter what our state would be, and that they could seek Him in humble repentance and find salvation through His shed blood. This beautiful story was brought to us by our precious Sunday school children through song at our annual Christmas program. With us that weekend was ministering Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Diane, Rockville, CT).

The weekend prior, Bro. Duane Reutter (Sis. Kay) was here from

Rockville, CT, to bring us the Word. We went to a local retirement home after church to sing carols and share the blessed plan of salvation through song and a scripture reading.

On December 19, Bro. Dan Goric (Rockville, CT) came up to be used on the pulpit. It is always so refreshing to be in church and have the fellowship of other believers on Sundays. Sometimes it can be quite lonely and isolating here, not being in close proximity with other believers.

On December 26, Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan (Sis. Cheryl) and Ordained Deacon Bro. Warren Zahner (Sis. Bonnie), both of Rockville, CT, held services in Norwich.

The ministering brethren in Rockville, CT, have been heavily used to support our small group of believers. We wish to again thank them for their endless labors for us.

“Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,

forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

I Corinthians 15:58

If you are interested in fellowshiping with us here in Vermont, and would like information about service locations and dates, please contact Bro. Chad and 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.

Assistant Houseparent Needed

Gateway Woods currently has an opening for a single sister to work in a full-time ministry with troubled children. The Assistant Houseparent position offers competitive wages and generous benefits and a close relationship with brothers and sisters whose hearts and lives are dedicated to a mission with an eternal reward. If you feel the call to explore the possibilities, please call one of the brothers listed below:

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

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



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comes so subtle it seems, like, where they talk about the tower of Soloam, where they said to Jesus, what happened here? Do you think these men were more evil than all others? (St. Luke 13:4) Or what happened to this person that this evil came upon him? Or, who sinned that this man was born blind (St. John 9:2)? Sometimes we look at our circumstances and say, okay, things are going good so I must be serving God. Or, things are going bad. I must not be serving God. Here, Solomon had done something wrong and God still blessed him. When we look at our lives and we look at Solomon's life, we need to compare ourselves and our lives to the Word and not to the circumstances around our life. Are we being blessed financially? Are we unemployed?

Here, Solomon had gotten great riches. God had blessed him with understanding. God had blessed him with wisdom. Yet he had already started - and it talks later on in the Bible, how God was patient and forbearing. When we see the power of something in front of us, the power that is occurring in our lives or in the lives of others, whether it is power for good or power for bad, it needs to be evaluated against the Word, not against if it is beneficial in the eyes of the world.

We look at this and we think, boy, Solomon had it going great. But the very first verse, Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh the king of Egypt and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the city of David. He started wrong.

What is happening in our lives should cause us to reflect and seek the Word and evaluate ourselves in the light of the Word. But according to the Word, that is how we stand or we fall, not according to what is happening in our lives. Whether we are going through great struggles and great battles or if things are just tremendous, we still turn to the Word and we find our focus. We find our foundation. We find our status of where we stand with God from the Word. It just strikes me that here in

Solomon's life, as we read it, it just seems to jump out. That he was given so much but he had started so wrong! God still gave him a blessing and the opportunity to turn around and his heart drifted and drifted.

Then we also see the blessing of God's wisdom and how Solomon was able to lead the people. The heart of Solomon here at the beginning, even though he started off with a heart that seemed that it wanted to serve God, even though he started off in the wrong direction, verse 9 says, "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" His heart was set on serving others. It is a good place to be.

That's where Paul was. He wanted to serve. He is being challenged, saying, 'Don't listen to Paul'. The first verse of I Corinthians chapter 9 says, "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?..." They are rhetorical questions. They know the answer. "...are not ye my work in the Lord?" Have I not been serving you and seeking you?

"If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." v.2. He says, you're the reason I am considered an Apostle. You're the seal. You are the affirmation.

"Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, Have we not power to eat..." v.3. He is being challenged in saying that he should not be receiving money from them. He says, "Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" v.4,5. As far as I know, Paul wasn't married. He may have been earlier and his wife may have passed away, from how well he speaks of marriage and such. It seems like he has experience in that. But Barnabas may have been married and that may have been what they were speaking too.

"Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?" v.6 Or

to put aside working. He then goes on and compares it. "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" v.7.

