

The Silver Lining

*All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto
such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.*

Psalms 25:10

January 2012

Sermon by Bro. Paul Schmidgall, Morris, MN

Joshua 22 & II Timothy 3

Greetings to all in the name of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is truly a blessing to awake to a Lord's Day – a day in which we can look forward to coming to God's house and being able to worship together and greet brethren. We can greet brethren with a kiss of faith and charity. We can experience a love that someday will manifest itself in Heaven above. We want to experience that true fellowship until that day when we stand before God. So, really, today is also an opportunity for us to consider those things that are eternal and consider our standing before God and our lives in the light of God's Word.

So with that thought in mind let's open our Bibles to Joshua 22. I always appreciate the accounts in this book. It is evidence of the power of God – the accounts of Joshua stepping into the land of promise and how the enemies of God had no power. That can really teach us the power of taking on the will and power of God and how the enemy, Satan, has no power.

It is a rather lengthy chapter, but it really gives us a good account of the credit that the children of Israel gave to God. They recognized their abilities were given because of serving Him with their whole heart and being obedient to Him. How quickly, after they had that manifested to them, the children of the three tribes named there went across the River Jordon to their lands and erected there an altar (v.10). There was this misunderstanding. There was confusion over what was the purpose. Were they separating themselves from coming to worship with the priests, the Levites, the tabernacle, and with the children of Israel? Were they erecting for themselves another assembly? It created a stir, didn't it? It created a rising up, and they were going to go with force. They were going to correct their brethren.

Then we see the power of coming in a spirit of listening and seeking to understand. They realized the purpose of this altar and the purpose of what they had done. They realized it was

to glorify God and to build a bridge, if you will, between those who were to cross the river so they would always recognize it was their brethren there on the other side of Jordon. So we can be encouraged in that, can't we, in many ways but maybe most of all considering if there would be a time when someone would do something and it would bring about in us strong emotion. Maybe we would be angry. Maybe we would feel hurt or mistrusted. Maybe we would be so disappointed, and it might be in a brother or a sister. It might be in a family member or our children. It could even be in the workplace, with a neighbor, or a friend. Isn't it so easy to frame it in what we think to be the case, what we think to be right? Then how often our words and our actions start to cause further problems for us if we in our hearts are upset.

This is the principle we talk about quite a bit with teenage children – that of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. How often what's in our heart manifests itself in our lips, our manner of life, and how we are with one another. Then we really can see a greater separation – a wall being built. We can be encouraged that often it would do us well if we would sit down with our brethren, our friend, or our neighbor and just ask, why do you do this? Help me understand. What is this about? In this case the children of Israel said, it seems like you are separating yourself from God's chosen people (v. 16-20). We can imagine the alarm – they had been through the journey through the wilderness. They had been able to unite and destroy the enemies of God, and then here it seemed like a faction was setting themselves apart.

Then the power of being reconciled – being able to come together. Such a good encouragement and good teaching to all of us in any situation we may have where we can see a schism, division, or a wall being built in our life with someone who we are close to.

As we read in II Timothy 3, we could develop quite a contrast when we started reading of those things

that describe the perilous times, the time that will come when men will depart from God and serve self. Contrast it to what the apostle described

Sermon continued on page 41

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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)

Light From The Word



Writings based
on God's Word

January 2012

Our Living Hope

"Hope is patience with the lamp lit." This quote by a third-century Christian author suggests the thought of having confidence in the likelihood of obtaining what one desires. More importantly, God's Word gives the believer much assurance regarding the present and effectual possession of a blessed hope: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2:13).

The New Testament Scriptures consistently portray hope as the confident expectation of something desirable or joyful. Even in temporal matters, some hope of reward for our labors is justified; "...that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope" (1 Cor. 9:10). However, the ultimate hope and goal of the believer is to reach his home in heaven. Faith in the death, shed blood and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ makes this living hope possible. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3). The sure promises of God are the source of our heavenly hope: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Tit. 1:2). In addition to the hope of heaven beyond this life, having hope enables us to endure the tests and trials in this life: "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope" (Rom. 5:3-4). All of us become discouraged at times, but God's Word gives us a wonderful encouragement: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God" (Ps. 42:11).

Hope is a valuable possession, and God intends that we share it with others. By God's grace, we can share the comfort and hope derived from enduring struggles or trials in our lives with

others finding themselves in similar circumstances. "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" (2 Cor 1:4). This sharing of hope one with another is one of the most productive and worthwhile forms of fellowship and is an ideal way to draw closer to our brothers and sisters. Communicating our hope of salvation is also a form of witnessing to the lost. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Sharing our hope with both brethren and friends is one way for us to be "...a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish" (2 Cor. 2:15).

Having hope is an essential factor in our salvation, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24-25). In this sense, hope is closely intertwined with faith, "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith" (Gal. 5:5). Our ultimate salvation will include leading an overcoming life, by the Lord's grace—motivated by our love for Him. The hope of seeing God at Christ's return gives us an additional incentive to keep ourselves pure. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). Hope allows us to approach God "...by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2). We possess "hope...as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast..." connecting us to the Rock, which is Jesus Christ (Heb. 6:19). Hope lends stability to our Christian walk that we might "...continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard..." (Col. 1:23).

Having "...hope toward God... that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15), allows the believer to look beyond the

struggles of this world and time. Jesus Himself was driven by this same hope (assurance) when faced with His future agony upon the cross, "...who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). Likely, our Savior was thinking not only of His own future joy in heaven, but of ours also "who would believe on Him" (John 17:20). In like manner, let us pray and have this same confident expectation that loved ones still lingering without the door of grace will yet turn to Him in repentance and obtain the like "hope of salvation" that we possess (1 Thes. 5:8).

The Holy Spirit moved the prophet Jeremiah to pen a wonderful portrayal of an enduring hope, even when remembering his "affliction, misery, wormwood, and gall." "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. 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. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord" (Lam. 3:21-26). Just as the prophet of old, we have our struggles in this time as well, but we will fulfill our Savior's hope and fond expectation for us "...if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:6).

A portion of the very purpose and vision of our Lord and Savior was that we might enjoy an abundant life in Him: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Indeed that abundant life is grounded in hope through believing in the God of hope and it is enabled by the power of His Holy Spirit: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 15:13).

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 cleman1377@gmail.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

Servant Fund

As the Apostolic Christian Church has been called to share the Gospel and to serve the needy, opportunities have been presented and doors have been opened to serve in many ways. The church, through the Mission Committee and Apostolic Christian World Relief, has responded to these opportunities by sending brothers and sisters to serve in various capacities.

“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?”

ROMANS 10:14,15

We have opportunity to support these individuals who have been sent by the church, through prayer and financially. There are approximately thirty-six brethren who are serving in Mexico, Haiti, and Jamaica.

What is the Servant Fund?

The Servant Fund was established in 2006 to provide a means of financial support for those sent to the mission field by the church. Individuals who are sent to the mission field by other organizations often spend up to 3 months annually securing their financial support. Our desire in establishing the fund was to provide the necessary funding for those sent by the church, thus allowing full time focus on serving in the area they have been called. The fund provides for a modest monthly stipend to those serving.

Who receives funds?

Anyone who is sent by the Church is eligible for funding through the

Servant Fund. Individuals who feel called into the field of serving first complete an application and secure the support of their local elder. The application is reviewed and the individual is interviewed by a committee of trained brothers to determine if the individual is qualified and prepared to be sent.

If the applicant is approved for service, they are matched with a need in the programs we administer and support. These individuals are then supported through the Servant Fund.

Where do these funds come from?

There are three main sources of funding: individual donations, support from the individual's home (sending) church, and general church collections. Many individuals are aware of those serving in the field and want to financially support them. While we do not have a specific sponsorship program, we do encourage individuals wishing to donate for an individual to do so.

Funds donated to support a specific individual are applied toward any remaining need for that brother or sister. All funds donated in an individual's name that exceed that person's need are used to support others.

Home churches of those being sent are encouraged to provide part of the funding for the individual. In addition to the financial support, it is important that the home church provide emotional and spiritual support for the individuals sent. The Mission Committee has established recommended ways to accomplish this and is forming a subcommittee charged with overseeing this important element of supporting our brethren in the field.

The Word encourages us to

count the cost, lest we be unable to finish what we have begun. We have made significant long-term commitments, in faith believing that God will supply our need. These responsibilities are a significant commitment to continue to serve in various ways including:

- Churches and brethren in Ixtlan and Magdalena, Mexico
- Nurturing the lives of children at Casa Vida y Esperanza in Magdalena, Mexico
- Supporting deaf children and adults in Jamaica in various ways
- Ongoing work in Haiti in numerous ministries including support for Hospital Lumiere

In order to help fulfill these long-term commitments, all Apostolic Christian churches are encouraged to take a general collection annually to support the Servant Fund.

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

LUKE 14:28-30

Where can I send my financial support?

Whether individual or church donations, all contributions should be made out to ACC Servant Fund and sent to:

Apostolic Christian Servant Fund
711 Elm Drive
Bluffton, IN 46714
(260) 824-0780
nbucher@adamswells.com



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

Winter Work Projects

The year of 2011 has been a year of unprecedented natural disasters throughout the world and in our own country. Tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis and wildfires have brought destruction, hardship and death to many throughout the world. Homes, schools, hospitals, churches and businesses have been lost. People struggle to make a new beginning and continue on with life, life that will never be the same.

Among these events are the tornadoes that hit Alabama in April. What is now known as the "Super Outbreak of 2011" is a three day period, April 25-28, in which there were 353 confirmed tornadoes in twenty-one states.

In Alabama alone, there were sixty tornadoes in one day which resulted in 239 deaths. Thousands of homes were destroyed in the path of destruction which spread across the entire state.

As the year progressed, other areas of the country were facing different challenges. In Texas, wildfires fanned by strong winds from tropical storm Lee burned approximately 34,000 acres in Bastrop County. Nearly 1,500 homes were destroyed as a result of these rapidly moving flames. There were two deaths in Bastrop County as a result of the fire. Throughout the state of Texas, more than four million acres have burned since mid-November of 2010.

For most of us, we have never been faced with such a devastating loss. We have never experienced the despair that results from losing all our earthly possessions in a matter of minutes. For some, even loved ones are gone forever. We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus as

we reach out to those who have suffered this great loss. This is our opportunity to share His love with the victims of these natural disasters.

The USA Committee of World Relief has organized two rebuilding projects to help the families who have been affected by these disasters. Modest two and three bedroom homes will be built. Working through case workers who evaluate the financial resources, clients will be selected based on their ability to recover on their own. Preference is given to the elderly, families with small children and those who have other extenuating circumstances.

These projects will begin in January and continue through March. Volunteers of all skill levels are needed; carpenters, electricians, plumbers, drywall hangers and finishers, painters, cooks and anyone with a heart to serve. Housing and meals will be provided. Work days will be Monday through Friday with weekends open for travel and worship.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 1 JOHN 3:17

Cullman, Alabama

The city of Cullman took a direct hit from a very strong tornado on April 27th. Hundreds of homes along with many businesses and churches were destroyed or damaged by this storm. The project will be based at Stoney Creek Camp which is approximately one hour south of the Athens Apostolic Christian Church. Volunteers are encouraged to worship with the brethren in Athens on Sunday before arriving in camp.

The camp is located in a peaceful

rural setting about thirteen miles outside the town of Cullman. Housing at the camp is in dormitory type rooms. There are separate accommodations for men and women. Meals will be prepared and served in the kitchen and dining room that is conveniently situated in the main lodge, the same building that contains sleeping quarters.

A full complement of World Relief tools and equipment are on site. Experienced construction leaders will direct the volunteers on the projects.

Bastrop, Texas

One of the largest wildfires that burned in Texas last summer was the fire in Bastrop County. The Austin Apostolic Christian Church is located on the west side of the city of Bastrop. Thankfully, the fires were all on the east side of town, several miles from the church. Evacuations forced several of the church family to leave their homes during the height of the disaster.

It was just two years ago that a much smaller wildfire destroyed around thirty homes in the same area. At that time, buildings on the site of the Austin church were converted into dormitories to house volunteers. Little did anyone know that in a very short time there would be another disaster. Once again, volunteers will be housed in these facilities.

Tool trailers and equipment are on site in Bastrop and capable construction leaders will direct the volunteer work force. Both the skilled and unskilled are needed and there is a blessing for every willing heart.

For more information or to register to work on one of these projects, please visit the World Relief website at www.acworldrelief.org.

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

Another year is dawning, Dear Master, let it be,
In working or in waiting, Another year for Thee.
Another year of mercies, Of faithfulness and grace.
Another year of gladness, In the shining of Thy face.
Another year of progress, Another year of praise,
Another year of proving, Thy presence all the days.
Another year is dawning, Dear Master, let it be,
On earth, or else in heaven, Another year for Thee.
Hymns of Zion #150

We have experienced the Lord's mercy and grace over the past year, and we are thankful that we can anticipate His faithfulness in the coming year. The residents bring a gladness to our hearts, as we see and feel the Lord's love and likeness reflected through them. It is a joy and privilege to care for them, and we feel the Lord's presence as we labor.

We recently experienced the loss of a loved one who lived at Timber Ridge for 40 years. She moved in the first day the home opened, October 1, 1971. If she could have verbally spoken to us, imagine the stories she could have told us! Her experiences and relationships included many residents who have come and gone, visits from her dear family, a host of staff members who lovingly cared for her, challenges she faced during those 40 years, and memories from activities and events here at ACHH. Our staff will sincerely miss her smiles, laughter and loving ways. She was the only resident still residing here who moved in the first day.

We sincerely appreciate your

prayers and support. We truly need the Lord's continued blessing on our endeavors in the coming year.

**GATEWAY WOODS
APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
CHILDREN'S HOME
Nicole Wiegand**

Romans 8:14-15 explains: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father!" I deeply love how God Almighty exemplifies the redemptive beauty of adoption through our own, personal 'adoptive experience'. We all were once without our Heavenly Father. We were orphans, whether or not we had an earthly father. Praise God that He provided a way of redemption through the ultimate gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Through Christ, we can be the children of God. We are 'adopted' into His family.

I saw this in a beautiful way through a recent Oak House resident. Keira came to us as most of the pregnant girls do, caught in a vicious cycle of teen pregnancy. Oftentimes their own mothers became pregnant as teens. Incidentally, there are usually a number of step-siblings and half brothers or sisters. There can be multiple father figures and abuse is not uncommon. This was Keira's story.

As she acclimated to Gateway, it was endearing to watch her open up, laugh and be herself. She made friends with others on campus and had opportunity to hear about Jesus. That is always exciting! God's Word is alive and His Spirit is always at work. Keira began to ask questions and her spirit was troubled.

One night we were talking, and I felt compelled to ask her about her

father. Where was he during her growing up years? He was in jail, she said. He wasn't really a part of her life. That was when we read Romans 8. Do you know you have a God who wants you to be His child? You can run to Him whenever you want and He will listen? He sends good things and allows the difficult for our own good? He loves you. It's an everlasting love. Keira, you haven't experienced love until you've experienced God. He gave His all, for YOU.

We prayed that night. We talked about God and Jesus, about His Holy Spirit. Keira had tears in her eyes as she began to demonstrate an understanding of what this meant in her own life. My heart rejoiced as she later shared how God had been real to her that night. She related to me that she had been afraid, pondering what we had talked about. She knelt by her bed and prayed. Soon after she felt an overwhelming sense of peace, the embrace of God. She has since acknowledged and confessed her sin and desires to live for Jesus. It continues to be a joy to ask her what she's been reading in her Bible and to hear her answer; to hear how she's been encouraged through the Word. It's humbling to hear others comment that they've noticed a softening in her countenance, the work of the Spirit.

Her story is far from finished. I ache for the times she will struggle and question. I yearn for her to run to 'Abba Father!' at every crossroads, every sorrow, every joy. I long for her to further cultivate her relationship with Christ each day. I sometimes cry for her newborn son. His earthly father is not in his life. Will he come to know Jesus? Will he suffer from never experiencing the love and guidance of a father in this life? Most assuredly he will. What a comfort to know there is still an un-

changing, loving and righteous Father. There is still One who hears the cries of the fatherless, abused and broken. There is still One who won't ever leave. He hears Keira's cries, and He hears her son's. He hears you and me. And when we are His children, we hear His. Thank you so much for your prayers for the Spirit to continue to work at Gateway Woods!

News:

- Looking forward to summer already? Consider one of three summer positions at Gateway Woods. We have begun our annual search for a Summer Volunteer Coordinator, a Top Quality Coordinator, and an Education Intern. Please see the notices in The Silver Lining or email Adam McAfee at adam.mcafee@gatewaywoods.org for more information.

- Gateway Woods welcomed one new resident to campus this past month. Please pray with us as she becomes accustomed to her new home. It can be a difficult adjustment for new residents as they discover a very different living situation than they have experienced before. We would also ask for your prayers for the Houseparents as they grow to know the new children in their houses.

- 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.

- We are grateful to God for providing us with a wonderful Staff. We currently have two career positions

available. We have an opening for an Alternative Houseparent couple as well as for an Assistant Houseparent. For more information please see the notices in this month's edition of The Silver Lining or visit the Career Opportunities page on our website at: www.gatewaywoods.org/supporters/career-opportunities. We trust that God will continue to provide qualified, mature brothers and sisters who will 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
Susan Koch**

Our theme for December was the holiday season. We learned a lot about Christmas and its true meaning. The two weeks before our Christmas Break were full of holiday activities, decorating the rooms, and reading stories about Christ's birth. One of the favorite activities was making edible Christmas trees. The children stuck waffle cones to a paper plate and then covered it with frosting. Then they decorated the "trees" with gumdrops, Twizzlers, and M&Ms. The students loved decorating the Christmas tree in Ms. Louise's room. It was rather humor-

ous when I noticed halfway through decorating the tree that the majority of the ornaments were on the bottom third of the tree. We put on a Christmas concert for the families of the students telling the story of Jesus' birth. Then the students enjoyed a Christmas snack and gift exchange. Let's thank Jesus for coming to earth in such a humble way and setting the ultimate example of how to live our lives.

**ALABAMA, ATHENS
Roger and Becky Roberts**

What a blessing to have our youth bring to us the "Happy Birthday Jesus" message on December 11, 2011. In the hustle of the season, did you invite Jesus to His own birthday party?

We wish to thank the following for ministering to us. Bro. Paul and Sis. Loretta Zimmerman (Forrest, IL), Bro. Dan and Sis. Ann Moser (Elgin, IL) and daughter Alyssa, Bro. Gary and Sis. Evelyn Endress (Bradford, IL), Bro. Michael and Sis. Erica Wagenbach and family (Wolcott, IN).

We wish God's blessings to Olivia Coulter (Bro. David and Sis. Barbara) and Adam Mason (Sammy and Penny Mason) as they were wed November 5.

How sweet the privilege of prayer. We are keeping Frances (Haggenmaker) Edwards in our prayers as she recovers.

If you are traveling through the area, we would welcome you to fellowship with us.

ARIZONA, PHOENIX

Our dear Sis. Toni Bentley passed away rather suddenly on November 25. She had just spent a

joy-filled Thanksgiving day with her family. How thankful we are that our God has each of our days numbered and calls us in His perfect time! Sis. Toni is survived by her two daughters, Sheri French (Larry) of Farmington, NM, and Mary Williams (Bobby) of Scottsdale, AZ; her grandchildren, Mitchell French, Kristen French, Ashley Zettler and Brian Zettler; and 3 great-grandchildren.

Many in our congregation are in need of our prayers! They are: Sis. Heather Hinrichsen, Bro. John Pulfer, Bro. Ed Frautschi, Sis. Ruby Barna, Ruth Finley, Bro. Allan and Sis. Edith Freed, Sis. Shirley Mohrman, Bro. Kenny and Sis. Mary Jo Schmidgall, Sis. Louann Klopfenstein, Sis. Deanna Beyer, Dakota Thorpe, Bro. Jim Beres, Bro. Jake Hoerr, Sis. Bertha Miller, Bro. Rudy Bertschi and Carl Steffen.

We rejoice with Sylvia Mitchell as she has been announced for baptism. We look forward to this special weekend on January 14-15, 2012.

Our visiting ministers this month were Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor) and Elder Bro. Steve Ringger (Sis. Myra, Bluffton). We are grateful to them for their work in World Relief that brought them through Arizona and also for serving us on a recent Wednesday eve.

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT

Denise Steidinger

We always appreciate when visitors come to our small congregation, and are especially thankful for willing brothers who come to preach God's Word. We were visited this past month by Bros. Byron Stoller (Sis. Carol, Gridley), Dale Frank (Sis. Tina, Oakville), Tim Hohulin (Sis. Cathy, Roanoke), Keith

Hinrichsen (Sis. Tammy, Phoenix), and Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich (Sis. Nancy, Phoenix).

The Christmas Program was on Sunday, December 18, and the Sunday School children told us the miraculous story of Jesus' birth through song and verse. They did a wonderful job and we appreciate their willing and joyful hearts.

We are praying for a willing servant to move to Prescott to teach, preach and spread the Gospel in our community.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp

We are enjoying our traditional holiday get togethers here in Tucson. Many of us gathered to sing at local nursing homes the first Friday in December which is always such a special evening. When you can see the joy on people's faces that results from doing something as simple as singing Christmas carols, it brings a huge blessing into your life. So we are not only blessed to see that joy and appreciation but we also get to enjoy hot barbecue sandwiches and Christmas goodies afterwards with family and friends.

Sunday, December 11, was our Christmas program, another evening that is special to our hearts. Our Sunday School classes have been quite small recently so we were encouraged to see many new faces this year. God has brought into our little church many new people from a nearby neighborhood. They have been attending church and participating in our holiday events and we are getting to know them one by one, little by little. They made our Christmas program extra special this year. What a wonderful evening! Many thanks to Bro. Chris and Sis. Sara Hattan for organizing both evenings

– and to everyone who helped bring food, set up and clean up at caroling and the program. With all the extra people, it took more willing hands and we appreciate everyone pitching in. Hopefully, it was all to the glory of God.

Some of our winter visitors have arrived and we anticipate more in the coming weeks. We are thankful for the safe arrivals and pray God will watch over others as they make their way towards the Arizona sun.

Lord willing, our Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand will be with us tomorrow evening (Wed.) and conduct a family night Bible Study on Integrity. We are praying for Bro. Ben's safe travels as well.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

In Southern California, we rarely see the power of God displayed in thunder storms and enormous winds. During this past month, we witnessed rolling thunder and even small bits of snow, and winds so intense that they took out trees and electricity. It is a wonderful thing to know one's own smallness and to feel secure in His hands during the storm.

This month we were blessed by the announcement of the engagement of Bro. Jonathan Sauder (Bro. Frank and Sis. Kathy, Roanoke) to Sis. Kali Zobrist of Magdalena, Mexico (Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie, Congerville). The couple became engaged during our annual Thanksgiving trip to Ixtlan. May they seek God's guidance during this time and the years to follow.

A good number of our small body made the trip to Magdalena, Mexico for Thanksgiving. They returned with stories about the many ways they were blessed in the time spent

in Magdalena. When we seek to bless others, we often find that we are the ones who have been blessed.

Bro. Loren Schrenk (Sis. Betsy, St. Louis) shared the Word with us. Thank you for your willingness to serve from the pulpit.

The weather has cleared and, while it is cooler here than we are accustomed to, Southern California offers a respite to those from the more eastern locales. We welcome all who would wish to partake of the warmer climates and to fellowship with us in the Lord.

**KITCHENER, ONTARIO
CANADA
Kim Leman**

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

Luke 15:10

Many prayers were answered when our friend Paul Kupa (Sis. Susan) answered God’s call to repentance! Our hearts rejoice along with the angels, and we will keep Paul and Sis. Susan in our prayers.

We were blessed to witness God working in the lives of Bro. Doyle Stoller (Bro. Scott and Sis. Charlene, Smithville, OH) and Sis. Naomi Ursu (Bro. Mike and Sis. Barb) during their engagement this past year. Their wedding service was held here in Kitchener on December 4. We thank Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev, Detroit, MI), and ministering Bros. Jerry Bauman (Sis. Martha) and Wayne Hartzler (Sis. Camille), both of Rittman, OH, for sharing the day with us. In keeping with immigration requirements, the actual wedding vows and marriage license

were executed later that evening in Ohio with Bro. Andy Stoller. Our prayers are with this dear couple as they establish their home in Smithville. We will miss Sis. Naomi here, but trust this is God’s will for her life and rejoice that God has blessed her in many ways!

We also thank Bros. Dale Banwart (Sis. Missy, Congerville, IL) and Dale Stoller (Sis. Sandra, Fairbury, IL) for ministering God’s Word to us this month. May God bless you for your efforts!

**REGINA, SK
CANADA
Myrna Shipley**

We are so thankful to have the support of more ministers coming to our small church in Regina this year. God bless all our ministers and visitors. The schedule for 2012 is:

March 18 - Morris
April 8 - West Bend
April 15 - Morton
May 6 - Rittman
May 20 - Elgin
June 3 - Detroit
June 17- Bern
July 1 - Princeville
July 15 - Forrest
Aug. 5 - Congerville
Sept. 2 - Lester
Sept. 16 - Sabetha
Oct. 7 - Silvertown
Oct. 21 - Bloomington/Normal
Nov. 11 - Morris

**COLORADO, DENVER
Lily Zarkovacki**

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise; When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.”

Matthew 1:18

Our congregation was blessed with a wonderful Christmas program from our Sunday School children, including our high school class! We are thankful for all those that put forth the effort, that the name of Jesus could be glorified!

Our gratitude and thankfulness for Bro. David Marquart (Sis. Lori, Taylor, MO) for coming to Denver; we appreciate his willingness to be used on the pulpit.

O come all ye faithful joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born the

King of angels...

Hymns of Zion #40

**CONNECTICUT
ROCKVILLE
Laura Virkler
Bonnie Bahler**

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Phil 3:13-14

As a new year is ahead of us, let us reach for those things which are before us and strive to live every day serving our God faithfully.

We thank God for the safe arrival of two new babies in the past weeks. Gabriel David joined the home of Tabor, Ashley and Nicholas Dizon on December 3. His grandparents are Bro. Duane and Sis. Kay Reutter and Judi Murphy and David Dizon. Bro. Jon, Sis. Elisa, Julia and Evan Goric, welcomed Christian Warren to their family on December 10. His grandparents are Bro. Warren and Sis.

Bonnie Zahner and Bro. Dan and Sis. Mary-Lou Goric. What a blessing these precious babies are to all of us.

We rejoice with Bro. Patrick McMann (Rose McMann) and Sis. Rebecca Schaefer (Bro. Steve and Sis. Pam, Morris MN), as their engagement was announced recently. May God bless them as they plan their future together.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON
Henrietta Meyer**

Our caretakers for the latter part of November were Bro. Keith and Sis. Joan Hanson (Champaign, IL). The caretaker calendar for 2012 is filled except for the last two weeks of December. We look forward to meeting new caretakers each month, as well as reconnecting with caretakers who come for a second or third visit. We are beginning to book into 2013, so if this is something you are considering, contact Sis. Doreen Steffen at 302-540-6574 or dkgsteffen@gmail.com.

Our ministers this month were Bro. Mike Walder (Sis. Susie, Smithville, OH), Bro. Jerry Isch, (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA), Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla, Chicago, IL), Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Sis. Michelle, Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH). Other visitors were from Forrest, IL and Akron, OH.

The Sunday Bro. Ben was here, we were able to partake in Holy Communion. Always a special time, drawing us closer to the Lord and to each other.

The highway/toll road is now open behind the Church (even if your GPS or internet map says it isn't). It will save time, miles and stress as you travel from I-270 to the

Church. There are no toll booths; you will need an E-Z Pass or other electronic payment method. I-Pass works. If you have another multi-state device, check with your provider to see if it works in Maryland. If you use the highway without such a device, you will receive a bill by mail with a service fee added.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Ken and Roberta Belsley as they begin the process of giving up their home and moving in with their daughter.

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
FT. LAUDERDALE
Renee Mangold**

We were thankful to have several visiting ministers this past month. Visiting were Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Sis. Rachel, Morris North, MN); Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Sis. Linda, Francesville, IN); Bro. Greg Stoller (Sis. Jill, Forrest, IL). We pray for a blessing on His servants.

We had our annual caroling event at a nearby nursing home. As some of the residents joined in the singing, we were the ones to receive a blessing. After the singing, we gathered at the fellowship hall for a potluck dinner.

We are happy that it's that time of year when our winter families begin to return to Ft. Lauderdale. It's wonderful to see the familiar faces that are dear to us as well as new faces from all over the country.

**FLORIDA
NORTH FORT MYERS
Victor Beer**

This is a very joyous time for our church, when many of our northern brethren and friends return to their winter places. Unusually warm weather has been their welcome, as well as from we who live nearby. It is so good to see those again, that we have known for so long, but it is always sad to think of those that from year to year have gone on to their Lord for eternity.

During the last month, those of longer stays in Fort Myers have spread great hospitality during the Thanksgiving holidays and again for the Christmas holidays at potluck suppers. Their giving spirit just overflows when possible times of sharing come.

Our fellowship was truly blessed again by visiting ministers from northern churches. Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Sis. Michelle, Philadelphia, PA), Elder Bro. Mark Streitmatter (Sis. Sara, Bloomington, IL) and Bro. Matt Oesch (Sis. Shelly, Alto, MI) all were a wonderful blessing to us. Then our Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Sis. Jeni, Bluffton, IN) favored us with a short visit, enroute from Haiti, and shared the church Memorandum with us.

We thank Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary Masters for their holding "open house" at their New Beginnings home for unwed mothers. Much appreciation is being shown over this effort by many that know or hear of it.

**FLORIDA, SARASOTA
Kim Ott**

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

Luke 2:11

With the hustle and bustle of this busy time of year, it is good for us to stop and reminisce on the true meaning of the season. Our congregation had just that opportunity as we listened to the Sunday School classes perform their Christmas program. What a beautiful time to sit still, listen, and meditate on their songs and recitations as they reminded us that the story of Christmas doesn't end at the manger, but continues on to the cross. How thankful we are to know we have our Saviour, Jesus Christ who has offered us the most wonderful gift, the gift of salvation!

We were thankful to have two visiting ministers this month. Bro. Nelson Beer (Sis. Minnie, Milford, IN) and Bro. Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Austin, TX) have our prayers of special blessings for sharing with us God's Word.

Our hearts grieved to hear the news that Bro. Leroy Koehl (Forrest, IL) has passed away from this life, but we rejoice that he had accepted God's plan of salvation and is now rejoicing in his eternal home in heaven. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Leroy's family, especially Bro. Ron and Sis. Carol Koehl, their children, and many grandchildren.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA

Eager faces and quiet smiles sat in our front benches that day, just one week before Christmas. They awaited their turn to stand and proclaim the verses they memorized and praise God through the melodies they learned. Following the special Christmas program, we piled into one another's vehicles and vis-

ited two neighboring nursing homes. The younger children ran ahead of those caroling; cards and small gift bags in hand! Together, they dedicated themselves to ensuring every resident would receive one. As voices grew tired and every gift was given away, many returned to the Waldbeser's home for an evening of soup and fellowship.

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE

**Shayla Steffen
Doreen Moser**

I Cor. 3:5 "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" They are but men bringing forth the Word through the Holy Spirit. Yet we thank them for their willingness to be used by God as they preach the Word Sunday after Sunday. We thank Bro. Gary Anliker, retired Elder Bro. Ron Schambach and our local ministering brothers for bringing forth the Word at our small church in Belvidere.

Matt. 19:14 "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The children recited verses, sang songs and read Bible passages unto Him at our Christmas program. If only we would all work that hard to memorize songs and scripture every day!

Psalms 98:4 "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise." We rejoiced as we sang Christmas praises unto the Lord and nursing home residents December 11. It gives us such a blessing to see them enjoying the songs and singing along.

Matt. 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of

them." We gathered together after caroling for a chili supper. When we as a congregation labor together here on earth to partake of an early supper, we are given a taste of how we will be bid to "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God."

Season's greetings and blessing from our church in Belvidere!

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

Oh come let us adore Him, Christ our Lord!

The month of December is always a wonderful time to gather with our families, loved ones and fellowship with our Church family, and all in celebrating the birth of our Lord.

On Wednesday evening, December 7, the church choir had their annual Christmas program. The theme was "Oh Come Let Us Adore Him". We enjoyed an evening of praise and thanksgiving to our Lord for His wonderful gift of salvation through His Son, Jesus.

**ILLINOIS, BRADFORD
Roseann Stahl
Sandi Joos**

Faith and hope and love adorn
Heart and life of all true Christians;
With these must each child of God
Be endowed in full submission.
All who wish to serve God truly
Must show forth these virtues fully.

Zion's Harp #78, vs. 1

Two couples have taken a step of faith and sought God's direction in the next step of their lives. Bro. Loren Stoller (Bro. Nate and Sis. Sherrill) is engaged to Sis. Lena Christ, Princeville (Bro. Kurt and Sis. Connie). Bro. Cory Joos (Bro.

Ralph and Sis. Jenny) is engaged to Sis. Heidi Ehnle (Bro. Donn and Sis. Tracy). We offer our prayers and wish these two dear couples God's nearness as they begin planning their lives together as one in the Lord.

We keep a prayer upon our hearts for Sis. Sue Hausmann (Bro. Fred) in the passing of her mother, Sis. Evalyn Herrmann (Bro. Noah, Princeville). May the comfort of the Lord be with the family at their time of loss.

We want to thank Bro. Glenn Steiner (Sis. Rachel, Winthrop) for being willing to be used in the service of the Lord by bringing forth the message to our congregation.

Our prayers are with Bro. Rich Gillespie (Sis. Paula) that he may feel the comfort of the Great Physician during his time in the hospital.

May we all remember that the miracle of Christ's birth is not only with us at Christmas time, but each and every day of the year. May the light of His presence in our lives shine forth to all we meet and greet.

ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN **Sarah Drake**

Warm wishes to you and your family as we begin 2012. Every new day, month, and year is a gift from God, so let's remember to thank Him for every moment and live every day for Him.

We pray a blessing on Bro. David and Sis. Ethel Wiegand, as they celebrated 50 years of marriage on December 3. We are thankful for the leadership and support they have always given to our Champaign congregation.

December 11 was the Sunday School Christmas program. Our theme this year was "Is There Room?" Beyond the idea of "no

room in the inn", we were challenged to examine our own lives to see if we had room in our plans, schedules, egos, and hearts for our risen Saviour. Following the program was our annual all-church Christmas caroling and chili supper. Many thanks to everyone who helped make the day a success and a blessing.

We rejoice with Sarah Schmidgall (Bro. Dan and Sis. Mary Schmidgall) as she has decided to seek the Lord in repentance. We pray for Sarah and offer our loving support as she grows in the love of Christ.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

We were thankful to have the blessed preaching of visiting Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington) and Bro. Howard Plattner (Alto) this month.

We have had many reasons to be prayerful this month. Bro. Dan Plattner continues with treatments and we keep his wife, Sis. Deanne, and little girl Olivia in our prayers. Sis. LaVirra Lehman has had to go on oxygen and we are very mindful of her. Bro. Steven Hofstetter, a long time Chicagoan who married his wife, Sis. Tamara, here in Chicago some years ago, has been diagnosed with cancer and we are very prayerful that the doctors might know how to treat him. Bro. Steven and his family attend Washington church but are still very much a part of our church family. Bro. Steven's sister, Sis. Janell, is one of our dear Sisters.

We share sympathy with many in their losses this month. Sis. Jaron (Bro. Adrian) Montgomery's father, Bro. Earl Grimm of Princeville, has gone to meet Jesus. Bro. Don Brown of Roanoke has also gone on ahead and his daughter, Sis. Diane (Bro.

Kim) Steffen, and his granddaughter, Sis. Amber (Bro. Brian) Vercler, will be rejoicing when they are able to meet him again on yonder shore. Toni Bentley passed away in Phoenix. She is an aunt to Bro. Dale Eisenmann and a sister in law to Sis. Lucille Koehl. Bro. Tibor Bozzay, Sr. was converted in Chicago and spent many years raising his family here among us. He went to his reward in San Diego and leaves his dear wife, Sis. Pearl, and children to miss him.

We are sorry to say farewell to long-time residents, Bro. Steve and Sis. Marlene Lau, as they have moved to Bloomington in their retirement. We didn't have Bro. Chris and Sis. Nancy Williams for too long but certainly enjoyed their fellowship. They have found new employment in Ohio. We are happy to welcome Sis. Alyssa Nuest from Latty who is here for a four month job assignment.

We enjoyed a full day of Christmas caroling followed by a chili supper and then a wonderful Sunday School Christmas program. It was a full day of remembering how and why our Saviour came to this world.

And in this Christmas season, on December 18, Bro. Ryan Graf got a wonderful present from the Lord in his new wife, Sis. Leah Zimmerman, as they were wed in Morton. We welcome her to Chicago. (Proverbs 18:22)

We wish the Lord's rich blessings on each one in this coming year of 2012. May we all appreciate HIS great gift and HIS loving sacrifice.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK **Marilyn Maul** **Tina Walder**

Christmas has come again; let us ever rejoice in the coming of our

blessed Lord and Saviour and be thankful for the promise of everlasting life in heaven with Him.

The whole church blessed many with Christmas caroling the first Sunday in December. We were also blessed ourselves with the fellowship of the evening.

The Sunday School presented their Christmas program the Wednesday before Christmas.

It is always a blessing to hear the Christmas story in song and verse by the children.

Our prayers of healing are with Sis. Myrna Weerts (Bro. Ken) with medical problems and Bro. Stan Maul with his second hip replacement this year.

Thankful for visiting ministers, we enjoyed the Christmas messages from Bro. Les Kaeb (Sis. Christine, Francesville) and Elder Bro. Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Sue, Atlanta).

The funeral for Sis. Eunice Feller was held here. She spent much of her married life in Valparaiso. Ministers for that day were Bro. Joe Gerst (Sis. Connie, Iowa City), Bro. Jim Butikofer (Iowa City) and Bro. Mike Thomas (Valparaiso).

Marie Bauer also passed away, with her funeral being just before the end of the year.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Rachel Currier

Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Zobrist's daughter, Sis. Kali, has recently become engaged to Bro. Jonathan Sauder (Bro. Frank and Sis. Kathy, Roanoke). Sis. Kali attends the Magdalena, Mexico church, and currently Bro. Jonathan is in Altadena, CA. May the Lord provide for them as they begin their lives together as one.

We rejoice with the family of Bro. Bob and Sis. Sally Rinkenberger, as

their daughter, Rachel, has turned to the Lord in repentance. We are thankful that the Lord is still calling souls unto Him, and pray for many more to seek their salvation through Him.

Bro. David and Sis. Maria Currier have become first-time parents, with the birth of their son, Noah Rodell, on December 7. Grandparents of Noah are Art and Sis. Mary Currier and Bro. Tim and Sis. Charlene Hartter (Sabetha).

We appreciate the labors of visiting ministers again this month. They include Bro. Greg Stoller (Sis. Jill, Forrest), Bro. Pat Zaugg (Sis. Julie, West Bend), Bro. Craig Stickling (Sis. Jacki, Peoria), Bro. Tom Lanz (Sis. Mary, Oakville) and Bro. Merlin Meyer (Sis. Marilyn, Lester).

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Amy Gasser Miriam Gasser

Another year is dawning, dear Master let it be,
In working or in waiting, another year with Thee.
Hymns of Zion #150

We were blessed by the ministry of visiting Bros. Barry and Ken Dietz (Bradford, IL) and Mike Walder (Smithville, OH).

Having lived in the Prescott, AZ, vicinity a number of years, Bro. Ed and Sis. Jenny Schambach recently returned to Elgin and are residing in the apartments at Resthaven.