Then he goes on and talks about the oxen, that they should be able to eat, according to the law, what they are treading out. Not to restrain them. (v.9) He said, 'We are at work. We have a right to ask from the congregation.'

"Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." v.10. He goes on and talks about the priests. "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" v.13. They would put in the tongs into the flesh and pull out some of the flesh and that was theirs to keep. There were different things that were left for the priests and the Levites. It even talks in the Old Testament how the Levites had to go and leave their ministry because the people were not coming with their sacrifices the way they should and they had no food. They had no ability to sustain themselves so they had to leave their endeavors in serving the temple. (Nehemiah 13:10)

It says, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I Corinthians 9:14. And he says in verse 15, "But..." If I remember right, that was what some of the false teachers were doing. They were trying to glean money out of the church. "But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." v.15. He says, I want to glory in Jesus Christ. I want to speak of Jesus Christ and I don't want anything to hinder that. I don't want anything to stand in the

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Sermon continued from page 41

way. I don't want anyone to be able to hold something over me. I don't want anyone to challenge me on something that I accepted from them that puts a taint to what I am saying. I want the Word to come through clear and I want it to be a message about Jesus Christ and God. Nothing hindered. I don't want any man to make my glorying void.

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" v.16. Paul was a watchman. Paul was called to bring the gospel to the people. God had laid that charge before him. He could not turn back on that. He could not turn back on that.

In Zechariah 9:12, Zechariah is talking about the struggles that are going on in Israel and what is occurring. He says, "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee;" I really appreciate this verse and the phrase, 'you prisoners of hope'. The people were grabbed by God. God was so strong in their heart that they could no longer stop trusting in God than breathing air. They were prisoners of hope. No matter the battle, no matter the circumstances, no matter the pain, they would trust in God no matter what.

Another good example is Habakkuk. He says, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail..." 3:17. There is a drought in the land. The crops are ruined. "...and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength..." 3:17-19. What strength do you have, Habakkuk? You said everything is wasted. It doesn't matter. God is my strength. "...and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments." v.19. No matter what happens, I will love my

God! I am a prisoner. I am set on Him.

Paul says the same thing. I am committed to say what the gospel says. I am committed to share. I am committed to declare Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It doesn't matter about anything else. That is what I will do. He was a prisoner of hope. He didn't care how barren the fields were. God was his strength.

How is that in our lives? How is that in my life? We are each called to be a minister of the gospel. It is not just ministers that stand up here on the pulpit. Each one of us is a minister. We are ministering to people in our lives continually, daily, in all different aspects. God has called you to a ministry. He has called you to reach people around you, whether it is your children, parents, cousins. Whether it is those you meet in the grocery store, those in school. You are called to a ministry. How do we stand in that ministry? Paul said, it were better for me to die than that any man should make my glorying void. Better for me to die than not to be able to preach and do what God has called me to.

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" I Corinthians 9:16. It is a challenge to each one of us. Not to the brothers that stand up here only, but to each one of us. How do we speak the Word in our lives? By the words that come out of our mouth, by our actions, by our attitudes. We have nothing to glory of. Necessity is laid upon us. Necessity is laid upon us.

I remember a story. There was a young gal that was dying. She and her mom would sit around the bed and talk about heaven and cry a lot. Sharing about what heaven was going to be like. The mother remembered a story she had read. It talked about a young lady that was born blind and her mom would try to describe the scenes of different things, what was going on and explain things to her. Let her know what things looked like. When she was twelve years old, there was a surgery

developed that helped her regain her sight. They weren't sure what was going to happen. She had the surgery done and had the band aids on her eyes. The mother was telling her the way everything looked. Just talking about what she might see and experience if the surgery worked. They couldn't sleep well that night. They were just so nervous about what was going to happen the next day. Eventually, the next day came. They pulled the band aids off. She could go to the window and it was a perfect spring day. Little clouds in the blue sky. Flowers were blooming. Green grass. She just stood looking out the window. She turned around with tears coming down her eyes and she said, 'Mom, you didn't tell me it would be this beautiful!' That is what heaven is going to be like.

If you know Jesus Christ, there is a beauty that you have seen and you can try to share to others. There is a beauty that we are given to preach the gospel of, to share, to minister to others. To tell them of this wonder! I know so many times our words fall so short and our lives do too. But when they see it, the tears come. A new joy. A joy unlike anything else. Not happiness but joy. Amid the sorrow, amid the tragedy, amid the pain, there is still joy. There is still rejoicing in Jesus Christ.