During the blessed Christmas season, we enjoyed many special events including family caroling on December 11 and the Sunday School program on December 18.

Sis. Maria Steffen was able to return home from the University of Chicago for several weeks in Decem-

ber, because her white blood cell count had increased to an acceptable level. Though Bro. Dave and Sis. Linda's family have appreciated the many prayers, we continue to plead for divine help as they and Sis. Maria cope with the complexities of multiple medications and possible infections.

Sis. Erika Furj is recovering from another knee surgery and Mary Krueger from an operation on her foot. Sis. Joan Scheitlin (Bro. Al) needs our special prayers, as she deals with the unpleasant effects of cancer.

Though one's years may exceed three score and ten, life is still brief when compared to eternity. Bro. Dick Klopfenstein's 87-year-old brother, Gary, passed away November 24 at his home in South Bend, IN. Sis. Lillian Bohlin, 83, lost her battle with cancer December 14 at her home in Ottawa. May those who feel each loss find strength and comfort in the Scriptures.

ILLINOIS, EUREKA

Dee Baer Jodi Blunier

Children are a blessing of the Lord. Bro. Brent and Sis. Kelly Vierling were blessed with the addition of Kyle Alan to their family. Nathan, Lena and Elise are happy for a new brother. Grandparents are Bro. Jim and Sis. Linda Vierling and Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kathy Leman. Tim and Regina Sinn are equally blessed as Cody John joins brothers Michael and Jordan. Grandparents are Bro. Charlie and Sis. Karen Sinn and David and Faith Yoder of Kansas. Bro. Alan and Sis. Sharon Martin rejoice in a new grandson, Winston Michael, born to Brent and Jessica Martin of Roanoke, IL.

Private graveside services were

held for tiny Ashton Todd Fehr, son of Bro. Todd and Sis. Kandi Fehr. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." (St. Matthew 5:4). Saddened by his loss are Hailey, Preston and Anderson Carr, and grandparents Bro. Ken and Sis. Sandy Fehr and Glen and Sis. Becki Bauman.

Close in heart and prayer have been Debbie Wiegand (Merle), Sis. Eva Rocke (Bro. Dave) and Andrew VanWaters (Vernon and Sara) who have received medical care.

We are thankful for the faithfulness of God's Spirit as He speaks. Visiting ministers have been Bro. Greg Braker (Lamar, MO), Bro. Randy Beer (Milford, IN), Bro. Kent Getz (Elgin, IA), Bro. Tony Manz (Junction, OH), Bro. Don Manz (Junction, OH) and Bro. Curt Rassi (Tremont).

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY
Angela Herr
Kay Steffen

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,
 ere the day of grace expire.

Zion's Harp #52, vs. 1

We are thankful Caleb Hartman (Bro. Ryan and Sis. Lori), Kelly Waldbeser (Jim and Sis. Renae), and Patty Bunch have made a beginning in repentance. We pray they may feel God's grace and His nearness as they yield to Him in true submission and begin their walk with the Lord.

My lifetime doth pass away;
 Hourly to the grave I hasten,

and I know each fleeting day
 my allotted span will lessen.
 Think, man, death comes soon or
 late.

Tarry not, it will not wait!

Zion's Harp #253, vs. 1

Our prayers are with Dick Koehl (Sis. Esther) in the loss of his sister, Sis. Toni Bentley (Phoenix, AZ), who passed away on November 25. We also extend our sympathy to Bro. Willis and Sis. Elsie Bachtold as they mourn the loss of their brother-in-law, Bro. Leroy Koehl (Sis. Janita, Forrest, IL), who passed away on December 2. Our thoughts and prayers are also with Bro. Perry and Sis. Carol Virkler and Charles and Arlene Farley in the death of their sister-in-law, Dlorah Zehr, who was killed in a car accident on December 22. Sis. Shirley Fehr's (Bro. Warren) brother, Denny Koehl (Alto, MI), also passed away on December 22 and we lift her family up in prayer during this time of sorrow.

We also extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Marlene Moser who passed away on December 17. May God comfort and be near her siblings, Sis. Joanne Aupperle (Gridley, IL), Keith Moser (Nita), Bro. Lloyd Moser (Sis. Martha, Washington, IL), Sis. Colleen Walter (Bro. Rich), and Sis. Sharon Kelson (Bro. Bud) as they mourn the loss of their sister. Marlene lived at Apostolic Christian Timber Ridge in Morton for many years and we were thankful to have Bro. Randy Mogler (Washington, IL) minister to us at her funeral service.

Other visiting ministers in our midst this past month, include Elder Bro. Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL), Bro. Kerwin Edelman (Athens, AL), Bro. James Fehr (Tremont, IL), Bro. Al Schambach (Remington, IN), Bro. Dennis Rassi (Austin, TX), El-

der Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Brian Waibel (Champaign, IL), Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville, IA), Bro. Chad Leman (Kitchener, ON), and Bro. Darren Fehr (West Bend, IA). May God bless these brothers for their willingness to share God's Word with us.

Several in our congregation have recently had surgery. Our thoughts and prayers have been with Gideon Moser (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Kara), Wade Steidinger (Bro. Wes and Sis. Erinn), and Maurice Zimmerman. May God's healing hand be upon each one according to His will.

Love, of all gifts, is the greatest
 which the Spirit does bestow...

Zion's Harp #37, vs. 1

The engagement of Bro. Tyson Fehr (Bro. Ivan and Sis. Cinda) and Sis. Mandy Payne (John and the late Sharon) was announced on December 18. May God be with them and guide them as they plan for a life together.

On the evening of December 11 we gathered together for the Sunday School Christmas Program. It was a blessing to hear the children share the story of Christ's birth and then also remind us that it was not His birth, but His death upon the cross that sets us free from sin and condemnation. May we never forget the gift of salvation that has been given to each one of us.

ILLINOIS, FORREST
Lisa Aberle
Lynn Dotterer

Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Harvey Kuenzi (Silverton, OR). We thank him for his willingness to minister to our congregation.

We joyfully report that we had several young converts this month. Annette Coffey (Bro. Kevin and Sis.

Denise), Trenton Edelman (Bro. Karl and Sis. Bethany), Lilah Knapp (Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean), Logan Mueller (Bro. Stace and Tonda), Royce Mueller (Bro. Ron and Sis. Vicki), Stanton Mueller (Bro. Stan and Sis. Kristen), Logan Steidinger (Bro. Glen and Sis. Holly), Mariah Steidinger (Bro. Roger and Sis. Sheila), Philip Stoller (Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill), and Luke Zimmerman (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Steph).

Bro. Leroy Koehl passed away on December 2. In this time of loss, we think of his wife, Sis. Janita, and his children: Bro. Ron Koehl (Sis. Carol) from Sarasota, FL; Warren Koehl, Valparaiso, IN; Sis. Deb Gasser (Bro. Jeff) and Sis. Diane Miller (Bro. Max), both of Smithville, OH; and Dawn Kerr (Bill) of Grand Rapids, MI. In addition, we extend sympathy to Bro. Leroy's sisters, Sis. Bernice Cox and Sis. Velda Huetter; and one brother, Maurice Koehl (Carol).

Also, a former Forrest resident, Dennis Koehl (Alto, MI), passed away. Our sympathy is with his family of our congregation: his mother, Sis. Doris, and his sister, Sis. Marlene Walter (Bro. Duane).

While our congregation has experienced losses, we also have a new baby to report. Landon Allen joins the home of Bro. Craig, Sis. Leah and Twyla Steidinger. He is also welcomed by his grandparents, Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean Knapp and Bro. Glen and Sis. Holly Steidinger.

Bro. Josh Coffey (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Denise) and Sis. Amber Stork (Bro. Reuben and Sis. Devra) were united in marriage on December 18. May their life together be a blessing.

At the time of this writing, little Molly Brown (Bro. Brad and Sis. Shannon) is still in the hospital, but hopefully she will be home soon for the first time.

Note of Thanks:

Thanking each of you dear loved ones for the many words of encouragement on my 90th birthday. Humbled,

Bro. Glen Zimmerman

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD

Kayla Wiegand

Melissa Rokey

It is a joy to announce the birth of two new babies in our church family. Hudson Gray Knepp was born November 23 to Bro. Alex and Sis. Cassie Knepp. His older brother Dierks welcomes him home. Hudson's grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Trish Gerber, and Bro. Rich and Sis. Janet Knepp (Roanoke, IL).

Garrett Russell was born to Bro. Tim and Sis. Susie Blunier on December 5. His two sisters, Laura and Ella, and brother Jubal welcome him home. His grandparents are Bro. Dennis and Sis. Eddis Blunier and Bro. Art and Sis. Pam Wiegand.

We give thanks to God as he has worked in the heart of Cody Wood (Jeff and Ronda, Roanoke, IL) who has begun his walk with Christ and turns his back on the world. In St. John 3:5, Jesus answered Nicodemus and said "...Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." We lift Cody up in prayer as he seeks the Kingdom.

"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 Corinthians 1:4

Bro. Curt (Sis. Melita) Hodel's mother, Floy, passed away on No-

vember 24. We offer our sincere sympathy in this time of loss in their family.

Our prayers for comfort and healing reach out to Sis. Paula Stoller (Bro. Tom and Sis. Edie, Eureka, IL) and our convert BJ Hinrichsen (Bro. Charles and Sis. Brenda) who have both had back surgery and are at home recovering. Our Sis. Laura (Bro. Nate) Wiegand has had another surgery to remove some of the hardware from her previous neck surgery. She will continue to wear a neck brace for a period of time and will soon begin therapy. We are prayerful for Bro. Roger Gerber (Sis. Trish) who has had foot surgery, and for Bro. Gary Allen (Sis. Connie) who has had a knee replacement. Robbie Rieke (Bro. Brian and Sis. Lisa) has undergone surgery on his jaw. Chad Gerber (Bro. Roger and Sis. Trish) has been moved to a home in Freeport, Illinois. We ask for God's reassuring hand over him as he makes this transition. Let us not forget the power of praying to our Heavenly Physician for earthly healing.

Come children, join in singing,
sweet praises to our Lord,
who blest us with salvation
through faith in His good Word.

Zion's Harp #136

The evening of December 2 was set aside for Christmas Caroling together and singing songs of rejoicing honoring the birth of our Savior. The Sunday School children also gave glory to God as they presented their Christmas Program on December 11.

This month, we enjoyed the opportunity to have Bro. Troy Leyse (Sis. Kelly, Bluffton, IN) and our Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL) minister to us.

Note of Thanks:

A special thank you to everyone for your prayers on my behalf through surgery and recovery. Thanks also for the cards, visits, gifts, and food brought in during my recovery. May God richly bless you for your kindness and thoughtfulness.

Sis. Mildred Knapp

**ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY
Perry Klopfenstein**

In the course of a month, many of our members and friends deal with health ailments. Sis. Marilyn Schieler has moved into the Meadows Home for therapy, and hopes to eventually return to her home, following a stroke. Bro. Herbert Gramm was hospitalized for a stomach condition, and now he and his wife, Sis. Jane, have moved into the Eureka Home.

Bro. Paul Klopfenstein, who became almost gravely ill while vacationing in Branson, Missouri, has been transferred to a nursing home in Normal for therapy and continued care. While there he had a setback and was sent to a hospital in Normal, and has since returned to his nursing home. Sis. Linda Kinder had surgery. Sis. Barb Kiefer was hospitalized briefly with a heart condition. Bro. Ron Schmidtgall also had surgery. We surely pray for all these souls to regain their health, if it is God's will.

Ason, Crew Howard, was born to ministering Bro. Daren and Sis. Rita Metz. Grandparents are Bro. Gene and Sis. Carol Metz (Roanoke) and Bro. Nelson and Sis. Minnie Beer and the late Sis. Shelby Beer (Milford, IN).

It was a special occasion in December to hear our Sunday School

students put on a Christmas program in the assembly. We thank them for all the effort they put forth to bring us the story of Christ's humble birth. And we thank their teachers as well.

As a New Year unfolds, life's pathway(s) can find joy and God's comfort. Although God is in heaven, we have a comforting link to Him through our Lord Jesus. We benefit by God's Word and the Holy Spirit. May God grant us grace to concentrate our focus on the things that are unseen, not on the things that are seen. It is the latter that will enrich our lives. Bro. Froehlich wrote, "Gathering riches is worthless. To be rich is to have a pure heart!"

Visiting ministers were Bro. Brandon Emch (Kansas City, MO), Bro. Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN), Bro. Mark Wettstein (LaCrosse, IN) and Bro. Brace Wieland (Leo, IN).

**ILLINOIS, MORTON
Annette Tanner
Julie Bahr**

This New Year we are entering, can we say with confidence that He will supply us with our needs from His riches in Glory? Our prayer is that, as His children, we will be given the grace and strength to look out for one another, all because of what Jesus Christ did for us.

Our church was greatly blessed by many ministers who traveled here to share with us God's precious message! Our thanks to Bros. Greg (Sis. Carla) and Matthew (Sis. Bridget) Rassi, Elder Bro. Brad Eisenmann (Sis. Cindy), all of Chicago; Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford); Elder Bro. Jim Plattner (Sis. Marlene) and Bro. Glen Braker (Sis. Audrey), both of Princeville; Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Sis. Debbie, Peoria); Bro. Ken Wuethrich (Sis.

Lyn, Indianapolis); Bro. Brian Huber (Sis. Jacki, Francesville); and Bro. Jeff Waibel (Sis. Margo, Leo). Bro. Jeff Wiegand (Sis. Janelle, Goodfield) blessed us when he presented our Wednesday evening Family Worship Topic, "Evidence That the Bible is Real".

On December 4, Sis. Heather Funk and Bro. Kyle Plattner were united as one in Christ. Sis. Heather is the daughter of Bro. Fred and Sis. Diane Funk. Bro. Kyle is the son of Elder Bro. Jim and Sis. Marlene Plattner (Princeville). We welcome the happy couple as they plan to make Morton their church home.

Sis. Leah Zimmerman and Bro. Ryan Graf felt the leading of God in their lives as they chose December 18 to become united in Christ in Holy Matrimony. Sis. Leah is the daughter of Bro. Doug and Sis. Jane Zimmerman. Bro. Ryan is the son of Bro. Ed and Sis. Deb Graf (Leo). The happy couple will reside in Chicago.

**ILLINOIS, PEORIA
Pam Fritzenmeier**

We are thrilled to report three engagements! On November 27, Bro. Michel Elsasser (Bro. Brian and Mary) was announced to Sis. Jessica Waibel (Bro. Mike and Sis. Rose). Next, on December 11, Bro. Jesse Hoerr (Bro. Bob and Sis. Myrna) was announced to Sis. Joanna Kummer (Bro. Chris and Sis. Patty). Then on December 18, Sis. Samantha Ginzel (Bro. Geoff and Sis. Angie) was announced to Bro. Seth Kieser (Bro. Tim and Sis. Denise) of Princeville.

The annual soup supper and auction to benefit Skylines was held November 19. They wish to thank everyone for their supportive prayers and donations.

Bro. Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton) spent a Wednesday evening

with us and we thank him for his time and effort on our behalf.

Sunday afternoon, December 11, was our Sunday School Christmas program. What a joy and privilege to hear the youth of all ages sing and tell the Christmas story with such enthusiasm! All church Christmas caroling was enjoyed by many later that afternoon.

Bro. Joe Wiegand (Oakville) recently passed away. He was a brother to Sis. Hazel Geyer and Sis. Sharon (Bro. Irv) Hodel. Sis. Elsie Eilers also passed away recently. Please keep these dear families in your prayers.

We also wish to remember in prayer those suffering health issues: Sis. Barb Schaefer and Becky Sutter (daughter of Sis. Shari Fehr).

Sis. Emily Kieser (Bro. Mark and Sis. Cathy) just graduated college and is looking forward to working at Gateway Woods.

We think of our local families serving in a mission field far from home. It is surely difficult to miss the special family times that Thanksgiving and Christmas bring. Please keep them in your prayers: Bro. Tim and Sis. Joan Reinhard and family, and Sis. Janelle Grassi, Haiti, and Bro. Zach Knobloch, Magdalena.

Note of Thanks:

God bless each one who prayed, sent cards, brought food, and did acts of service following my surgeries in September and October.

Sis. Judy Getz

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE

Gloria White

Linda Joos

We appreciated the Word brought to us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by Elder Bro.

Brad Eisenmann (Chicago, IL), Bro. Troy Leyse (Bluffton, IN), Bro. John Grimm (Columbus, OH), and Bro. Ken Schneider (Remington, IN).

We bid a sweet farewell to Sis. Evalyn Herrmann (Bro. Noah) as God called her Home on December 12. Our prayers are with her dear husband, Bro. Noah, and her children: Wayne (Brenda), Bro. Keith (Sis. Ruth), and Bro. Dean (Sis. Dawn), all of Princeville, IL, and Sis. Sue (Bro. Fred) Hausmann (Bradford, IL).

Bro. Kyle Plattner (Elder Bro. Jim and Sis. Marlene) and Sis. Heather Funk (Bro. Fred and Sis. Diane), Morton, IL, were united in marriage on Sunday, December 4, in Morton, IL. We wish them God's blessings and nearness as they establish their home.

The engagement of Sis. Lena Christ (Bro. Kurt and Sis. Connie) and Bro. Loren Stoller (Bro. Nathan and Sis. Cheryl) of Bradford, IL, was recently announced. Also, Bro. Seth Kieser (Bro. Tim and Sis. Denise) and Sis. Samantha Ginzler (Bro. Geoff and Sis. Angie), Peoria, IL, have been announced for marriage. May God bless these two dear couples in the days and years ahead.

Sis. Kalla Knobloch (Bro. Alan and Sis. Mary Ann) has moved to Athens, AL, to teach in the preschool. We will miss her but wish her God's protection and blessings as she follows the Lord's direction in her life.

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE

Jamie Hodel

Judy Sauder

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;"

Philippians 3:10

Sis. Jeanette Wagner's husband, Ralph, passed away on November 18. He is also survived by three sons, Steve (April) and Dennis (Cheryl) of Roanoke, and David (Shari) of Germantown Hills. Vernon Schieber, formerly of El Paso, passed away on November 28. He was the father of Jan (Bill) Rassi. Bro. Don Brown went to be with the Lord on December 10. He is survived by his wife, Sis. Helen; daughters, Laurel (Mike) Santi (Columbia, MO), Sis. Susan Rocke, Sis. Marsha (Tom) Durand, Sis. Karen (Bro. Gordon) Presley, Sis. Diane (Bro. Kim) Steffen (Chicago), and a son, Dan (Beth) Brown (Eagle, Idaho); a sister, Patsy Hingartner (Jacksonville, IL), and a brother, James (Judy) Brown (Topeka, IL). We extend our love and deepest sympathy to these dear families and pray for God's comforting touch upon them.

On Thanksgiving Day, Bro. Dale Wulf (Lester) was our guest minister. Then on November 30, Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield) presented our monthly topical Bible Study on "The Bait of Satan". Psalm 119:165: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Bro. Tom Schambach (Elgin) was our visiting minister on December 4. Then on December 11, we welcomed back home Bro. Ed Stoller (Denver) as our guest minister. We thank these brothers for their kind service to our congregation and pray for God's continued blessings upon them.

Hudson Gray arrived to bless the home of Bro. Alex, Sis. Cassie and Dierks Knepp (Goodfield) on November 23. His excited grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Trish Gerber (Goodfield) and Bro. Rich and Sis. Janet Knepp. We are so

thankful for this gift from the Lord!

Genesis 2:18: "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him." On November 27, the marriage engagement of Bro. Jonathan Sauder (Bro. Frank and Sis. Kathy) and Sis. Kali Zobrist (Magdalena) was announced. Sis. Kali's parents are Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Zobrist (Congerville). Also, Joel Wuthrich (Sis. Val of Roanoke and Bill of Peoria) and Amber Schultz of Peoria were married on December 13. Amber's parents are Bob and Marilyn Schultz of Trivoli. May God richly bless these dear couples!

Our annual Christmas caroling and church supper was held December 4. We thank all those who helped make it a wonderful evening of worship and fellowship.

St. Matthew 20:27: "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Our annual business meeting was held December 7. Bro. John Getz was chosen as our new church trustee. Bro. Harold Sauder was selected as our nursing home trustee. And our new fellowship hall trustee is Bro. Mike Hoffman. We are so grateful for those who graciously serve our congregation in so many ways.

St. Luke 2:11: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Our church and community have had the opportunity to hear the beautiful message of Christ's birth presented in word and song. First, our Sunday School students proclaimed that message on December 18 at our annual Christmas program. Then on December 21, the Prairie Choristers, our Youth Choir, a men's quartet "Testify" and a trio of sisters brought forth another beautiful presentation of God's love

for us with carols and scripture reading. We thank these groups for their efforts and ask God to bless them.

We welcome back Sis. Dorothy Bertschi, formerly of Zapata, to our congregation. Sis. Dorothy is residing at the Eureka Apostolic Christian Home.

"God seldom calls us to an easier life, but always calls us to know more of Him and drink more deeply of His sustaining grace." (from "Don't Waste Your Life")

James 5:16: "...and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." We continue to pray for Bro. Rich (Sis. Janet) Knepp, Sis. Virginia Blunier, Sis. Ann Hodel, Sis. Jane Schumacher, Bro. Dan (Sis. Deann) Plattner (Chicago), Bro. Steve (Sis. Tammy) Hofstetter (Washington), Sis. Helen Leman, and Sis. Madlyn (Bro. Rich) Fehr who are dealing with health issues. May our Lord strengthen, encourage and grant healing according to His will.

ILLINOIS, TREMONT
Teresa Rowell
Janice Sauder

Rejoice, Rejoice, it's Christmas when
Jesus came to Earth,
Rejoice, Rejoice, ye Christians, be
thankful for His birth.
He came to save His people, who
were o'ercome by sin.
So open wide your heart door, and
let Christ enter in.

This was the first verse of the song that the second graders sang at our Christmas program this year. Doesn't it just say it all? It is so easy to get caught up in the busyness of the season, that sometimes we forget the real "reason for the season". As these words reverberated in the church that night, may they continue to reverberate in our hearts al-

ways.

We are thankful for Bro. Dewayne Dill (Sis. LaRae, Minneapolis) who visits us often and is always willing to preach the Word to us. One of our home ministers mentioned one time while he was preaching that we all pray for the Word to come forth, not as man would speak it, but as God would have us to hear. We need to take the teachings and apply them to our lives as God speaks to us through these dear brothers.

We rejoice with Bro. Matt and Sis. Jenni Sauder as they welcome another boy into their family circle. Asher James joins Daniel, Trevor, Adam, Elise and Kayli who are excited for a new sibling to love. Bro. Dale and Sis. Joann Sauder and Bro. Jeff and Sis. Ruth Grimm (Goodfield, IL) are Asher's grandparents.

"Afflictions tho' they seem severe, in mercy oft are sent..." (Hymns of Zion #22). Sis. Sara Garman (Steve), Sis. Marcia Dennis (Bro. Rob), and Mark Zuercher (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kathy) have experienced affliction of the flesh and are now assembling with us again. We are thankful to God for His healing hand upon them.

"Love of all, gifts is the greatest, which the Spirit doth bestow..." (Zion's Harp #37). Bro. Brent Dill and Sis. Whitney Braker were united in holy matrimony, and in this important step in their lives, we wish them the blessings of our Heavenly Father. Their parents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Ann Dill and Bro. Todd and Sis. Wendy Braker (Morton, IL).

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

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.

Just as the world celebrates the humble entrance of our Savior, we too celebrate the safe arrival of two little babes. On December 8, Kennedy Fae was born to Bro. Brian and Sis. Alison Sutter. Welcoming Kennedy are grandparents, Bro. Jim and Sis. Kris Sutter (Taylor, MO) and Bro. Ron and Sis. Gail Romersberger (Gridley). Also, first-time parents, Josh and Wendy Schick welcomed Dixie Laine on December 15. Dixie's grandparents are Bro. Tom and Sis. Carol Schick and Bro. Lynn and Sis. Elaine Stoller (Gridley).

As we are filled with the joy of the Christmas season, we are also keenly aware of the frailty of our flesh and the illness and hurt that is all around us. We lift Bro. Steve Hofstetter, his wife Sis. Tamara, and their four young boys up in prayer as Bro. Steve begins cancer treatment. We remember Bro. Rich Drester in prayer as he is very ill and currently hospitalized. We also continue to pray for our dear Sis. Frieda (Bro. Andy) Mogler as she and Andy adjust her changing health needs and life at the Eureka Home. We are

so thankful that Bro. Don (Sis. Marie) Wagenbach is recovering from a recent injury.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON

**Suzie Fiechter
Kim Meyer**

Another month has come and gone and now we are in the midst of the blessed Christmas season. We have three young families who have the physical reminder of what it's like to hold a new born babe. Bro. Rob and Sis. Sierra Parker welcome Willow into their arms. Bro. Krent and Sis. Liz Frauhofer gave birth to another healthy baby boy, Wade. His grandparents would be Bro. Dean and Sis. Holly Frauhofer and Bro. Derryl and Sis. Peggy Aschliman. Bro. Aaron and Sis. Rachel Isch warmly welcome little Logan into their growing family. Bro. Rick and Sis. Beth Fiechter and Bro. Barry and Sis. Imogene Isch are also thankful to embrace another grandson.

We rejoice with Spencer and Breanna Pfister who turned their hearts to Christ. We pray God will continue to guide this young couple as they walk not only as one, but also as one in Christ. Their parents would be Bro. Courtney and Sis. Jodi Pfister and Bro. Larry and Sis. Sharon Stoller.

Bro. Steve and Sis. Tonia Price are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Sis. Amber, to Bro. Blane Baumgartner, son of Bro. Brad and Sis. Michelle Baumgartner of Bluffton North.

Bro. Craig Steffen (Sis. Jean) has been in the hospital the last several weeks with double pneumonia and other undiagnosed problems. However, we rejoice that he is out of ICU and off the ventilator. We continue to pray for him and his family as he

recovers and goes through rehab. Sis. Eunice Fiechter (Bro. Gerald, dec.) fell and broke her leg. Although she is doing okay, we will continue to lift her up in prayer.

The Bluffton congregation was blessed by the Sunday School's Christmas program. The children put forth a lot of effort and we enjoyed each and every song. We were also blessed to share the day with Bro. Doug and Sis. Lillian Wagenbach from San Diego, CA. Their family was out for the weekend and we appreciate his willingness to share the Word with us.

As we enjoy the Christmas season, let's pray for open eyes. There are many hurting and lonely people all around us and some just need someone to listen. It's too easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season and miss our true purpose of the season. What true Christmas blessings are we depriving ourselves of if we are too consumed with going here and there and trying to buy the "perfect" gifts for our loved ones. May the joy and peace in our hearts resound, "Emmanuel, Emmanuel! God is with us!" this holiday season and into the new year.

**INDIANA
BLUFFTON NORTH
Jessie Longenberger
Amy Moser**

“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

Philippians 4:6

Elder Bro. Lynn Fiechter (Sis. Ronda, Bluffton) was our visiting minister in November and we wish to thank him for serving the Lord and us.

November was a big month for babies in our congregation. Bro. Jesse and Sis. Janelle Frauhiger had baby girl, Molly Irene, on November 1. She joins Drew, Kylie, Emma, and Tess at home. Molly's grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Irene Frauhiger and Bro. Keith and Sis. Kay Steffen.

Bro. Kelly and Sis. Lisa Aschliman welcomed their granddaughter, Emma Renee, on November 11. Emma's parents are Logan and Abby Aschliman.

On November 21, Bro. Tim and Sis. Gwen Drayer welcomed their baby boy, Rowan Gray. He joins his siblings, Brock, Marly, and Rori, at home. Grandparents are Bro. Jerry and Sis. Louis Drayer and Kent and Janel Kloter.

Bro. Rocky and Sis. Melinda Giltner welcomed their first grandchild, Chase Aiden, on November 22. Chase's parents are Mike and Brooke Mann.

Bro. Lucas and Sis. Andrea Gerber welcomed their first child, Walker Lucas, on November 30. Grandparents are Bro. Lee and Sis. Paula Nuest (Latty, OH) and Bro. Steve and Sis. Gayla Gerber.

"Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

Psalms 37:4

The desire of Bro. Blane Baumgartner's (Bro. Brad and Sis. Michelle) heart was fulfilled as Sis. Amber Price (Bro. Steve and Sis. Tonia, Bluffton) accepted his proposal to be his wife. May God's blessings be with this dear couple as they take this step in faith.

**INDIANA
FRANCESVILLE
Mildred Clauss
Jacki Huber**

As we come to the close of 2011, we see a new year on the horizon. How encouraging to know our Lord and Saviour stands between the years. "The Light of His Presence is flung across the year to come! Backward over the past year His Shadow is thrown hiding trouble and disappointment". Without His help we could not face unafraid the year before us. But let us trust in His promise: "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12)

The Sunday School Program presented the Christmas Story through the mouths of our precious children. Their innocence and enthusiasm illustrate the child-like faith our Lord spoke of! The whole church participated in Christmas Caroling to local loved ones and to several nursing homes.

We look forward to our New Year's Eve service and program which is another annual event for our church. It is always an enjoyable time of worship and fellowship.

Bro. Nick Wuethrich (Bro. Mark and Sis. Lynne) was recently in the hospital. Sis. Diane Clevenger is presently a surgical patient and we pray the Lord will bless these dear ones with a good recovery.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Jim and Sis. Barb Rayburn at the death of his brother. In every circumstance the Lord is our Source of comfort and we pray they will know His nearness.

**INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS
Penny Schroder
Sandy Lichtle**

Our annual Sunday school Christmas program was held on December 11. It was a joy and blessing to hear the children tell the wonderful story of Jesus' birth through verse and song. On Wednesday, December 14, we enjoyed a pizza supper at church, followed by Christmas caroling in the community.

We want to thank Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Sis. Peg, Goodfield, IL), Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL), and Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Ruth Ann, Wolcott, IN) for sharing the Word with us. We appreciate their willingness to be used in the Lord's service.

**INDIANA, LACROSSE
Meagan Frank
Julie Rocke**

As busy as this month has been for many of us, there is not a lot of news to report. We are thankful for God's continued blessings in many areas of life and pray the same for each of you.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bros. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI), Lucas Frank (Sis. Crystal, Detroit, MI) and Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, St. Louis, MO). May each of these brothers and their families be blessed richly as their service to us was a blessing.

Our annual Sunday School program was held December 11. Many thanks to our children and their teachers who worked hard to bring us the Christmas story in word and song. Heaven truly must rejoice to hear the voices of children raised in praise to God and His Son.

Christmas caroling was held the evening following the program. We

enjoyed the opportunity to sing Christmas songs to our loved ones at Parkview Haven in Francesville as well as numerous homes around town.

Our hearts rejoice with the miracle of healing that has been granted to our precious little Noah Gudeman (Bro. Glen and Sis. Kerri). He underwent surgery in Cincinnati, OH, at the beginning of December. At the time of this writing, he is still in the hospital and will likely remain there for several weeks for therapy. God has been faithful throughout these long weeks and we are thankful that Noah has recently made wonderful strides in recovery. It is so good to hear each new report and see pictures of his smile again.

INDIANA, LEO Kirby Reutter

Perhaps the most memorable event to take place this past month was the first Leo wedding in decades of two people born in Leo (Bro. Tyler Stieglitz and Sis. Abby Klopfenstein). On December 4, believers from more than 15 different Apostolic congregations joined the Leo flock to celebrate this occasion. Visitors were present all the way from Germany and Mexico, and parking spilled over the sidewalks. The fellowship hall was commandeered to help serve the noon lunch. During the actual wedding service, seating arrangements filled the sanctuary, swelled the outside foyer, and even spilled into the dining area. The reception occupied three stories of the Historic Allen County Courthouse.

Oh would to God this many people showed up EVERY Sunday to hear the GOSPEL! "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Revelations 19:9).

We were particularly amazed that our dear ministering Bro. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane), who is affectionately known by our Sunday School children as the "crying minister", was able to lead his own son's wedding service with incredible composure!

In addition, the Leo Sunday School presented yet another incredible choral rendition of the Christmas Story on December 11. For me personally, some of the most profound words in the entire history of hymnology are the following: "The Word became flesh, an incredible thing: Yet truest of things that are."

A number of visiting ministers joined us this month for these various occasions. At least some of these dear brothers include the following, in no particular order: Elder Bro. Randy Kellenberger, Elder Bro. Mark Bahr, ministering Bro. Gary Maibach, ministering Bro. Bill Waibel, and ministering Bro. Ron Bollier. Except for Bro. Randy, who came for the wedding, it is interesting to note that all of these other brothers are grandfathers who came to visit their Leo-area grandchildren. Since it is quite common for us to have ministering grandfathers, it was recently suggested that the Leo pulpit might be more accurately referred to as the "grandfather's bench".

On a different note, our dear Sis. Natalie Stieglitz (daughter to Elder Bro. Lynn and Sis. Leonda) recently announced her commitment to serve at Hospital Lumiere in Haiti. During a conversation at Tyler and Abby's wedding reception, Natalie told me that she "bought one way tickets and will see how the Lord leads." Natalie seems to have a tough time staying in one place for any length of time, but it is so re-

freshing to see her youthful energy well expended for the Kingdom!

Finally, another update regarding our dear Sis. Maria Steffen:

"After four weeks in the hospital, Maria was so glad to return home on Friday. Her white blood cells and other numbers improved enough last week for her to be released. She is still very weak and tired from the transplant, chemotherapy, and adjustments to many different medications. Her immune system is especially weak and she must be careful with outside contact. Maria has a very long road ahead but still with the goal of returning to Gateway."

A different "Maria" also had a very long road ahead of her over two thousand years ago, as she journeyed to Bethlehem to deliver the Savior Child for all humanity. May the Lord bless us and keep us in 2012, as we embark upon another year of faith and pilgrimage.

INDIANA, MILFORD Paula Haab Janie Price

Our Bro. Matt Pamer was in the hospital recently. We are thankful God has answered our prayers and restored his health.

An indoor garden setting was the place where Eric Bales and Mary Cockburn (Bro. Bob and Sis. Sue) on October 29 exchanged wedding vows. As they walk the path of life together, may their love grow as only God can multiply.

Elder Bro. Curt Frank assisted our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter in reading of the Memorandum. We ask God's blessings on the brothers as they allow the Lord to direct their paths.

Our congregation had the privilege of Christmas caroling. It is such

a joy to be able to share the songs which tell the story of our Saviour's birth. Our Sunday school students presented a wonderful program to us. They shared the testimony of how Jesus touched lives and His traits of forgiveness and compassion. They said "Never man spoke like this man". He spoke wonderful words that brought comfort to weary hearts, courage to the disappointed; words that burnt into the sinner's heart. The wonderful words of Jesus reached the lost. The bands of death and destruction could not hold him. He lives today in our hearts and the lives of all believers. What a wonderful Saviour. Listen to the voice of the past. Isaiah calls across the ages, through the pages of God's Word.

INDIANA, REMINGTON

**Jenni Honegger
Marcella Tyler**

We were thankful to have visiting ministering Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH) here at Thanksgiving to share the Word with us. It is always a blessing to have extended family come visit for the holidays. God has provided so much for us to be thankful for!

Several of our congregation traveled to witness the wedding vows of Bro. Luke Bahler (Bro. Tim and Sis. Lynette) to Sis. Hannah Stoller (Bro. Todd and Sis. Pam) in Latty over the Thanksgiving weekend on November 27. We are excited to welcome Sis. Hannah to Remington, and we pray she and Bro. Luke will find much happiness together!

This past weekend we enjoyed our annual Sunday School Christmas program during the afternoon service and then Christmas caroling around the community in the evening. One of the children's recita-

tion pieces this year focused on the sorrow that God must have felt in sending His Son as a helpless baby into a sinful and evil world. It struck me that such a joyous occasion for us was not such a "merry" time for our Lord at all. How thankful we should be that in His infinite mercy He chose to do it anyway!

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

Joshua Martinez

"There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid."

Proverbs 30:18-19

We recently celebrated the final days of Bro. Tyler Stieglitz and Sis. Abby Klopfenstein's engagement with a church singingshower. We rejoice at the news of their December 4 wedding in their home congregation of Leo, IN. We're thankful for the time Sis. Abby worshipped with us as a college student and young working adult in the area. We wish her and Bro. Tyler many blessings as they begin their lives as one in the Lord.

On December 10, Bro. Don and Sis. Jill Lehman celebrated the wedding of their son, Kyle, to Taylor Romenzak. We congratulate this dear young couple and wish them God's blessings as they set up their first home in Ames, IA.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:15

We are thankful for Bro. Bob and

Sis. Sue Beebe's safe return from a short-term mission trip to Haiti. We are inspired by their accounts of the spiritual seeds planted through the work done at Hospital Lumiere. We continue to pray and encourage all those who serve and point the way to the refuge and protection offered by the Lord.

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

John 3:16

We recently enjoyed the wonderful sounds of children praising and honoring the birth of our Lord and Savior at our Sunday School Christmas program. Our hearts burst with thankfulness and happiness as we saw the many beautiful expressions of appreciation for our Father's gift of His Son. May all honor and glory be given to Jesus, who loved us so much that He personally delivered His wonderful "unspeakable gift".

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

II Corinthians 13:11

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Marguerite Hoerr

I've been thinking recently how much we depend on each other in a small church. As young people leave for college we realize how much we miss hearing his (her) voice singing each Sunday; not to mention just missing their presence and their fresh bright smiles. Each person

in our little congregation holds an important place in our hearts. Age doesn't seem to matter as we meet

and greet each other. It's the joy of hearts reaching out to each other. One can just feel the love radiating in our precious fellowship. This love takes on different forms. For example one sister told me when she has problems sleeping in the middle of the night, she simply prays individually for each person in our Valpo church until peaceful sleep overtakes her. I had to think when she told me, that I should follow her example. Not only does it work, it calms my soul.

It's five days before Christmas as I write this report, so we're anticipating that we can celebrate our Lord's birthday and the coming year 2012. I want to share the following poem that was written by one of our youngest members who admitted she couldn't write poems unless the inspiration came from God first. How effective her poetry is to share her inspiration with the rest of us.

Do You Know the Story?
 Do you know the story of Jesus,
 Christ our Lord and King?
 The son of God, born Christmas
 Day! Hear the angels sing.
 Glory in the highest and peace on
 earth to all.
 The Savior of the world is born.
 Hear the Heavens call!
 Are you aware that our King was
 born among cows and sheep?
 The Babe of Bethlehem was laid in a
 manger to sleep.
 Christ was visited by the shepherds,
 whom the angels told.
 Then came the wise men with
 frankincense, myrrh and gold.
 But this story must go on, to a place
 called Calvary.
 For the sins of the whole world, Je-
 sus died for you and me.
 Then Christ rose again, from death
 on that third day.
 The Son of God lives, the one who
 was born amidst the hay.
 And still the story is not over, for
 Christ is coming once again.

I know He's coming to take home,
 His faithful women and men.
 — *Sis. Rachel Feller*

The young folks and their teachers treated us all to a delicious meal in the Fellowship Hall on December 10. This was followed by the Christmas program, which included scripture readings, and inspirational songs and poems. They gave us the story of the Babe who was born in a manger; coming to this earth to live among us to teach us His ways. He died cruelly on the cross for us and arose again to return unto God the Father that we may live eternally with Him. However this story is told, it's the most meaningful story our hearts can embrace.

All of us in the Valpo church were invited to share in another delectable dinner this month at Bro. Lyle and Sis. Marilyn Zeltwanger's. Young and old attended and shared a delicious dinner and beautiful evening of fellowship for which we thank them from our hearts.