"For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel." v.17,18. He says, 'I will freely give the gospel. I will share it.' A challenge to each one of us. Let's share the gospel. Let's bring it to others like Paul did. Let's have that heart, that zeal, that passion out of a love for God, not out of a necessity. But there is a necessity for us to preach it. We cannot just sit back. We need to share.

Child Placement Manager Opening

As Gateway Woods expands our Christian Adoption Services into Illinois, we are in need of an IL Child Placement Manager. Applicants for this job must:



1. Be a member in good standing of the Apostolic Christian Church with approval of his/her local elder.
2. Have at least a Master's Degree in Social Work from an accredited school and three years work experience in social work administration OR a Master's Degree in a human services field from an accredited school and five years of work experience in human services administration.
3. Have a dedicated interest, love and sensitivity for youth and families.
4. Possess good motivational, organizational, teaching and communications skills.
5. Have ability to establish positive working and interpersonal relationships and use a team approach.
6. Have treatment philosophy compatible with the mission of Gateway Woods - Apostolic Christian Children's Home.
7. Have commitment to ongoing personal and professional growth.

This position offers a competitive salary and generous benefits. For further information and a job description, please contact:

Bro. Jeff Schumacher
 Administrator
 PO Box 151
 Leo, IN 46765
 1-888-443-4283 (GATE)
 jeff.schumacher@gatewaywoods.org

Bro. Lynn Stieglitz
 Counseling Elder
 15417 Doty Rd.
 New Haven, IN 46774
 260-657-1033
 lynnstieg@lightningnet.net

Apostolic Christian Counseling and Family Services

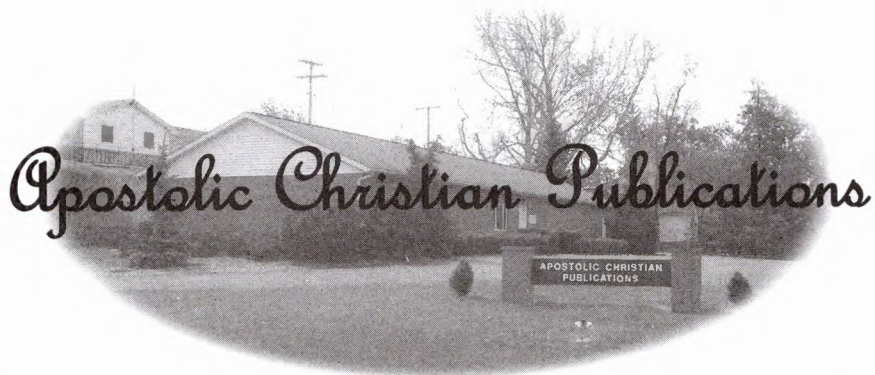
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877-370-9988 (toll free)

www.accounseling.org

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APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN

Counseling and Family Services

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New Website

We have launched a new website at ACCFS this month and we want to give an overview of the new site and what it offers.

History

A proposal for a website for ACCFS was first considered in 2004, and a new website was launched in 2005. As news of the existence of the website made its way across the church, more and more people began using it and accessing the materials available on it. We began tracking the traffic on the website at a detailed page level, which helped determine which areas people were most interested in and where new material needed to be developed. In the 6 years since its launch, the website has seen use from nearly every country around the world. With the advent of powerful search engines such as Google, many people were directed to our website and the information it provides.

Change in Needs

As higher speed Internet access became more widespread and people in our church became more technology aware, the amount of information desired from the ACCFS website grew tremendously. People wanted to be able to find information easily, download larger documents, and access information in multi-media formats. This led us to decide to develop a totally new website that would meet the needs of the church membership.

Website Design

The new website is located at the same URL as before; www.accounseling.org. It is designed with user needs and expectations in mind as well as to find information quickly and easily on a variety of topics. There are multiple ways to navigate through the website, appealing to a wide range of users. Quick navigation was also desired so that the fewest possible number of mouse-clicks is required to reach any desired page. We have kept ease of readability a high priority and all text fonts and styles are consistent throughout the site. Each page has a "back" button to return to the prior page visited. Each page also has an option to return to the "home" page. The website is superimposed over a background of a quiet forest scene with a winding path that corresponds in thought with our logo and remains consistent throughout the website. A changing Bible verse is displayed

at the bottom of every page along with our contact information. Much effort went into trying to make the design as user-friendly as possible.