The Memorandum of the church Conference was willingly shared on December 14 with the Valpo church by Elder Bros. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington) and Lynn Fiechter (Sis. Ronda, Bluffton). It wasn't an easy night for traveling so we thank them sincerely for sharing their love and instruction.

We are looking forward to hearing a testimony and witnessing a baptism on New Year's Day. Our dear friend, Sherry Meiss (Dale), has given her heart to the Lord and wants to become a member of the Apostolic Christian church and our congregation. She and Dale are dearly loved by all of us. They took such good care of Dale's parents, Bro. Rollie and Sis. Jo Meiss, until they went Home to be with their God. They are adoptive parents of

Anthony and Stacia whom we love deep in our hearts, also. We are rejoicing for an addition to our church membership, and for Sherry's love for her Lord.

We lost a dear sister last month. Sis. Alvina Schmeckpepper left us for her Eternal Home in Heaven. She was brought to church so faithfully by her daughters and we enjoyed all three of them. Alvina's children are: Nancy, Marsha, Marlene, Jeff, and Heather. We send our deep sympathy to all of them. Bro. Mike Thomas officiated at her funeral which was held near her home in Steger, IL.

We also received word today of the death of Sis. Eunice Feller (Bro. Willis). She attended Valpo church for years and moved to Iowa with a daughter who cared for her. I never knew her as she left about the time we moved here. I feel as if I missed knowing her because she was another one who was deeply loved. Bro. Mike Thomas will conduct her services at Cissna Park, IL.

Winter weather will be with us for a while but some nice Sunday if you feel like taking a drive, please visit us. You will be most welcome. We are just 2 ¾ miles South of U. S. 30 on State Rd. 49.

**INDIANA
 WEST LAFAYETTE
 Katie Widmer
 Beth Tonner**

Congratulations to our Sis. Kaitlin Bahler (Bro. Ed and Sis. Annette) on her engagement to Bro. Sam Kaufman. We look forward to their upcoming wedding in May.

As a church body, we come together with thankful hearts in the answer to so many prayers for Bro. Ed Bahler. The cancerous cells were successfully removed and he has

been given a healthy report. We rejoice for God's healing and His perfect plan for our lives, even when we don't understand it.

We will miss Sis. Beth Tonner both in our church and in the Silver Lining. Beth is moving to the Fort Wayne area and will be working at Parkview Hospital. We wish her God's blessings in this new phase of life.

December has been filled with caroling and programs which center around the celebration of our Lord Jesus. We look forward to worshipping together on Christmas day and remembering the true meaning of the season.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT
Donita Edelman
Sasha Kyburz

We were blessed this month to sit and listen to the youth tell us the Story of Christmas. It is such a joy to see these young people from 4 to 19 tell us this story. It brings the true meaning of the season to the forefront of each of our minds. Many thanks to the teachers that put forth the effort to work with the students on their songs and pieces. May each of us celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ this season and not get caught up in the worldly aspect of the season.

Michael and Sis. Melissa Blanding are parents again as they welcome Evan Michael into their family. Older sisters, Kylie and Michaela, along with grandparents, Bro. Mike and Sis. Glenna Minniear, also welcome this precious little bundle. May God grant wisdom to raise these precious souls for Him.

Believing God has directed their paths, Bro. Clint Blume (Bro. Larry and Sis. Lynell) and Sis. Holly Stoller (Bro. Todd and Sis. Pam) of

Latty, OH, have announced their engagement. We pray God's guidance upon Bro. Clint and Sis. Holly during this time of getting to know one another and preparing for their marriage.

We are offering up prayers for Sis. Marge Hofstetter. Sis. Marge is in the hospital at this time. We pray for God's protective hand upon her as her health is restored.

IOWA, BLOOMFIELD
Rachel Stoller

We rejoice with our new sister, Meredith Klotzle (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Jane, Akron, OH), as she was baptized this month. Visiting ministers for the weekend were Elder Bros. Ken Indermuhle, (Sardis, OH), Dave Graf (Akron, OH) and Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH). It was a blessed weekend for us, and we appreciate the labors of love.

Also visiting this past month sharing with us the Word were Bro. Darin Fehr (West Bend, IA) and Bro. John Steiner (Oakville, IA).

We are also thankful to report Rachel Dotterer (Bro. Joe and Sis. Rose) has been given peace with God and man. We wish her the Lord's nearness as she awaits her baptism.

“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

IOWA, BURLINGTON
Marilyn Anderson
Karla Gerst

Fade, fade, each earthly joy; Jesus is mine.

Break every tender tie; Jesus is mine.

Dark is the wilderness,
Earth has no resting place,
Jesus alone can bless; Jesus is mine.

Hymns of Zion #281

We wish to express our sympathy to Sis. Lois Wiegand and her family in the loss of her dear husband, Bro. Joe Wiegand. May they find comfort in their memories of his love for them and his faithfulness to his God.

Our sympathy is also with Bro. Leo and Sis. Tami Banwart and their family, as Sis. Tami's father, Gene Samek, passed from this life. May their faith sustain them at this difficult time.

We were blessed with many visitors this past month, among them being Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall, and ministering Bros. Tom Lanz and Dale Frank, all of Oakville.

Note of Thanks:

The family of Bro. Joe Wiegand wish to thank each of you for the prayers, cards and memorials we received during Joe's illness and death. It was a great comfort to hear from so many of you.

May God Bless you one and all.

Sis. Lois Wiegand

Mary Jo and Galen Metzger

Jane and Ron Schmidgall

Bro. Brian and Sis. Cindy Wiegand

IOWA, ELGIN
Maria Roche
Brianna Strahm

Our congregation spent an evening of Christmas caroling and assembling baskets of encouragement for those of our community who have recently had a loss. We are often reminded of our many blessings when we ponder those who have suffered such.

“For unto us a child is born, unto

us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:7

The Sunday school held their annual Christmas program this month. Through their poems, verses and hymns, the children shared of Jesus' birth and the purpose for His coming. It was a blessing to be there, and we thank each one involved for their efforts.

We're thankful Sheryl Schroeder is able to assemble with us again. We've missed her presence over the past couple of months.

Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) and Bro. Kevin Banwart (Sis. Sandy, West Bend, IA) were with us this month. We're thankful for their willingness to share God's Word with us.

“Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.”

Psalms 37:3

As we begin the new year, may we remember to trust God simply and to live for Him wholly.

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE Laura Funk

Visiting our congregation and bringing forth God's Word this month were Bro. Floyd Frieden (Elgin, IA) and Bro. Ron Joos (Bloomfield, IA). We are thankful for all our visitors.

The engagement of Bro. Clint Moser to Sis. Moonlight Szabo (Alto, MI) was announced. Also announcing their engagement are Alecia Moser to Luke Stuaan. Clint and

Alecia are the children of Bro. Tom and Sis. Dawn Moser. Also announcing their engagement is Carma Clark to Stephen Dixson. Carma is the daughter of Sis. Willa Clark. We are thankful our congregation is growing.

A Virgin Unspotted

A Virgin unspotted, the prophet foretold,
Should bring forth a Savior, which now we behold,
To be our Redeemer from death, hell and sin,
Which Adam's transgression had wrapped us in.

Then God sent an angel from Heaven so high,
To certain poor shepherds in fields where they lie,
And bade them no longer in sorrow to stay
Because that our Savior was born on this day.

Then presently after the shepherds did spy
Vast numbers of angels to stand in the sky;
They joyfully talked and sweetly did sing:
“To God be all glory, our heavenly King.”

To teach us humility all this was done,
And learn we from thence haughty pride for to shun;
A manger His cradle who came from above,
The great God of mercy, of peace, and of love.

Aye and therefore be mercy, set sorrow aside,
Christ Jesus, our Savior, was born on this tide.

IOWA, IOWA CITY Diana Butikofer

We were thankful that Elder Bro.

Curt and Sis. Lyla Frank (LaCrosse, IN) and many of their family members joined us for our Thanksgiving service. We appreciate Bro. Curt's ministry to us and trust the Lord will bless him for his work.

During our annual Christmas program, the Sunday School children reminded us of God's Gift: His Son, Jesus Christ. They also used Hymns of Zion #115 to help us compare what we have given, left, borne, and brought in comparison to what He has done for us. We appreciate the work the teachers and students put into the program and ask God to bless them as well.

Bro. Jim and Sis. Diana, Kyla, Garrett, Wyatt, Larissa and Mitchell Butikofer welcomed Tanner Michael into the family December 5. Tanner's grandparents are Bro. Al and Sis. LaVerne Butikofer (Elgin, IA) and Bro. Gene and Sis. Evie Heinold (LaCrosse, IN).

IOWA, LESTER Gloria Moser Polly Metzger

“Oft I read the blessed Bible, How God sent His precious gift;
How our Lord in love and mercy, Came the sinful load to lift.”

May we enjoy the blessings of this Holy season, and remember the birth of our dear Lord. Our Sunday School Christmas program was December 18. There were recitations and songs, and we enjoyed hearing 192 children remind us of “the story that never grows old.”

“How He called the little children,
How each child by Him was blest;

In His loving arms embraced them,
Pressed them gently to His breast.”

On December 9, Bro. Drew and Sis. Maria Metzger welcomed their son, Avery Drew, into their family. His big sister is Elsa, and his grandparents are Bro. Stan and Sis. Sue Warner and Bro. Marv and Sis. Joleen Metzger. We wish these young parents God's blessings as they raise their family.

"How His help and tender mercy,
On the sick He did bestow!
To the poor, the meek, and lowly,
He His love divine did show."

Taryn Besonen (Brant and Samantha) has spent some time in the hospital. We continue to pray for God's healing, comfort and strength, for those suffering in one way or another.

We extend our heartfelt, best wishes to Laura Molitor (Bob and Carol) and Brad Schneider (Bro. Charles and Sis. Sue, Elgin, IA) as they make plans for a summer wedding. Bro. Ross Mogler (Bro. Rodney and Sis. Lois) and Sis. Abby Kellenberger (Bro. Brad and Sis. Teresa, Sabetha) had their engagement shared with us on November 27. We wish these dear couples God's blessings as they plan for their marriages.

Sis. Lanna Meyer (Bro. Dean and Sis. Linda) graduated from college on December 9. We wish her God's blessings as she begins employment and new challenges in life.

"How He did accept each sinner,
Who forsook his erring ways,
Gladly did He lift the burdens,
From the soul who gave Him praise."

We rejoice with Joe Barber (Mike and Sis. Donna) and Wyatt Knobloch (Bro. Denis and Sis. Jackie), as they have sought their

soul's salvation and have found their peace with God and man. They look forward to their baptisms and we pray God will be near them each day.

"How He gently led His children,
Light and strength He did impart;
With His love and tender mercy,
Sought to draw them to His heart."

We appreciate the efforts of our visiting ministers, Bro. Mark Schmidgall (Oakville) and Bro. Bruce Frank (Cissna Park). May our ministering brethren continue to feel God's "light and strength" as they bring forth His teachings to us.

"I am never weary reading, Hearing
of His wondrous love;
How His loving, tender mercy,
Draws us to His home above."
Hymns of Zion #75

May God's love and mercy be with each one of us through the new year.

IOWA, OAKVILLE Sharla Wiegand

"My lifetime doth pass away..."
(Zion's Harp #253)

Bro. Joe Wiegand peacefully left this earth for a better Home on November 20. We pray that God will comfort his wife, Sis. Lois, and children, Mary Jo (Galen) Metzger, Jane (Ron) Schmidgall and Bro. Brian (Sis. Cindy) Wiegand.

An engagement was announced on Thanksgiving Day. Bro. Reilly Wagenbach (Bro. Colin and Sis. Barb) is engaged to Sis. Katie Wiegand (Bro. Andy and Sis. Vicky) from Eureka, IL. We wish this couple the Lord's blessings as they pre-

pare for their life together.

Bro. Michael Wagenbach (Wolcott IN) brought forth the Word to us on Thanksgiving Day. We were pleasantly surprised with a Wednesday night visit from ministering Bro. Art Mueller (Belvidere IL).

IOWA, WEST BEND Janet Fehr Leona Fehr

We were thankful to have Bro. Nathan Walder (Sis. Denise, Cissna Park, IL) here with us on Thanksgiving, and then the following Sunday Bro. Dan Moser (Sis. Anne, Elgin, IL) joined him in reading and expounding on the Word of the Lord through the Holy Spirit. May God richly bless those that preach the Gospel.

The only hospital patient this month was Sis. Judy (Bro. Dennis) Fehr. Hopefully her hip surgery proves to be successful. May God continue to give Sis. Judy and her family His continued nearness.

Our precious Sunday school children told the story of Christ's humble birth through songs and readings this December. How grateful we are to be reminded of the love and mercies of God. As a New Year is here, we think of the Hymns of Zion song #150, Another Year is Dawning.

Another year is dawning, Dear Master let it be,
In working or in waiting, another year with Thee.
Another year of mercies, of faithfulness and grace,
Another year of gladness, in the shining of Thy face.
Another year of progress, another year of praise,
Another year of proving Thy presence all the days.
Another year of service, of witness for Thy love;

Another year of training for holier work above.
 Another year is dawning, dear Master, let it be,
 On earth, or else in heaven another year for Thee. Amen.

JAPAN, SHIODA

Carrie Ito

December meant several special activities for our church. We went caroling at the local hospital and gave each patient a card and a small towel. It is a good opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas with the staff and patients. We had a small Christmas program after morning service — Koshin (9) and Tomoki (2) “sang” two songs with hand motions and Koshin read the story about the wise men and showed pictures he had drawn. He asked the congregation some questions after his presentation and all were answered correctly! Somehow in Japan, Christmas means it is time to eat fried chicken, so we had that for lunch along with many other dishes including pink sticky rice that is ate at special occasions. We had a special surprise as a young couple and their little baby came after lunch. The mother had attended the Shioda kindergarten years ago. She said she so appreciated her experience there and would like to have something similar for her little son. Surely those students felt the love of the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit through the teachers and staff of the kindergarten. May many more of those seeds sprout and grow. Thank you for your continued prayers for our small congregation and so many in this land who need the Lord.

JAPAN, TOKYO

**Marie Inoue
 Manuela Denes**

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.”

Psalm 19:1

I recently moved to Tokyo from my home in Canada and church in Detroit. One Sunday, on my way to the Shioda church, I was told to look to my left. There for the first time was the view of Mt. Fuji that I'd been looking forward to. It truly was awe-inspiring! The top of the mountain is covered in snow and it was a beautiful sight to see it coming from behind the green rolling hills that spread out in front. It is early winter here so the sky was clear and bright without a single cloud. What a blessing to know that no matter where you go, God's wondrous creation is all around!

We were blessed to have Bro. Akihiro Ito with us to share the Word. We're grateful to both him and Sis. Carrie for giving of themselves to be with us. Lunch was followed with a visit to a local retirement home to share some Christmas caroling with the residents. How wonderful to see the large number that were gathered together that afternoon! We sang a number of Christmas carols and I found it so encouraging to see that a number of the residents sang right along with us in Japanese, and even sometimes in English. May we be able to let our light shine with those we encounter so that they, too, can learn of the miracle of this Christmas season.

Blessings to you all for Christmas and the New Year to come! Please continue to pray for the people of Japan that many more can come to

know the Lord.

KANSAS, BERN

**Sheri Edelman
 Jill Meyer**

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

Luke 15:10

We are rejoicing with the angels in heaven that Josh Strahm (Bro. Brad and Sis. Michelle) has seen his need for repentance and has begun upon the narrow way. Our prayers are with him as he begins to grow in the Lord.

Visiting ministers are much appreciated and we were blessed with three of them on December 18. May God bless retired Elder Bro. Don Braker (Sis. Eileen, Kansas City), Bro. Harvey Kuenzi (Sis. Jennifer, Silverton) and Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha) for their labors of love in serving us.

Benola Bieri continues to receive treatment and is living with her son in California. May the Lord provide for her as we lift her up in prayer.

Wonderful story of love: Tell it to me again;

Wonderful story of love: Wake the immortal strain!

Angels with rapture announce it,
 shepherds with wonder receive it;
 Sinner, oh! Won't you believe it?

Wonderful story of love.
Gospel Hymns #838

We were able to sing of this wonderful story as we went Christmas caroling on December 12. A soup supper is always enjoyed afterward and we pray it was as much a blessing to those who heard the songs as it was to those who sang. Our Sunday

School youth also sang of this wonderful story as they presented a Christmas program on December 18. Though we enjoy the Christmas season and remembering Christ's birth, let us all remember that "... 'tis not the manger, but the cross that sets the spirit free"!

KANSAS, KIOWA

Janice Bahr

Jenny Stewart

What a wonderful time of year to rejoice in the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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

St. Luke 2:13-14

What a blessing it was to have many visitors with us for a wonderful weekend to celebrate Christ's birth; the annual caroling on a Saturday and then the Sunday School Christmas program on Sunday. What an awesome responsibility to teach our young ones about Christ and the Creator. Yet their love for Him is so pure and real. What an example! Thank you to all the visitors for coming to celebrate with us. We truly look forward to it every year!

KANSAS

LAMONT-GRIDLEY

Sarah Somerhalder

Our congregation assembled together to hear the reading of the Memorandum. Our thanks to Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Sis. Charlen, Champaign, IL) who was with us for this service. May we ever strive to preserve sound doctrine. Other visiting ministers were Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda, Tremont, IL) and

Bro. Brandon Emch (Sis. Maria, Kansas City).

The engagement of Bro. Kent Kraft (Bro. Doug and Sis. Judy) to Sis. Marissa Hoerr (Bro. Norm and Sis. Connie) of Eureka, IL, was made known to our congregation. We wish them God's blessings as they plan for their marriage.

On December 11, our church enjoyed hearing the Sunday school tell the old story of our dear Lord's birth. We appreciate the efforts of the teachers and students in preparing for this special program.

KANSAS, SABETHA

Sally Strahm

Carrie Grimm

"Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord."

I Chronicles 16:10

We rejoice as Rachel Edelman (Bro. Darin and Sis. Karen) has answered the call to repentance and has felt peace with God and man. We continue to pray for Rachel and look forward to her upcoming testimony and baptism. May the Lord continue to guide her as she looks to Him.

Sis. Abby Kellenberger (Bro. Brad and Sis. Teresa) is engaged to Bro. Ross Mogler (Bro. Rodney and Sis. Lois) of Lester, IA. Sis. Lena Hartter (Bro. David and Sis. Beth) is engaged to Bro. Loren Grimm (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Nita), both of Sabetha. Bro. Ryan Grimm (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Nita), residing in Morris, MN, announced his engagement to Sis. Paula Mogler of West Bend, IA (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Beth). May God bless each of these dear couples as they plan their lives together.

Bro. Timothy and Sis. Charleen

Hartter welcome little grandson Noah Rodell into their hearts. Noah was born to Bro. David and Sis. Maria Currier of Congerville, IL. We pray the Lord will direct these parents as they raise their children in Him. We also pray the Lord will direct the grandparents as they play such an important role in the lives of these dear little ones.

We are thankful that Elder Bro. Wayne Grimm (Sis. Rose, West Bend, IA) labored on our behalf this month as a visiting minister. We continue to ask the Lord to bless and uphold all ministering brothers throughout the lands.

Austin Keim (Curt and Valerie) has graduated from college. We pray he looks to the Lord to guide him as he begins a new journey in the workforce.

Our thoughts and prayers have been with Sis. Dawn Strahm (Bro. Troy) and their family as Dawn has undergone surgery. May all who have had recent conflicts of the flesh feel God's nearness and gain strength through His power.

We have now discontinued our Sunday evening singings and are enjoying Wednesday night church services rotating between Sabetha and Bern.

We enjoyed Thanksgiving services on Thanksgiving Day. We also enjoyed Christmas caroling on December 4 and the fellowship and supper following.

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

Psalms 47:6

The Sunday School Christmas program was held December 18. What a blessing to hear the children tell the old, old story of the birth of our Saviour!