Website Layout

Navigation buttons appear across the top and along the left side of each page. Each of these will have a drop-down menu when the computer mouse rests upon it. The high-level view of site arrangement is:

About Us – This gives an overview of ACCFS; charter, policies, history, etc.

Services – Includes counseling services as well as presentations and other church outreach services.

Resources by Topic – This includes all of the topic informational pages arranged according to topical subject.

Resources by Role – This includes many of the topic informational pages arranged according to the role or life-stage of interest.

Get Help – This is a quick link on how to obtain counseling assistance.

Bookstore – The bookstore contains all of the books that are referenced throughout the site and that are available for purchase from ACCFS. These books have been screened and selected for use by our church membership. Credit cards and personal checks are the accepted methods of payment. At checkout, a log-in will be required and first-time purchasers will need to fill out billing and shipping information, similar to other websites.

Support Us – This gives information on how to help support ACCFS through volunteering, donations, and through the Brother's Keeper Fund.

The second tier of navigation buttons is the list of Resources by Topic:

Matters of Faith – This includes information about Bible studies, personal spiritual growth, and the Apostolic Christian Church along with all of the Silver Lining articles produced by ACCFS.

Emotions – This includes topics such as: anger, grief & loss, loneliness, and stress & worry.

Relationships – This includes topics such as: understanding relationships, forgiveness, boundaries, and conflict resolution.

Marriage & Family – This includes sections on: engaged couples, parenting, marriage enrichment, marital conflict, family relationships, and household financial stewardship.

Mental Health – This section includes many mental health topics such as: depression, abuse & trauma, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, Obsessive- Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Scrupulosity, personality disorders, and more.

Sexuality – This includes topics such as: sexuality in Christian marriage, sexual temptation, sexual abuse, sexual addictions, and sex education.

Spanish – This page contains all of the ACCFS materials that have been translated into Spanish.

Webpage Design

The home page has a very short description of the ministry at ACCFS as well as a section containing news, announcements, and a list of upcoming presentations as well as a list of those we have done in the recent past. At the left side is a repeat list of the Resources by Topic and at the bottom-right is a box that repeats the list of the Resources by Role. Also included in the box are the roles which are secured and require log-in information. Currently those secured roles are: elders, ministers, and Way of Purity mentors. Others may be added as the need arises.

Most lower-level web pages have several possible elements which may include:

Documents – These are downloadable documents produced and/or endorsed by ACCFS.

Presentations – These are subject-targeted presentations or seminars produced and delivered by ACCFS staff.

Books – This section describes books in our bookstore; clicking on the titles will take the user to the online bookstore for more information and ordering options.

Links & Other Resources – These include any links to other websites that may have subject-specific information as well as any recommended materials that are not stocked by ACCFS.

Throughout the website, there are two symbols that frequently appear. They are the letter C and the letter F each within a box. Allowing the computer mouse to hover over those boxes will reveal that the C indicates that the document, book, etc. was written from a Christian perspective. Likewise the letter F indicates that the associated materials were developed for families.

We encourage those who are interested to visit our new website and take some time to explore it, get familiar with it, and discover the wealth of information it contains.

Important Notice to Americans Crossing the Canadian Border by Land.

All adults will need just one of the following documents:

1. Regular U.S. Passport
2. U.S. Passport Card
3. **Enhanced** Driver's License
4. any Trusted Traveler Program (*ex Nexus card*)

U.S. citizens under the age of 16, or under the age of 19 if travelling with a school, religious, or other youth group, may present a birth certificate, Consular Report of Birth Abroad, or a naturalization certificate. Birth certificates can be original, photocopy, or certified copy.

Anyone interested in receiving a printed sermon, please send info to:

Printed Sermons
102 Lake View Drive
Fairbury, IL 61739
(815) 692-3616
 jschneider54@verizon.net

- USED BIBLE, BIBLE STORY BOOK, AND SONG BOOK DISTRIBUTION -

We currently have outlets for Bibles, Bible Story Books, Hymns of Zion, Gospel Hymns, and Tabernacles.