Be true; be true!
 The Lord is by thee standing;
 Joyful with Him at last will be the
 ending!
 Tho' hard the strife and long the
 conflict be,
 Through faithfulness the Lord will
 honored be!
Zion's Harp #172, vs.1

KANSAS, WICHITA
Emma Miller

Although our small church status is smaller in numbers, our responsibilities as a body of believers remain the same.

Bro. Phillip Bowers and his mother, Sis. Lillian, remain in need of prayer support. I would also ask for prayers for Phil's twin sister, Ruth, and her husband, Bro. Jonathan, as they accept the responsibilities of care giving.

We thank the Bluffton church for sending Bro. Troy and Sis. Kelly Leyse to fill our small church needs. Bro. Troy made a point to define the word "disciple". A disciple is a student. We might ask ourselves, am I an active student?

An area resident has begun visiting our services on a limited schedule. Not only does his soul need nourishing, which he gradually admits and accepts physical food as well as counseling. He needs our prayers.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON
Barb Huber

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Isaiah: 41:10

What a wonderful promise as we begin another year...to know that God is with us and will provide whatever our need may be. We were thankful for Bro. Doyle Frauhiger and his dear wife, Sis. Jane, who came from Bluffton North to minister God's Holy Word on December 11. Bro. Doyle shared many testimonies of God's ever presence and faithfulness in their lives which was indeed strengthening to our faith. We pray God's special blessing for their efforts and labors of love to further His kingdom on earth. The tape and CD ministry has also blest our fellowship as we assemble around the Word.

May the Lord bless all those who make this ministry possible. The Holy Spirit is always present to provide, comfort, and be in our midst. In this new year, let us be unto God the sweet savor of Christ. (II Cor. 2:14) May we always keep our focus on things of eternal value, abounding in the work of the Lord, looking forward to His soon return.

We welcome 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 are in the minister's book.

MEXICO, IXTLAN
Matt Gerber

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

1 Tim. 3:16

This season we remember the humble birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the transforming godly effect He has had on each one of our lives. We marvel at the incarnation—God becoming flesh. The Eternal Son of God becoming the Son of Man, born of a virgin. Accepting the limitations and struggles of humanity, yet sinless. Living His life in dependence upon the power of the Holy Spirit, He overcame the tempter's cleverest wiles. The angels worshiped Him as they witnessed His obedience to the Father in all things. He preached the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, entrusting His followers to carry that message to the entire world. Relatively few believed on Him at first, but the seeds for the Church were planted. He offered Himself on the cross to take away our sins and destroy the works of the devil. After His triumphal resurrection, and appearing to His disciples, He was received up into glory.

But the story doesn't end here. We were reminded recently in a message that while it is beneficial to have a special time of year to remember the Savior's birth, we need to remember every day the fact that He is going to return to the earth. Not as a harmless baby prophesied as King of the Jews, but as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Contrast this description of Jesus with the Child in the manger:

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and

his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Revelation 19:11-16

Let us worship Him in readiness for His return. Let us continue to spread His gospel to the peoples of the world, beginning with those nearby. Let us be living witnesses, but let us not be content to be silent witnesses. We must show the world the reality of a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

MICHIGAN, ALTO

**Listyn Oesch
Melissa Blough**

“And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 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 Saviour, 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. 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. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.”

Luke 2:6-19

A Christmas Singing was held on December 17, not only for our congregation, but all friends and family to come together and praise our Lord in the season of His birth. We were also treated on the 18th with the Sunday School Christmas program open for all to come listen to God’s children sing.

A welcome is extended to Bro. Warren and Sis. Kay Rauhe Hastings as they have moved to make Alto their home church.

Our congregation thanks Elder Bro. Doug and Sis. Clara Schock (Bloomfield, IA) for visiting during Memorandum and wish them blessings and a safe trip home.

Sis. Kim Koehl’s father, Bill

McGowan, has passed on to meet our Lord and Savior. Please continue to pray that God would comfort the family in the loss of their loved one.

May the Lord bless and keep you in your days ahead and have a Merry Christmas.

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

**Sarah Knochel
Janelle Ramseyer**

We rejoice with Sis. Moonlight Szabo (Sis. Gail) as her engagement to Bro. Clint Moser (Bro. Tom and Sis. Dawn, Garden Grove, IA) was announced recently. We wish them God’s richest blessings as they make preparations for their life together.

Our Sunday School students gathered to decorate Christmas cookies early in December. The cookies were used as part of the dessert at the Good Samaritan Rescue Mission where we serve a meal and hold worship services once per month.

On December 9, we had our Christmas Caroling followed by the Sunday School Christmas program on December 11. It is such a special opportunity to see our young people share the account of Christ’s birth through songs and verses.

We are thankful that Bro. Jesse Bedolla (Sis. Bonnie, Detroit, MI) spent Thanksgiving with our congregation and Bro. Jeff Waibel (Sis. Margo, Leo, IN) spent Christmas day with our congregation.

We want to remember Sis. Evelyn Wieland (Bro. Rod) as she is currently being treated for some infirmities of the flesh. We pray that God will continue to stand mightily by her side and that if it is His will, health would be restored.

Three of our young people graduated from college during the past

month. We congratulate Sis. Laura Knochel (Bro. Jim and Sis. Kay), Nicholas Schlatter (Bro. Jay and Sis. Carola) and Scott Schmidt (Mike and Sis. Cheryl) and wish them God's blessings as they pursue employment.

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life; ...and Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins; and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"

John 3:16; Matthew 1:21, 23; Isaiah 9:6

Our church was both humbled and inspired with the beautiful Christmas Program of song and verse on a Sunday evening. It has been said that music is a language of the soul. Psalm 100 teaches us to "serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing. Enter into His gates with praise: be thankful unto Him and bless His name." God later also inspired the words of Colossians 3:16 – "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." We express a sincere thank you for each one, young to old, who helped us worship in spirit and in truth and to experience the love and joy of the Lord.

The evening of our annual

Christmas Basket preparation and distribution for loved ones and the evening of Christmas Caroling are always rich blessings. Special thanks to those who organized these worthy missions.

This past month our Sisters Bonnie Popp and Florence Wieland and baby Elijah Harmon (Bro. Ben and Sis. Sarah) were hospitalized for a time. We thank God for His gifts of healing (I Cor 12:28) and for the comfort and joy of committing those we love into the hands of our Creator.

Bro. Warren and Sis. Kay Rauhe and Sis. Barb Johnson have been profound blessings to our church. We love their inspiring examples of love and grace and being servants (Philippians 2:7). We also have tender tears of sadness as they follow the Lord's leading for them to be moving to their new respective home churches of Alto, MI, and Washington, IL. For Bro. Warren and Sis. Kay, this move accommodates his vocation as a Michigan State University professor. Sis. Barb continues to graciously walk this season of her cancer and she cherishes this opportunity to be near her daughter Kyra who is attending ICC in Peoria. Both of them have felt a clear peace that the Lord is guiding their steps. Along with our tears of sadness is an ocean full of love, prayer and trust that the Lord will be their peace (Ephesians 2:14). Both the Alto and Washington churches will surely be enriched.

We rejoice in welcoming to our church and community Abraham and Sarah Nolan from Toledo, OH. We pray they can daily experience the Lord's love and grace.

The Lord blessed us recently with visiting ministers as they shared the grace and truth of the Word. We express our gratitude to Bro. Doug

Harmon (Sis. Lanna, Toledo, OH) who ministered at Woodhaven; Bro. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo, IN) and Bro. Justin Koch (Sis. Marcia, Washington, IL).

"Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart."

Psalm 119:111

MINNESOTA MINNEAPOLIS Tim McMillan

We began December reading from James Chapter Five. Verses 19-20 read: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." I have heard spoken in our churches, "I'm not convicted by that" when discussing spiritual matters with fellow members. I have even been told by a member once, "I'm sorry you feel that way" when speaking of biblical teachings. Are we pursuing our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12), or are we becoming too cavalier in our attitude towards the gift of salvation the Lord has given us? Are we striving for perfection (Luke 8:14, Heb. 6:1) or have we allowed the ways of the world to penetrate our church and are no longer concerned with our actions, living as those who are deceived believing once saved always saved?

We are thankful for a visit from Bro. Dale Zeltwanger (Sis. Rachel), who shared with us the teaching of God's Word this month. As a small congregation we are always happy for the visits of our brethren from far and near!

Proverb 15:13 reads, "a merry

heart maketh a cheerful countenance; but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken." We feel sorrow in the passing of Sis. Viola Aupperle during the month. She had been under the care of nurses and doctors for some time. We trust God will comfort her family including her daughter, Sis. Arletta Bragg, of our local church. It is our hope that we see her again when we are with the Great Physician!

While there is a time for mourning and sorrow, we also recognize the great joy that the Lord allows in our hearts to see once again the children sing praises to God and tell the story of Jesus' birth. May they also teach their children and be it so throughout all generations!

Christ Himself lived here below,
in a pilgrim's hut He tarried.
Greater far than ours, we know,
were the burdens that He carried.
Firm in conflict let us be
with our eye fixed, God, on Thee.

Zion's Harp #104, vs.4

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Susie Wulf

Kim Feuchtenberger

Elder Bro. Steve Martin (Sis. Vicki, Eureka, IL) assisted our home Elder Bro. Roy Koehl in the reading of the Memorandum on November 19. Other visiting ministers recently include Bro. Galen Rokey (Sis. Nancy, Bern, KS) and Bro. Jim Koehl (Sis. Hildegard, San Diego, CA). May God bless these Brothers as they allow the Holy Spirit to speak through them. Also, Elder Bros. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH), Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH) and Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) were in Morris this month.

We rejoice with the angels in heaven that two more souls have chosen to seek their salvation by

turning to God in repentance. Andrew Steiner (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jill) and Tony Domnick (Bro. Jim and Sis. Penny) have begun their repentance. May God continue to teach and provide humility and grace so that they can build a firm foundation.

Bro. Kurtis (Bro. Roy and Sis. Jenell) and Sis. Crystal (Robert and Mary Rinkenberger) Koehl had Todd Robert on November 28. His older brothers are Kyle and Derek. Eden Ella joined the family of Bro. Todd (Sis. Bonnie), Sis. Jamie (Joel and Rosie Dahlen) and Henry Nohl on December 15. May God richly bless these parents as they are given added responsibilities in raising another precious soul.

We have had several who have spent time in the hospital lately. This includes Bro. Carl Moser (Sis. Norene), Bro. Kenny Feuchtenberger (Sis. Sally), Sis. Norene Moser, Tony Domnick (Bro. Jim and Sis. Penny) and Ryan Feuchtenberger (Bro. Kenny and Sis. Sally). May we continue to keep each of these in our prayers that God would remember them in their time of need and provide His miraculous healing if it be His will.

We would like to welcome Sis. Leah Gerber (Bro. Nathan and Sis. LeAnn) from Bluffton, IN, to our congregation. We would also like to welcome Bro. Jim and Sis. Hildegard Koehl and their daughter, Ashley. They have relocated from San Diego, CA.

MINNESOTA, MORRIS NORTH

Wanda Gramm **Lois Schmidgall**

CHRISTmas.....a season of great JOY. It is a time of GOD showing his great love for us. GOD came to this

earth as flesh. It is a time we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. GOD sent His Son, JESUS, into this world to be born and his birth brought great joy to this world. Yes, Jesus came so He could pay the price for our inherited sinful nature. JOY TO THE WORLD, THE LORD HAS COME.

Our hearts gathered in JOY in remembering Christ's birth through Christmas caroling and the Christmas story that was given by our wonderful Sunday school. Special thanks and gratitude to all the children and the Sunday school teachers for proclaiming GOD'S greatest gift ever, JESUS. Luke 2:10-11 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.

Thoughts and prayers are with the dear ones that were hospitalized and now recovering with God's healing hand upon them, Bro. Harold Gramm, Elder Bro. Paul Messner, and Ruth Kearney. Our continued prayers for GOD'S love and strength to Bro. Mark Knobloch and Deanna Feuchtenberger.

1 John 1:9. If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Blessed are we that Alan (Bro. Neil and Sis. Linda) and Danielle Schmidgall have chosen to become disciples of JESUS. Our sincere prayers and love are with them for GOD'S continued grace and strength in their walk with our loving Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

CaraLee and Tracy Feuchtenberger (Bro. Dwayne and Sis. Kay) have shown their heartfelt desire in giving to Locks of Love which is a non-profit organization that pro-

vides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children in America and Canada. May GOD richly bless you both for your love and kind hearts.

Joyful, yet saddened, hearts gathered at Bro. Mark and Sis. Lori Mattson's for a praise sing in honor of our dear Sister, Victoria (Tori) Stoll, who has decided to move back to her home in Winthrop, MN for education purposes. We will miss you, Tori, but we pray for GOD'S abundant grace and guidance in your new education adventure. We look forward to your visits back to Morris North. Blessings to you!

Our continued appreciation to our ministers, Elder Bro. Paul Messner, Bro. Dale Zeltwanger, and Bro. Doug Moser for their sincerity, dedication, and love given to us all at Morris North.

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP
Lindsay Schmidt
Heather Steiner

At this time of the year, we pause to reflect on the many blessings God has given us. Every day of the year we thank and praise Him, but we are glad for opportunities to gather with the specific purpose of collectively thanking God!

"That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works."

Psalm 26:7

We are grateful to Bro. Clark Stoller (Sis. Cindy, Gridley, IL) for joining us for a weekend. He was willing to give a topical presentation to the church about our Heritage. May God bless him for his willing service.

We warmly welcome Sis. Victoria Stoll (Bro. Ed and Sis. Ginny) back to our congregation, as she has

moved back home from the Morris area, where she lived for 2 ½ years.

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

Philippians 4:6

Our prayers are with Sis. Bernadine Messner as she faces some health challenges. We pray for her healing, if God wills.

Many visitors have blessed us with their presence in the past month, as there have been many family gatherings and events surrounding the holiday season. We always appreciate visitors!

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

Psalm 100:4

Note of Thanks:

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all of our loved ones who remembered us with your prayers, phone calls, visits, cards, and food when I was ill, and since returning home. We also thank our beloved family for all you have done for us. May God bless you all.

Bro. Elmer & Sis. Hazel Schmidt

MISSOURI, LAMAR
Rebecca Dotterer
Venetta Banwart

Our visiting ministers this month were Elder Bro. Gerry Hertzell (Sabetha, KS), Elder Bro. Steve Martin (Eureka, IL), Bro. Kevin Fehr (West Bend, IA), and Bro. Larry Bahr (Fort Scott, KS). May God bless these brothers for their willingness to do God's work and feed us from God's Word.

We had the privilege to hear and witness the provings and baptisms of two souls: Sis. Audrey Luthi (Bro. Cal and Sis. Jodi) and Sis. Elizabeth Schmidgall (Bro. Larry and Sis. Marcy). Elder Bro. Gerry Hertzell assisted in this joyous weekend; may God richly bless him for his efforts.

We also were privileged to hear the Memorandum letter read to us. Elder Bro. Steve Martin assisted with this; may God richly bless him for his efforts.

Our hospital patient this month was Sis. Bonnie Braker (Bro. Leonard). May God continue to bless her with strength and healing.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS
Kary Mangers

Our congregation would like to thank Bro. John and Sis. Jill Bradle (Roanoke) and Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget Rassi (Chicago) for joining us for worship this past month.

Our church family set aside a day to spend together celebrating our Savior's birth with a Christmas program and worship service followed by caroling at a local shelter and chili supper to finish the day. It was a nice way to start December and set our hearts on things above.

We are thankful to report the safe and healthy arrival of Elijah Matthew Schrenk born on December 22 to Bro. Matthew and Sis. Alicia Schrenk. Grandparents are Bro. Loren and Sis. Betsy Schrenk (St. Louis) and Bro. Craig and Sis. Jean Steffen (Bluffton).

MISSOURI, TAYLOR
Melissa Reiman

The new year is now upon us! As always with the new year comes New Year's resolutions.

Most resolutions seem to be to lose weight, work out more, or basi-

cally things that would make us look better and feel better about ourselves. What would happen if we changed our New Year's resolutions to make someone else look better and feel better? What if our resolution was to make God come first? If we spent more time showing how wonderful God is and making other people feel like Jesus is out there watching over them, wouldn't that be a better New Year's resolution than just worrying about ourselves? We are called to be children of God. God needs us to witness to others about His grace and loving kindness!

We rejoice that two couples were announced for marriage! The best part is that they are in the same family! Bro. Caleb Sutter (Bro. Rich and Sis. Kay) is engaged to marry Sis. Mercedes Thompson (Randy and Monica Thompson). Also, Bro. Cole Sutter (Bro. Rich and Sis. Kay) is engaged to marry Sis. Tinsley Tuley (Ed and Cathy Tuley, Philadelphia, MO). How exciting to have two brothers to be announced at the same time! We pray that your marriages will be blessed by God and that they will be filled with His love!

We had three hospital patients the month: Bro. Josh Sutter, Sis. Rosie Massner (Bro. Allen), and Bro. Marvin Wiegand (Sis. Joann). We pray for their fast recovery and that we will see them back at church soon.

The church had its yearly election for a new trustee and member of the food committee. Trustee - Bro. Adam Reinbech (Sis. Katie); Food Committee - Sis. Kay Sutter (Bro. Rich), received the church's support.

We would like to thank Bro. Dean Steffen (Sis. Carol, Belvidere, IL), Bro. Floyd Freiden (Sis. Jan, Elgin, IA), Bro. Duane Metzger (Sis. Ruth, West Bend, IA), Elder Bro. John

Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS), and Bro. Ron Joos (Sis. Christy, Bloomfield, IA) for coming to Taylor and preaching about Jesus Christ!

NEW YORK CROGHAN-NAUMBURG Hope Graves

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

We are blessed to have Sis. Brenda Bachtold from Forrest, IL, now assembling with us. We are thankful that the Lord has led her to our congregation. May she feel the love and support of the brethren surrounding her. A singing was held to welcome Sis. Brenda and several other visitors on November 26.

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

Winifred Christiansen died on December 7 at the age of 93. A funeral was held at the funeral home followed by a dinner at our church on December 9. It was a blessing that we had just been to her room for Christmas caroling three days before.

As they offered gifts most rare,
at that manger rude and bare.
So, may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy.
All our costliest treasures bring
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

Mark and Kim Herzig received a

very precious gift on December 11 with the arrival of their first child, Victoria Marie. Happy grandparents from our congregation are Bro. Ron and Sis. Eleanor Herzig. We wish them many blessings as they enjoy their new daughter and granddaughter.

In the spirit of giving we put together cheer baskets at church on December 13. We were thankful for the many food items donated and each one who helped put them together. They are always overflowing with goodies and bring such cheer to those who receive them.

We always enjoy our opportunities to go Christmas caroling. December 2 was at Karcher Estates, the 4th at the Lowville Hospital and the 18th at Steepleview Courts. We enjoyed a chance to take Sis. Louise Purvines through the halls with us when we were at the hospital. Snacks were enjoyed each time when we were finished singing.

Our Sunday School presented their Christmas Program on December 18. We love watching the children get up and tell us what they have learned about the true meaning of Christmas. What a light they can be to us!

We offer up healing prayers for Sis. Bessie Farney and Joseph Bush who have been hospitalized.

Holy Jesus, every day,
keep us in the narrow way.
And, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last.
Where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds Thy glory hide.

Hymns of Zion #14

OHIO, AKRON Erika Gal

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye

have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

Romans 8:15

We rejoice with Bro. Daniel and Sis. Rachel Pamer as their adoption of Brennan Gage and Abigail Jayne was finalized on December 20. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Arliss Pamer, Bro. Don and Sis. Nan Steidl and Bro. Ron and Sis. Kay Rufener (Mansfield). Great-grandparents are Bro. Eugene and Sis. Eleanor Pamer, Sis. Martha Walder (Rittman), Bill and Helen Shurance (Medina, Nazarean) as well as Sis. Ruth Beery (Rittman) and Sis. Nina Rufener (Rittman).