The cost of sending books airmail to foreign countries is greater than what new books could be purchased for. We are currently working with organizations (such as Christian Aid Ministries) that send materials to foreign countries by sea container which is a more reasonable price. Some of the books are also used by U.S. churches and missions. Thank you to all who have provided books and those who help repair them.

Jerry and Arlene Banwart, 307 First St, Congerville, IL 61729
(309) 448-2416

Light From The Word

*now available by downloadable PDF from the
 Apostolic Christian Publication web site
www.acpublications.org*

After entering the web site, click on the item located in the left hand frame entitled, "Light from the Word Reprints". The entire set of editorials are available in a complete download (*June 1987 through January 2011*).

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

Sharing The Word In Love

*"Where there is no vision,
 the people perish:
 but he that keepeth the law,
 happy is he."
 Proverbs 29:18*

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

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

To order, contact,

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

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 of the Mayo campus)*

Contacts:

Sis. Anne Wagenbach
 (507)993- 6916
 Bro. Jim and Sis Deb Tilbury
 (507)281-2875.

Any that are in the area are welcome and encouraged to worship with us.

Give a Child Hope

Child Sponsorships

Those in the child sponsorship program have several things in common. They are very poor, desire to learn and they have an undying soul.



The goal of this program is to provide an education to help these children

learn life skills to improve their standard of living, and also to provide spiritual training to address the true need...the need for a knowledge of and a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. Isaiah 54:13

To sponsor a child

To sponsor a student fill out this form and send to the office. A student will be assigned to you and you will be sent further information.

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Mr. Mrs. Miss

Spouse _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Home Ph _____

Cell Ph _____

Email _____

Please check preference:

- Haiti Guatemala
 Mexico Jamaica
 Wherever needed

If possible I would prefer:

- Boy - Age _____
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 No Preference

Cost: \$25.00/month

For details: www.acworldrelief.org

Send to:

ACWR Child Sponsorship

PO Box 36

Morton, IL 61550

Phone: 309-266-6080

Fax: 309-266-5281

E-mail: childsponsorship@acwr.org



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
World Relief

www.acworldrelief.org

Caretaker Needed at Tennessee Fellowship Center

A caretaker is needed at the Tennessee Fellowship Center located in Pulaski, Tenn. which is approximately 1 hour south of Nashville and 1/2 hour north of Athens, Ala. Living accommodations are available for a couple or a family.

The site, which consists of 12 acres, is used for singings, picnics and other church events including Memorial Day Weekend where ministers give topical presentations, an auction is held and singing and fellowshiping are enjoyed by all. Two acres of the 12 was made into a lake, called Lake Richard, where fishing can also be enjoyed.

Please prayerfully consider answering this call and joining the loving congregation at Athens, Ala.

If you are interested or have additional questions, please contact Bro. Mike Moore at ALM38@aol.com or (256)729-0260 or (256)777-3390.

Pre-School Teacher Needed

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

Bro. Mike Moore
 (256) 729-0620
 (256) 777-3390
 Email: ALM38@aol.com

CARIBBEAN BOARD PROJECTS - 2011

All volunteers should contact the project coordinator. Should you not be able to contact the coordinator, for Haiti direct your inquiry to Bro. Rich Bertschi, Ph. 309-467-6110, E-mail lemangm@mtco.com.

HAITI

Data updated from the Apostolic Christian World Relief web site as of January 10th, 2011 -www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-caribbean/

Project	Year 2011	Coordinator	Capacity				
Dumay Lifeline Construction	Feb 1-8	Jim Koehl 309-377-3201 jmkoehl@yahoo.com	12	Les Cayes AWA Water Aid	Apr 29-May 6	Maurice Schaefer 309-925-3740 schaefs2@gmail.com	4
Les Cayes AWA Water Aid	Feb 4-11	Maurice Schaefer 309-925-3740 schaefs2@gmail.com	4	Les Cayes MEBSH Haiti Evaluation	May 13-20	Rich Bertschi 309-467-2351 lemangm@mtco.com	Invitation
Dumay Lifeline Construction	Feb 8-15	Jim Koehl 309-377-3201 jmkoehl@yahoo.com	12	Les Cayes MEBSH Medical	May 20-27	Keith Knepp 309-467-3468 kknepp@mchsi.com	8
Puits Sales Palm Grove Construction	Feb 8-15	John Aberle 785-459-2423 jraberle@hotmail.com	12	Les Cayes FRW Vocational School	Jun 8-18	Rick Wuethrich 219-567-9488 rick@wuethrichfarms.com	4
Les Cayes SEED Agriculture Aid	Feb 18-25	Dale Frank 319-766-3661 dtfrank@louisacomm.net	12	<u>HAITI MEDICAL WORK TEAMS</u>			
Les Cayes MEBSH Construction	Feb 25-Mar 4	Randy Kieser 309-695-6340 kieser84@gmail.com	12	Hospital Lumiere at Bonne Fin, Haiti Haiti Medical Team	Feb 18-26	Alice Widmer 330-939-0083 alice.widmer@jmsmucker.com	8-10
Puits Sales Palm Grove Construction	Mar 8-15	John Aberle 785-459-2423 jraberle@hotmail.com	12	Hospital Lumiere at Bonne Fin, Haiti Haiti Medical Team	Mar 18-26	Alice Widmer 330-939-0083 alice.widmer@jmsmucker.com	8-10
Les Cayes FRW Vocational School	Mar 15-25	Rick Wuethrich 219-567-9488 rick@wuethrichfarms.com	4	Hospital Lumiere at Bonne Fin, Haiti Haiti Medical Team	Apr 15-23	Alice Widmer 330-939-0083 alice.widmer@jmsmucker.com	8-10
Les Cayes MEBSH School Roof	Mar 18-25	Rich Bertschi 309-467-2351 lemangm@mtco.com	12	Hospital Lumiere at Bonne Fin, Haiti Haiti Medical Team	May 13-21	Alice Widmer 330-939-0083 alice.widmer@jmsmucker.com	8-10
Les Cayes MEBSH Haiti Support	Mar 25-28	Rich Bertschi 309-467-2351 lemangm@mtco.com	Invitation				
Les Cayes SEED Agriculture Aid	Mar 25-Apr 1	Dale Frank 319-766-3661 dtfrank@louisacomm.net	12				
Les Cayes MEBSH Maintenance	Apr 1-8	Jon Zeller 309-266-9009 jzeller@mtco.com	12				

JAMAICA

Data updated from the Apostolic Christian World Relief web site as of January 10th, 2011 -www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-caribbean/

Project	Year 2011	Coordinator	Capacity				
Jamaica Deaf Villg CCCC	Mar 5 - 12	Tom Waldbeser 770-463-4788 tswald@bellsouth.net	40	Jamaica Deaf Village CCCC	Jun 25 - Jul 2	Harvey Landis 330-925-8632 landziv@aol.com	Akron/ Rittman BC Trip
Jamaica Deaf Villg CCCC	Jun 10 - 18	Ted Hirstein 309-266-8769 hirstein@mtco.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
Data updated from the Apostolic Christian World Relief web site as of January 10th, 2011 -www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-mexico/*

Location	Year 2011	Coordinator			
Magdalena Construction	Feb 12-19	Jon Baner 309-747-4085 jbaner@grid.com.net	Magdalena Construction	May 28 - Jun 4	Todd Baum Phoenix Bible Class 480-563-8286 toddbaum@svmasonry.com
Agua Prieta Construction	Mar 5-12	Kevin Gerber 260-565-3313 kevgerber@yahoo.com	Magdalena Construction	Jun 11-18	Jason Schambach Elgin Bible Class 847-468-1194 jkschambach@att.net
Magdalena Construction	Mar 5-12	Jason Edelman Illinois State University 309-848-7987 isuyounggroup@gmail.com	Magdalena Construction	Jun 18-25	Stan Virkler 219-863-5913 svirkler@fbibuildings.com
Agua Prieta Construction	Mar 19-26	Sam Kaehr 260-565-3200 sckaehr@adamswells.com	Reynosa Construction	Jun 18-25	Joe Sprunger Indianapolis Bible Class 317-491-4424 joesprunger@gmail.com
Magdalena Construction	Mar 19-26	Jeff Leman Bluffton Senior Class 260-565-3815 jvleman@adamswells.com	Magdalena Construction	Jul 9-16	Jason Kaeb Bern Bible Class 785-284-3202 jason.maggs@gmail.com
Reynosa Construction	Mar 19-26	Tristan Herrmann University of Illinois 309-712-6902 tristanherrmann@gmail.com			
Agua Prieta Construction	Mar 26-Apr 2	Aaron Beery 330-927-6926 beeryaaron@embarqmail.com			
Magdalena Construction	Mar 26 - Apr 2	Doug Frank Tremont Bible Class 309-925-5000 frankfamilyfarms@yahoo.com			
Magdalena Construction	Apr 16-23	Mike Zobrist Congerville/Eureka 309-660-7004 zobfam@gmail.com			