We are also thankful for our Sis. Meredith Klotzle who was recently baptized in Bloomfield, IA. Her parents are Bro. Wayne and Sis. Jane Klotzle.

Note of Thanks:

Dear Ones,

We thank the Lord and each one for the love we've felt, the words of encouragement, and the many prayers on our family's behalf. How thankful we are for God's nearness and provision during the past year. May God bless each of you!

Love,

*Bro. Daniel, Sis. Rachel,
Brennan and Abby Pamer*

OHIO, COLUMBUS **Esther Saurer**

We wish the best for Sis. Danielle Sauder; may God grant His nearness as she leaves Columbus and transitions to the Leo area.

Special thanks to our visiting ministers this past month. We enjoyed having Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie Schambach (Elgin, IL), Bro. Marvin and Sis. Pam Zollinger

(Smithville, OH) and Bro. Art and Sis. Bonnie Ingold (Rittman, OH).

OHIO, JUNCTION **Vicki Boroff**

We were blessed to have some visiting ministers this month: Bros. Don Steidl (Sis. Nan, Akron) and Todd Sinn (Sis. Janet, Latty) blessed us with their service.

We pray for our hospital patients and those that have need of a healing hand.

Bro. Rex and Sis. Vicki Boroff welcomed Kimber Renee on December 22. Remington is thankful to have a little sister. Grandparents are Pauline Boroff and Wilbur and Dianne Klopfenstein (Salem, Oregon).

OHIO, LATTY **Mindy Stoller** **Carmen Stoller**

Life has been very busy for the Latty congregation this past month. Yet another thing to be thankful for as we remembered God's blessings to us on Thanksgiving Day. We were blessed to have many visiting ministers, too, for the wedding of Sis. Hannah Stoller (Bro. Todd and Sis. Pam) to Bro. Luke Bahler (Bro. Tim and Sis. Lynette) of Wolcott on November 27. They were Elder Bros. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN) and Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction, OH), along with Bro. Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL), Bro. Marshall Heinold (Sis. Janice, Ixtlan, Mexico), Bro. Vic Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH), Bro. Warren Schlatter (Sis. Cindy, Junction, OH), Bro. Dale Wulf (Sis. Becky, Lester, IA), Bro. Greg Lehman (Sis. Mary Beth, Wolcott, IN), and Bro. Jeff Bahler (Sis. Heidi, Wolcott, IN).

Kelsey Gerber has found peace with God and man. She is the daughter of Bro. Dave and Sis. Patty Gerber.

Mailey Kate, whose birthday is November 20, is the firstborn daughter of Bro. Caleb and Sis. Mindy Stoller. Her grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Barb Stoller and Bro. Roger and Sis. Sue Gasser (Junction, OH). May God be with them both as they strive to raise her in His sight.

We were privileged to witness a second wedding this month. Bro. Rustin Stoller (Bro. Craig and Sis. Ruth) took Sis. Carmen Eisenmann (Bro. Bill and Sis. Carol) as his bride on December 11. Joining us for this joyous occasion were Bro. Warren Schlatter (Sis. Cindy, Junction, OH), Bro. Doug Harmon (Sis. Lanna, Toledo, OH), Bro. Matt Manz (Sis. Deanna, Toledo, OH), and Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN).

OHIO, MANSFIELD **Tami Griffey**

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:”

Ecclesiastes 3:1

A time to be born: We are thankful for the newborn daughter of Bro. Mark and Sis. Julie Rufener. Heidi Jo Rufener was born on November 21. Siblings, Esther, Charity and Naomi, welcomed their sister home. Blessed grandparents are Bro. Ronald and Sis. Kay Rufener, and Bro. Clarence and Sis. LuAnn Zobrist (Congerville, IL).

A time to die: We are saddened to hear of the passing of Christine Naething, the daughter of Sis. Hedy and Leo Ormesher. Our prayers are

with their family.

A time to heal: Several loved ones are in continued need of prayer after hospitalization, surgery or illness including Bro. Adam Baumann, Sis. Luci Baumann, and Sis. Clara Zimmer.

A time to love: The wedding of Sis. Lauren Sauder and Bro. Todd Rufener was held November 28. We rejoice with their parents, Bro. Dan and Sis. Pam Sauder, and Bro. Jim and Sis. Pat Rufener (Rittman). We pray God's blessings upon their marriage as they settle in the Columbus, OH, area. We were thankful to have ministering Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI) with us.

A time of peace: We are thankful to see the evidence of God's Spirit working in our midst. Johanna Beer (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Tammy), and Marjorie Dawson (Bro. Ed and Sis. Judy) are at peace with God and man and we look forward to their testimony of faith and conversion.

A time to speak: Our Sunday School Students proclaimed the good news of the birth of Jesus on December 11. All who attended were blessed by the efforts they made.

Positions filled during the Annual Business Meeting include: Trustee - Bro. Henry Pfeiffer, Fellowship Hall Trustee - Bro. Edward Ramsey, World Relief Committee - Sis. Wendy Gerber, Kitchen Committee - Sis. Laura Ramsey, and Usher - Bro. Justin Miller. May God bless the willingness of each one who serves our congregation including our ministers, Sunday School teachers, and those who keep the church property in good order.

Our lives are filled with continual change and when we are down in the valley or high on the mountain we can take hope and comfort in the Bi-

ble verse, "He hath made every thing beautiful in his time..." (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

OHIO, RITTMAN
Jenny Pertee
Anna Bauman

The Rittman congregation extends its gratitude to the visiting ministers who gave a willing heart in preaching God's Word to us this month. Thanks to Bros. Bill Brake (Sardis, OH), Ron Palitto (Akron, OH), Vic Bauman (Smithville, OH), Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), and Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Junction, OH).

Many people enjoy the Christmas season, but the excitement began early for one brother and sister in Christ. On December 18, we were filled with joy to hear of the engagement of Bro. John Calame III (Bro. John and Sis. Jodi) and Sis. Jen Ryan (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Kathy) and we pray many blessings their way as they prepare for their upcoming marriage.

Speaking of marriage just reminded me that a name change will be taking place at the top of this column. The reason behind this occurred on November 20, the wedding date of Sis. Jenny Rupp (Bro. Ken and Sis. Carol) and Bro. Zach Pertee (Ron Pertee and Bro. Dave and Shelly Colvin, Smithville, OH).

Also beginning wedded life together on November 27 are Bro. Todd Rufener (Bro. Jim and Sis. Pat) and Sis. Lauren Sauder (Bro. Dan and Sis. Pam, Mansfield, OH). Bro. Todd and Sis. Lauren are a part of the Columbus, OH, congregation and we wish them many blessings as they begin their marriage.

New life was brought into the world as we had several babies born

this month. Bro. Matt and Sis. Lynn Baltic, along with older brothers Drew and Lincoln, welcomed Violet Marie on Friday, December 2. Grandparents are Bro. Dan and Sis. Betty Baltic (Columbus, OH) and Bro. Steve and Sis. Jeneé Rufener. On December 8, Ava Rose Ramsier joined the family of Bro. Dean and Sis. Julia, and big brothers and sister Luke, Chloe, and Tyler. Ava's grandparents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Terry Ramsier and Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam Brake (Sardis, OH). December 15 was the arrival date of Bro. Sam and Sis. Gail Hartzler's little boy, Logan Glen. Logan joins older siblings Sarah, Heidi, Julia, Kelsey, and Levi. Logan's grandparents are Bro. Merle and Sis. Bonnie Hartzler and Bro. Virgil and Sis. Lois Gasser. Cray River joined the family of Bro. Sam and Sis. Joy Gardner and Cora Lily on December 18. Grandparents, Bro. Art and Sis. Bonnie Ingold, also welcomed Cray. On December 19, Bro. Ken and Sis. Martha Steele gained another grandchild with the birth of Landon Elijah, son of Lamin and Amy Drammeh, and younger brother to Brayden.

Thoughts and prayers have been with Sis. Vi (Bro. Mitch) Baltic as she is in the hospital, and we wish her much peace and comfort during this time.

OHIO, SARDIS
Faith Beard

On December 8, Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam Brake were blessed with the arrival of a granddaughter, Ava Rose, daughter of Bro. Dean and Sis. Julia Ramsier of Rittman, OH. It's amazing how each child is precious in their own individual way in the sight of both their family and their Maker.

Our Sunday School children used song and verse to tell us of the birth of Jesus Christ during the Christmas program. Our congregation had several opportunities to carol to many in the surrounding communities who would not physically have been able to do the same. We gathered together on several occasions to commemorate the birth of our Saviour, and also gathered even more often in our own private celebrations. Most people reading this have probably experienced similar situations this past Christmas season, yet during each occasion are we really thinking of how blessed we are to have such opportunities? How many people living around the world spend their Christmas day or season no different than any other time? How many are not even aware that there is anything out there worthy of celebration — something that absolutely anyone regardless of possessions can own and rejoice over the same as those of us with much more than just the bare necessary food and raiment? Let us be aware that what we think we possess is only given us for a time, and that if taken away, we should have the same joy and peace in our hearts as we did before.

Peace on earth, goodwill from
heaven,
Reaching far as man is found,
Souls redeem'd, and sins forgiven —
Loud our grateful harps shall sound.
Christ is born, the Great Anointed!
Heaven and earth His praises sing:
O receive whom God appointed
For your Prophet, Priest, and King.
Hasten, children, to adore Him!
Learn His name to magnify;
Till in heaven ye sing before Him,
Glory be to God most high!
Gospel Hymns, #877

OHIO, SMITHVILLE

Gina Brake

Lydia Dotterer

December 4 was the wedding day of Bro. Doyle Stoller (Bro. Scott and Sis. Charlene) and Sis. Naomi Ursu (Bro. Mike and Sis. Barbara) from Kitchener, Ontario. Our congregation welcomes Sis. Naomi and wishes the dear couple God's blessing as they begin their lives together.

Jim Gasser has spent time in the hospital. We pray God be with him and grant him healing according to His will.

May this Christmas season be a blessing to all; may we like Mary keep all these things and ponder them in our hearts. (Luke 2:19)

OHIO, TOLEDO

Teresa Rywalski

Deanna Manz

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

Hymns of Zion #36, vs. 1

Many from our congregation enjoyed a Sunday afternoon together as we Christmas caroled. Despite the rain outside, we were richly blessed as we sang the carols and reflected on the true meaning of Christmas.

Our congratulations go to Sis. Anita Schlatter, Bro. Dan Coughlin (Sis. Tami) and Samantha Bauman as they have completed their college educations. We said farewell to Bro. Dan, Sis. Tami, Kaeb and Zoe Coughlin as they returned to Bern, KS, following graduation.

The weekend of December 17-18 was filled with joy and encouragement as we listened to the testimony and witnessed the baptism of Kent

Schlatter (Elder Bro. Bill and Sis. Emily, Junction). We welcome Kent as a Brother in Faith, and pray that he will continue to grow in his walk with the Lord. We thank Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction) and Bro. Warren Schlatter (Sis. Cindy, Junction) for ministering the Word to us.

OREGON, PORTLAND

Rebekah Jones

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?”

For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”

I Corinthians 10:16-17

We were richly blessed to share with one another the suffering of our Lord and Saviour's death through Holy Communion. It was an uplifting and humbling experience for those who were able to partake. Elder Bros. John Wiegand (Sis. Jane) and Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Susan, Atlanta, GA) were with us for Communion, and we pray the Lord will bless them for their faithful service. Bro. Chris Kuenzi (Sis. Mary, Silverton, OR) also shared the Word with us this month.

We gathered together on Thanksgiving Day to bring our thanks to the Lord, and praise Him for the numberless blessings we have all received. A few Sundays later, the Sunday school children brought to us the Christmas story through songs and verses. It was a blessing to be reminded of the Lord's lowly birth and His sacrifice on the Cross. The song “The Babe of Bethlehem” says it so clearly: “Be not

content this babe to know, nor stay at Bethlehem, but go with Christ to Calvary's brow..."

OREGON, SILVERTON

**Kris Luthi
Deb Roth**

"Oh give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good...."

Psalm 118:1

Elder Bro. Peter Petrovic (Sis. Marian, San Diego, CA) joined us for services Thanksgiving weekend and we thank him for sharing the Word with us. We have so much to be thankful for, all the time, and not just the time of year our country has set aside for this holiday. May we remember that all good things come from God and give Him the praise.

We enjoyed the Sunday School Christmas Program that our students presented December 11. The story is the same every year, but is so refreshing amidst all the celebrations of the world. Jesus is truly the "reason for the season" and we are thankful for God's most precious gift to us.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...."

Isaiah 9:6

Bro. Rich Kuenzi (Sis. RosaLee) and Sis. Renae Angstrom (Bro. Andy) were surgical patients this month. We wish them a speedy recovery and renewed health.

Jenna Lynn was born to Bro. Scott and Sis. Bethany Zollinger on December 18. Welcoming Jenna home are Ethan, Megan and Hannah. Grandparents are Bro. Ed and Sis. Shirley Zollinger and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Linda Edelman (Bern, KS). May God bless this cou-

ple as they raise their children to know Him.

PENNSYLVANIA PHILADELPHIA

"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

What a wonderful time of the year to be strengthened in faith as we remember the gift of Jesus Christ. We were thankful to hear the Christmas story told us in accents clear and plain by our beloved Sunday School. We were blessed by many family visitors who came to be with us on this blessed occasion to see their children and grandchildren. We trust that the words and expressions that they shared with us will some day be an expression of their hearts - Jesus lives! We are also thankful for the efforts our Sunday School teachers and parents put in to ensure that the children were ready to share the message. May each one of us be watchful as we never know when we will be asked to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

We were thankful to have a number of visitors this month, including Bro. Jerry Bauman (Sis. Martha, Rittman, OH) with us this month to bring forth God's Word. We are always thankful for our visitors and extend a warm welcome to all to come to worship with us.

TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE Mike and Monica Fritz

What a joy to gather with brethren to gain wisdom, strength, and

comfort from God's Word! We are thankful to our visiting ministering brothers for sharing with us. These have included Bros. Dan Stoller (Sis. Deb; Remington, IN), Kenny Dietz (Sis. Mardell; Bradford, IL), and Gary Sinn (Sis. Paulette; Latty, OH). We have also been blessed by the fellowship of brethren and friends visiting from Bradford, Congerville, and Tremont, IL; Remington, IN; Junction, Latty, and Mansfield, OH; and Jamaica.

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 (1/22); Tucson, AZ (1/29); Tremont, IL (2/5); Bluffton North, IN (2/12); Bay City, MI (2/19); and Phoenix, AZ (2/26). If you plan to worship with us, please call ahead to confirm our schedule. Often we gather on Saturday evenings for fellowship, and all are heartily welcome. Also, we typically meet on Wednesday evenings at 7:15 p.m. for call-in services and would welcome any midweek visitors. Contacts are Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz, (615)866-5543 (fritymb.family@gmail.com); and Sis. Gwen Leuthold, (615)356-5755.

TEXAS, AUSTIN Serenity and Jasmine Ringger

Then not to parting's sorrows we
dedicate this hour,
But to renew our union with Christ,
our rock and tow'r.
If faith in Him unite us, though
parting gives us pain,
It cannot disunite us for we in Him
remain.

Zion's Harp #155, vs.5

Our thoughts and prayers go with Sis. Betsy Mogler as she moves to Sabetha, KS, and likewise Bro.

Nate Steiner as he moves to Rittman, OH. We will miss them and hope they come back to visit often.

Brethren have been helping with fire clean-up and preparing for the World Relief Project.

We appreciate the efforts of our Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart and Bro. Leland Plattner who were here recently to read the Memorandum.

Ministers who came to preach the Word were: Bros. Matt Kaufman (Bloomington, IL), Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cissna Park, IL), Clint Beyer (Sabetha, KS), Chuck Kellenberger (Elgin, IL), Dan Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN). We also are thankful for the visitors we had from Belvidere, IL; Eureka, IL; Regina SK; Silverton, OR; and Morris, MN.

The following is the minister schedule for February: (5) Princeville, IL; (12) Bluffton, IN; (26) Cissna Park, IL.

Please refer to the minister's directory for directions and contacts.

TEXAS, McALLEN Gloria Walder

"O how welcome is the Lord's Day..." We have been very blessed through the Word and sincerely thank

Bro. John Rassi (Sis. Heather, Tremont, IL), Bro. Earl Beery (Sis. Susie, Rittman, OH), and Bro. Bill Schick (Sis. Joan, Magdalena, MX) for willingly lending themselves as God's servants.

Services are scheduled for February 5, Winthrop, MN; February 12, West Bend, IA; February 26, Rittman, OH; March 4, Washington, IL; March 11, Eureka, IL; March 18, Latty, OH. We also meet on Wednesday evenings at the home of Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Joyce Nohl. Please call them if you can join us.

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 heartily welcome anyone spending time in south Texas to worship with us. We appreciate advance notice when possible for planning meals and fellowship.

TEXAS, ZAPATA Mary Plattner

Bro. Tom Schrenk (Sis. Joan) are back in Zapata where he serves in the ministry during the winter months. We are thankful to have them as well as other brethren who reside in Zapata for the winter months.

Hospital patients have been Robert Bertschi, and at this time he is in Houston with his son. Sis. Dorothy Bertschi has returned to Illinois where she is residing in the Eureka Nursing Home. Sis. Dorothy spent many years in Zapata.

The holiday season brought visitors to our area and we are thankful for all those who spent time with us. Anyone coming to South Texas this winter is most welcome to spend time and worship with us.

VERMONT NORTH CLARENDON Nathan and Miriam Reutter

We bring you greetings from Vermont. This has been a very mild December. As we speak we still do not have any snow, which is unusual. As it is northern New England, we still trust that snow will come and that by the time winter ends we will be glad to see it gone.

The month started off with a Memorandum exhortation from

our Elder Bro. Bro. Kevin Ryan (Sis. Cheryl) and Ordained Deacon Bro. Warren Zahner. Other visiting ministers this month included Bro. Duane (Sis. Kay) Reutter and Bro. Dan (Sis. Diane) Stoller. All of these ministers and their wives are from Rockville, CT. We continue to enjoy and appreciate their constant effort to support us.

We hope to enjoy new and old friends in the New Year. We extend an open invitation to all to visit and support our small congregation. We are so small it feels awkward calling ourselves a congregation, but we invite you in spite of this.

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

Service times are as follows:
Mid-week services

(Contact local brethren)

Sunday Morning Service
10:10 AM

Sunday Afternoon Service
12:15 PM

Sunday school is held during the morning service.





Education Intern

Gateway Woods is in need of a Education Intern for the summer of 2012. The Education Intern position offers the opportunity to grow deep relationships with Gateway Woods Staff, as well as the chance to grow as a teacher and spend a significant amount of one-on-one time with residents. If you feel the call to explore the possibilities and to have a positive impact in the lives of residents this summer, please call one of the brothers listed below.

Summer Volunteer Coordinator

Gateway Woods is currently searching for a Summer Volunteer Coordinator. The Summer Volunteer Coordinator position offers the opportunity to grow deep relationships with fellow volunteers as well as Gateway Woods Staff and residents. If you feel the call to explore the possibilities, please call one of the brothers listed below.

Top Quality Coordinator

Gateway Woods is in need of a Top Quality Coordinator for the summer of 2012. The Top Quality Coordinator position offers the opportunity to grow deep relationships with Gateway Woods Staff and summer volunteers, as well as the chance to spend a significant amount of one-on-one time with residents. If you feel the call to explore the possibilities and to have play a role in a group of residents lives this summer, please call one of the brothers listed below:

Adam McAfee
 School Administrator
 PO Box 151
 Leo, IN 46765
 1-888-443-4283
 adam.mcafee@gatewaywoods.org

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

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Sermon continued from page 2

here as how Timothy had known His manner of doctrine. He went through and described those things that describe the life of a sanctified child of God. Maybe it would be well this morning as we have read this Scripture to consider some of those attributes in this contrast. It is a conflict that has existed since the Garden of Eden. It's a contrast that Satan brought to the garden when he caused Eve to sin. We know he came there and deceived her with a lie into thinking she could be as God. The pride of life would enter into her, and there was a deception that took place. (Genesis 3:5) That continues on, dear ones. That continued on in your week this past week wherever you were – in your workplace, at home, in the community, at school. Wherever you were, that conflict with sin and Satan attempting to deceive was right there. No doubt many of you felt it and it will continue on when we, Lord willing, continue on in this next week. So it does us well, doesn't it, to understand what the attributes of sin and Satan are – those characteristics that he's going to bring on us. We need to be trained warriors of the Lord Jesus Christ and God so we have the ability to counter, conquer, and overcome.