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

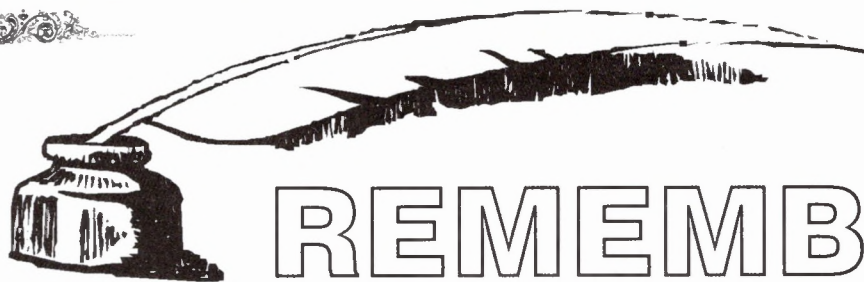
(*) = Changes or additions since last issue

()** = Spring Break Timeframe

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. Chuck Kellenberger	<i>Chairman</i>	Elgin, IL	Cell# 224-629-6531
* Bro. Bill Leman	<i>Treasurer</i>	Roanoke, IL	Cell# 309-241-0257
* Bro. Les Schambach	<i>Administrator/Sec.</i>	Elgin, IL	Cell# 630-247-5271
* Bro. Tom Neuenschwander		Bluffton, IN	Cell# 260-307-6026
* Bro. Ray Slagel		Fairbury, IL	Cell# 815-848-3714
* Bro. Paul Kaeb		Bern, KS	Cell# 785-547-5269



REMEMBERING

Our Spiritual Heritage

The series on the early days at Elgin, Iowa, continues. This data is from the files of a Mr. Gary Butikofer of Wisconsin, who has a family relationship at Elgin. This will be the next-to-last report. The overall data is quite lengthy. The intent was to give family information of some of the early arrivals at Elgin back in the mid-1800s.

1854 John Wenger, Jr. (1828-1915) and his wife Elizabeth (Kaiser) Wenger (1830-1905) and their two daughters — Elizabeth and Marie — came from Tuscarawas County, Ohio, to Elgin in 1854. They moved to Bern, Kansas, in 1875, where John was put into the ministry. In 1893, they moved back to Elgin and later back to Kansas where they are buried. John and his wife were born in Switzerland. John came to the United States in 1850 and his wife in 1847.

John Ulrich Banwart (1833-1903) and his wife, Anna Mary (Yost), came to Elgin in 1854 from Illinois. They came from Switzerland to Ohio in 1852. Then they went to Illinois and then to Elgin, Iowa. In June, 1869, they moved to West Bend, Iowa, and are buried in the church cemetery there.

Jacob Martie (1826-1886) and

his wife, Anna Baumgartner Martie (1823-1894), and their two children — Jacob, Jr. and Elizabeth — came from Switzerland to Elgin, Iowa, in November, 1854. They lived there the rest of their lives and are buried in the church cemetery in Elgin.

Peter Burki (1819-1896) and his brother, Sam Burki, came from Switzerland to Elgin in about 1854. In 1856, Peter married his first wife, Sophrina Bauman, and in 1874, he married Elizabeth Aeschliman (1840-1925). Sam Burki never married. Peter and Sam are buried in the Elgin church cemetery.

Frederick Minger (1833-1906) came to Elgin around 1854. In 1856, he married Maria Beer (1836-1911). This family moved to West Bend, Iowa, in 1869.

More Families From 1854 to 1896, a host of families migrated to the Elgin, Iowa, congregation. The head of each of the families are listed:

1854: John Reitz, Benedict Witchie, Sr., Benedict Hess

1855: Joseph Schneider, Benedict Marti

1856: Nicholas Baumgartner, John Schlupp, Benedict Matthys

1857: Mrs. Joshua Braker, Benedict Baumgartner

1858: Mrs. Sam Baumgartner Hofer

1859: John Wenger, Sr.

1860: John Gerber

1862: Victor Schneider

1864: Fred W. Schmid

1866: Rudolf Sutter, Frederick Studer

1867: Gottlieb Bigger

1868: John Marti, Gottlieb Streit, John Etter, Sr., Jacob Aeschliman

1871: John Hertig

1873: Fred Maurer

1875: Lydia Oehler

By: Perry A. Klopfenstein

Next Issue:

Families arriving at Elgin from 1876 to 1896, along with a short history of the Elgin, Iowa, church

The Light Of Hope

“Suggested Styles for 2011”

Retired Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, formerly of Shioda, Japan

In our church the sisters wear veils as head coverings based on I Corinthians, chapter 11. It is thought that the wearing of a head covering symbolizes humility and submission to God. If you attend our church, The Apostolic Christian Church, you may have noticed that some sisters wear it pretty far to the back of their heads, and some completely to the back of their heads. One sister explained that the reason for this is that it's the style. Hence this article about styles. I believe the sister has given us a truthful answer. It has become the style for some.

This raises the question, “Who sets the style for children of God?” My thought is that if the Holy Spirit sets the styles for us in the Bible, then I wonder if we couldn't somehow follow those styles the best we know how. None of us want to argue with the Holy Spirit. Our church's Statement of Faith tries to set forth what is understood to be the styles set forth in the Bible by the Holy Spirit. This is some of my thinking and I have lain awake at night for two or three hours thinking about this. What about styles?

A sister in our church has asked me to write an article about flip flops. I thought that must be a new kind of exercise and I don't mean to be funny. I really thought that. I've only had two years in this present American culture. I'm told that some sisters are wearing flip flops to church with the toes exposed. Furthermore, that the painting of the toes is gaining momentum.

I'm told that our outward appearance has nothing to do with our salvation and to make an issue of it is to follow the Galatians in another Gospel. Galatians 1:6 “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.” Yet both Paul and Peter wrote about outward appearance and John wrote as follows, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (I John 2:15). John goes on to talk about the lust of the flesh, etc. This was all written by the Holy Spirit.

Also, the Lord Jesus said, “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH the will of my Father which is in heaven.” What am I to think? Please help me.

I thought that we are saved completely by grace and that salvation is a gift, but that we are called upon to follow the teachings of the Holy Spirit in the Bible in order to be a light unto others and to bring glory to God as His ambassadors here on earth. Where have I gone wrong?

About flip flops, if someone has a foot problem and cannot wear shoes, they should wear flip flops or something similar. God wants us to take good care of our bodies. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit. “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (I Corinthians 6:19).

Schools, banks, and corporations

all have dress codes, or should have. They do in Japan. The question that arises is, “Is it wrong for the church to have a dress code for the members?” I should think that old clothes are all right if we are poor but I would suggest that we do what we can to maintain the dress code. “Let all things be done decently and in order.” (I Corinthians 14:40).

Something else I'm wondering about which I will share, is the custom we have of sharing our concerns with one another. At my proving I was asked if I would be willing to go to a fellow believer if I had a concern about his or her walk of life in the faith. Also, I was asked if I would accept it if someone came to me about my life style. I suggest that we continue to practice that or else we may drift away from the path that the Holy Spirit has laid out for us. It is part of the style for the life of a believer, or am I wrong?

I would like to think that we can be spiritually minded and service oriented with all our activities of World Relief, Berean Prison Ministries, the Midwest Food Bank, starting churches in new areas, and simply helping people at home and in foreign countries, and still maintain our church standards. Is that impossible? I remember the angel said, “For with God nothing shall be impossible.” (Luke 1:37).

I apologize if anything I have written is not of the Holy Spirit. I am willing to be taught. I love you.

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*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:
and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.*

*By this we know that we love the children of God,
when we love God, and keep his commandments.*

*For this is the love of God, that we keep his
commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*

*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world:
and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*