Then there would be those things that we could use as a measure to see if these things are in our life. Not that in and of themselves entirely these are righteousness, but they would be evidence of a righteousness that comes from living completely and wholly for the Lord Jesus Christ – of a converted child of God, one who has completely been restored and renewed.

So let's consider these things that will come. It says in the last days, there will be perilous times (II Timothy 3:1). It says, "...men shall be lovers of their own selves..." v.2. We see all kinds of evidence of that today in those who take the attitude of my way or the highway. It's really a doctrine that is pervasive in the world today that would be humanistic thinking. It teaches us that, based on our own personal values, we can look at all of those things we could possibly do in a certain situation. We'll make the de-

cision, and it would not be in anyone else's place to judge us in that decision. What's right or wrong is determined by us in our circumstance and our own determination. That's a philosophy that comes out of men loving self – putting our own judgments above judgments that would come from the Bible, judgments we would receive from the Holy Spirit, that we acknowledge we can be shown by God and can look to Him and He would teach us into right ways and right decisions.

It goes on to speak of "...covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers..." v.2. We know a blasphemer is someone who would speak against truth and against God. "...disobedient to parents..." – we could best grasp the shift in the world and the society that influences us today if we talk to grandparents or great-grandparents and ask them what their attitude, their manner of speech, and the interaction was with their parents and grandparents in their day. We would find out there was a different level of respect. There was a yielding to the biblical principle that was instituted with the Ten Commandments that the children would honor their father and their mother and be obedient to parents. Ephesians 6 teaches us "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." (v.1) If we consider that, we would realize that the obedience to parents is a principle initiated by God and expected of children. If we think of that, children are their natural selves, right? When they grow up they develop this selfish, natural character, and we as parents are always correcting, teaching, and training them up in the way they should go. So they will by nature be disobedient. We realize the role of instilling this principle of obedience comes back to parents. We live in a society today where children are taught they have rights. You talk to any teacher in the school, and they are really frustrated. They say it's not the children that are the problem. If they could just discipline, teach, and instruct children, that would be fine, but whenever they try to put their foot down on the child, the parent yells. That's what they have to deal with. You realize parents today

maybe just don't want to be bothered with the disobedience of their children. Maybe they would like to believe the children would receive their instruction and teaching elsewhere. That principle of obedience falls on us as parents that we would begin instruction as little children. How wonderful it is when that principle of God transfers then to obedient believers and obedient children of God and that we would have a habit already of submitting and yielding to higher authority. That's the principle that was being taught here.

"Without natural affection..." v.3 is an attribute of an ungodly world. Think of the prevalence of divorce today. Think of the prevalence of single parent families. One parent says they want to go and do their own thing, and they'll walk away from their flesh and blood, their own children. When you talk to children who have grown up in those situations, you realize the heartache and the fear they have from not feeling this natural affection – the love of a parent to nurture, raise, and teach their children. Today it is sadly common that parents walk away from the family setting.

It speaks here of "...lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God". v.4. If you go back in history and read the constitution and writings of our founding fathers, they grounded themselves in faith and in the Bible. The laws of our nation were built around Christian ideals. So we're in a nation that has been blessed, and we can believe it has prospered because of that. In this nation that was given what it has from God, we could ask how many people today, on the Lord's Day, will be worshiping God or how many would be about pleasures of men, maybe in a sporting arena or following some activity because Sunday's a day when so many sporting events are taking place. How many today would just take it as another work day and continue on not realizing that any blessing they received in the six days they worked was from God and of God and only given to them for a season by God. We see it a lot – those that love pleasures

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more than they love the things that be of God.

We even see it in the work place, in the business world. It manifests itself as you see men who become so caught up in career. They put themselves out so much by being about the business and being about their work that they lay aside family. We see those that would lay aside some of these things we read about – truce breakers (v.3). They would lay aside truth, become dishonest. Really, they would lay aside the love of God first. That’s really what it would boil down to, wouldn’t it? In the time of the children of Israel and Moses, the people would want to put up an idol. They would want to build this god they could see and put their hands on. That’s what affects the world today, isn’t it? It’s the desire to touch and feel the thing which we would worship. It could be so many things. It could be a car, a pick-up, or a job. In so many ways the idolatry could be in the entertainment world where we would lift up things greater than life – the sports figures.

It speaks here of “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof...” v.5. We really see a lot of that in nominal Christianity. They want to acknowledge God. They want to say, ‘I am a Christian. I believe’, but when it comes to separation from sin, separation from serving self, Satan, and the world, there’s not a desire to go that far. There’s not a desire to sanctify the vessel that will be the dwelling place of God and to keep it in a pure and holy state so God would desire to dwell there.

So we considered those things that would be attributes of the perilous times, the last days. Now we can consider those things that are the doctrine of the Apostle Paul when he was speaking to Timothy. He said, “But thou hast fully known my doctrine...” v.10 – those things that were of God. Doctrine is what we have as a pattern of beliefs, a pattern of godly values. So the Apostle says thou hast known the things that I stand for. He speaks of his manner of life. Sometimes in that thought we spoke of – those that would have a form of godliness but

deny the power thereof – they would want to believe it was just as simple as saying I believe, and then all of the good things of God will be added. If we start studying the Word, we realize there is a calling of God that would draw His people out of the sin of the world. So the Apostle speaks here of the manner of life (v.10), and that manner of life would be a life that would portray a child of God. It would show a joy. It would portray a child of God who has been redeemed and who ponders and considers, day by day, the goodness of God in sending His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and what was so freely given and so freely offered. It would be the thankfulness and the peace that comes out of a child of God, and this comes out in our manner of life. When we’re going about our work and dealings with our friends, neighbors, coworkers, children, what comes out of us should not be a constant downcast, negative, complaining type of a spirit but a spirit of appreciation for what God has done and provided for us. Our manner of life should separate itself from the activities that bring on the thoughts of sin. The prevalence of the entertainment industry today and the things that it would make money on tend to be around the corrupt things of the mind, the impure things, the violent things. Our manner of life should be that we distance ourselves from those things, and it should be evident that the indwelling love of God would be there.

Our purpose as a people of God should be clear to us. What is our purpose in life? It shouldn’t be that our purpose would be to grow a farm or a business or have a certain nice house or drive a certain nice vehicle. That would not be a purpose, would it, of a child of God? It should be evident to those around us that our purpose is one of service. Our purpose is one of yieldedness. Our purpose is one of, above all else, attaining an eternal kingdom – tied very closely to faith; tied very closely to longsuffering – that we would endure. We read in verse 12 that “...all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” A child of God in those times should portray a longsuffering

heart and spirit and have charity (v.10). We read in I Corinthians 13 of those attributes of charity. We could do a lot of good things, but if we don’t have charity we still are as nothing in God’s eyes.

We should have patience (v.10). Often in the workplace and even beyond that, we like to measure. We often talk about how you know if you are doing well in a certain area. So we come up with ways to know, whether it is in terms of sales dollars or some cases pounds of steel, what the measure is. As we think about that, we all like to connect with something like that, don’t we? When we bring it back to our faith, we ask ourselves what is the measure? It’s not ever going to be in our faith that we have a clear measure of knowing how we are doing because it’s a manner of the heart. It’s not that we ever have a clear measure to look at our brother, sister, friend, or someone else around us and be able to know how they’re doing because it is of the heart, isn’t it? But because we have gathered here and we have God’s Holy Word and the Holy Spirit, God can lay in each of our hearts an instruction on measuring up against His will and His Word.

As we consider the contrast of the perilous times and the sin, the ungodly person and the contrast of one who has the godly doctrine and manner of life, may it be that every one of us allow the Holy Spirit to show us where we stand in this. Could it be that we could walk closer to God? Could it be that we have not repented for sin and there is this gulf between us and being reconciled with God? Could it be as a converted person that through this past week there might have been something we could think of as a barnacle that attached itself to us that we need to get rid of? We need to overcome. So as we come together, that’s the opportunity we have, dear Ones. We have the opportunity to take this Word of God to measure ourselves in the light of it. May each one of us be given that desire first and then a heart that can clearly see and know, and may God bless it.



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

Director of Culinary Services

Apostolic Christian Skylines is looking for a professional who is highly motivated and interested in creating a superior restaurant dining experience for the elderly of our long term care community. An individual with hotel or restaurant culinary skills is preferred. Responsibilities would include:

- Plan, organize and supervise daily operations.
- Direct and coordinate the work production for our kitchen, dining room and café.
- Maintain proper production, safety and sanitation standards.
- Direct and participate in the daily preparation of standard and gourmet food items.
- Maintain proper inventory controls for food, supplies and equipment.
- Control revenue and expenses to ensure financial goals.
- Have a passion for customer relations and creating a superior dining experience for the elderly.

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Please contact Matt Feucht at 309-683-2512 if you are interested.

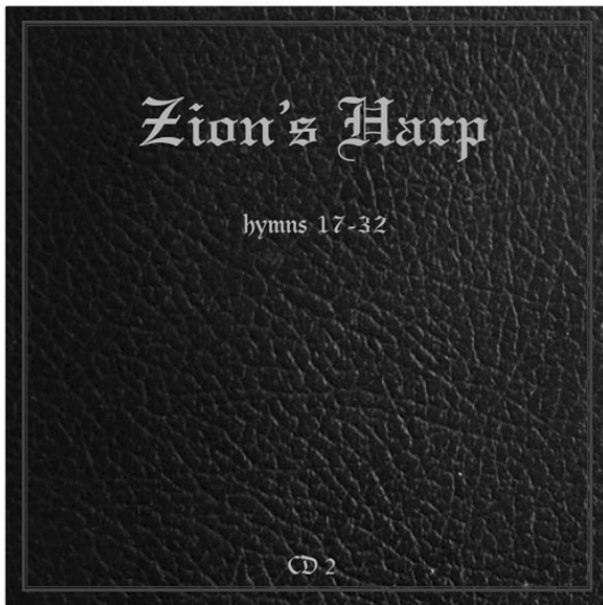


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Healthy Boundaries - Part 4

(referencing "Boundaries"
by John Townsend & Henry Cloud)

Resistance to boundaries.

Realizing that there will be opposition to the establishment or enforcement of boundaries in our lives by our own selves and others, the authors have identified eight boundary myths. These myths sound true and often are believed automatically. Some of these myths may come from family backgrounds, church or theological foundations, or our own misunderstandings. A foundational step in developing healthy boundaries is the prayerful examination of these myths and determining whether we have become ensnared in any of them.

"If I set boundaries, I'm being selfish."

"Boundaries are a sign of disobedience."

"If I begin setting boundaries, I will be hurt by others."

"If I set boundaries, I will hurt others."

"Boundaries mean that I am angry."

"When others set boundaries, it injures me."

"Boundaries cause feelings of guilt."

"Boundaries are permanent and I'm afraid of burning bridges."

Internal resistance.

As we begin to identify where we need to erect new boundaries or enforce existing ones in our lives, we will probably meet with resistance. Some of that resistance may come from our own perceptions of boundaries and the fears we have of consequences that will come from our enforcement of them. The first time we say "no" to a new task or duty, we may experience guilt if we have been accustomed to being compliant. The first time we restrain ourselves and respect someone else's "no", we may have feelings of inadequacy because our desire to control others is challenged and we fear isolation. When we begin to understand that our children also have boundaries that we need to respect, we may fear that they will grow out of control. The first time we kindly request that someone honor our time commitments, we may feel rude and unloving. When we first begin to realize that God isn't bound to answer our

prayers in our time or according to our expectations, we may feel unloved.

Romans 8:39 "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

External resistance.

Along with our own internal resistance to boundaries, we will likely face external resistance from others who may have grown accustomed to our compliance. We may be tempted to go back to our former boundary-less life because change is difficult and we fear the unknown. Guilt is a major obstacle to boundary setting as we begin to experience that others are inconvenienced by the new limits we have set. It is essential to remember that when we establish new boundaries, they may not be accepted well or appreciated by others, and that this is their problem to work through, not ours. We should recognize that as we begin to enforce our boundaries, we will face resistance, and we must be prepared for it.

James 3:17-18 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

Self-examination.

By understanding better who we are through earnest self-examination and allowing God to reveal to us our inner self, we can more clearly begin to see where we need to build fences or tear them down. We can see where we need to set limits on our time and talents and respect the boundaries of others. We can better determine whether we are being used by God in His service or being taken advantage of by others. God has given us a limited amount of time each day and the spiritual gifts to use within that time. It is up to us to use that time wisely by personally setting healthy boundaries to keep ourselves within the guidance and boundaries of God's Word.

Psalms 26:2 "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart."

Personal application.

So how do we apply the concept of having boundaries in our own lives? We

need to examine our lives and establish what is important to us and our families. We need to set priorities for our own activities and activities involving others. Then we need to adjust our personal behaviors and our behavior toward others to support the priorities we have established.

For instance, if it is important for us to have uninterrupted dinner together as a family, we may need to take the phone off the hook or shut off the cell phone. If we have made family plans for the weekend (and family activities are a high priority) and someone comes along seeking our help, we need to stand firm on our existing plans and politely tell the person we are busy. If our calendars are already full with high priority activities and a new task comes our way, we need to politely decline if at all possible. If our children ask for their space, we need to respect their boundaries as well.

Boundaries are simply ways we take control of the areas our lives that we can control. Having boundaries means being firm in our convictions and priorities. It also means respecting those same items in the lives of others. Ultimately, we have complete control over no one but ourselves. We cannot control others and how they act towards us, but we can control how we respond to them.

As you begin to establish and exercise your boundaries in ways that you haven't done before, people will notice and you will likely face some resistance. In Ephesians 4:15, we are reminded to speak the truth in love. There may be times when gentle firmness will be required to maintain the boundaries. It is healthy to be assertive without being aggressive or offensive. However, to yield to demands in order to avoid conflict is to allow the boundaries to fragment. You will need to find the right balance between avoidance and assertiveness. Family can be supportive in helping you establish and maintain healthy boundaries. The only person's thoughts and behaviors you can be responsible for are your own.

Romans 12:17-18 "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

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:

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Fairbury, IL 61739
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- 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. There is presently no outlet for Zions Harps.

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) 265-0857

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

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For schedule see: www.acmission.org/minister-rotation

For information and reservations, please call

Caretakers: Bro. Mark & Sis. Sandy Stork - (507)288-0072

Address: 4733 Birdie Lane NW, Rochester, MN 55901

Mid-week services in the Rochester area on the 3rd Wednesday

Contacts: Bro. Jim & Sis. Deb Tilbury - (507)281-2875

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.

Name _____

Mr. Mrs. Miss

Spouse _____

Address _____

City _____ St ____ Zip _____

Home Ph _____

Cell Ph _____

Email _____

Please check preference:

- Haiti Guatemala
- Mexico Jamaica
- Zambia Wherever needed

If possible I would prefer:

Boy – Age _____

Girl – Age _____

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

Interested in Houseparenting?



Houseparenting at Gateway Woods offers an opportunity for a couple, directed of the Lord, to come to work in a full-time on going ministry at Gateway Woods. Due to a change in staff, we have a need for an Alternate Houseparent couple. This position offers competitive wages and generous benefits and a close relationship with brothers and sisters whose hearts and lives are dedicated to a common mission with an eternal reward. If you feel the call to explore this possibility, 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

"We have always considered our position a ministry for our entire family not just a job for us. Relationships built during this time can last for a lifetime." - Bro. Jason & Sis. Joy Kilgus, Houseparents

CARIBBEAN BOARD PROJECTS - 2012

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 11th, 2012 -www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-caribbean/

Project	Year 2012	Coordinator	Capacity				
Les Cayes SEED Agricultural Aid	Feb 3-10	Dale Frank 319-766-3661 dtfrank@louisacom.net	12	Les Cayes MEBSH Construction	Mar 16-23	Rich Bertschi 309-467-2351 lemangm@mtco.com	12
Les Cayes MEBSH Construction	Mar 2-9	Rodney Menold rminpeoria@hotmail.com	12	Les Cayes SEED Agricultural Aid	Mar 23-30	Larry Kaufmann 815-716-6018 ljkaufmann@juno.com	12
Puits Sales Palm Grove Construction	Mar 5-13	John Aberle 785-459-2423 jraberle@hotmail.com	12	Les Cayes AWA Water Aid	Apr 6-13	Maurice Schaefer 309-925-3740 schaefs2@gmail.com	4
Les Cayes MEBSH Maintenance	Mar 9-16	Jon Zeller 309-266-9009 jzeller@mtco.com	12	Les Cayes MEBSH Haiti Support	Apr 13-16	Rich Bertschi 309-467-2351 lemangm@mtco.com	WR-CC
Les Cayes FRW Vocational School	Mar 9-16	Rick Wuethrich 219-567-9488 rick@wuethrichfarms.com	4	Les Cayes FRW Vocational School	Jun 8-15	Rick Wuethrich 219-567-9488 rick@wuethrichfarms.com	4

JAMAICA

Data updated from the Apostolic Christian World Relief web site as of January 11th, 2012 -www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-caribbean/

Project	Year 2012	Coordinator	Capacity				
Montego Bay CCCD	Mar 31-Apr 7	Tim Wiegand 260-627-8019 twiegand@blackhawkchristian.org	Leo SS	Knockpatrick CCCD	Jun 23-30	Peter Webel 419-564-5691 Wpw47@aol.com	Ohio SS
Knockpatrick CCCD	Jun 6-9	Keith Herrmann 309-639-4349 krgreetings@winco.net	Princeville SS	Montego Bay CCCD	Jun 23-30	Steve Gerber 260-437-1670 srgerber@live.com	Bluffton SS
Deaf Village CCCD	Jun 8-16	Ted Hirstein 309-266-8769 hirstein@mtco.com	40	Knockpatrick CCCD	Jul 7-14	Calvin Teubel 217-552-6515 cbteubel@hotmail.com	Champaign SS

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

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 December 9th, 2011 -www.acworldrelief.org/work-teams-mexico/

Location	Year 2012	Coordinator			
Magdalena Construction	Feb 11-18	Jon Blomgren 712-470-0173 jtb@alliancecom.net	Magdalena Construction	Mar 31-Apr 7	Curt Hodel Roanoke Bible Class 309-923-8091 cjhodel@gmail.com
Magdalena Construction	Feb 18-25	Jon Baner 309-747-4085 baner@gridcom.net	Magdalena Construction	Jun 9-16	Steve Leuthold Peoria Bible Class 309-249-2141 sleuth@speerbank.com
Magdalena Construction	Feb 25-Mar 3	Jim Barth 309-367-2098 barthlings6@juno.com	Magdalena Construction	Jun 16-23	Andy Sauder Morton Bible Class 309-263-9965 andy.sauder@gmail.com
Reynosa Medical	Mar 7-14	Todd Drayer 260-273-3112 todd.drayer@gmail.com	Magdalena Construction	Jun 23-30	Jeff Rocke Taylor Bible Class 573-231-5849 jeff@rocksolidcustombuilders.com
Magdalena Construction	Mar 10-17	Lance Martin Illinois State University isyounggroup@gmail.com	Magdalena Construction	Jul 21-28	Rick Kaisner Chicago Bible Class 847-942-1174 rick@kaisner.org
Magdalena Construction	Mar 24-31	Jeff Leman Bluffton Senior Class 260-565-3815 jeffleman62@gmail.com			

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

Director of Operations Job Opening at Hospital Lumiere

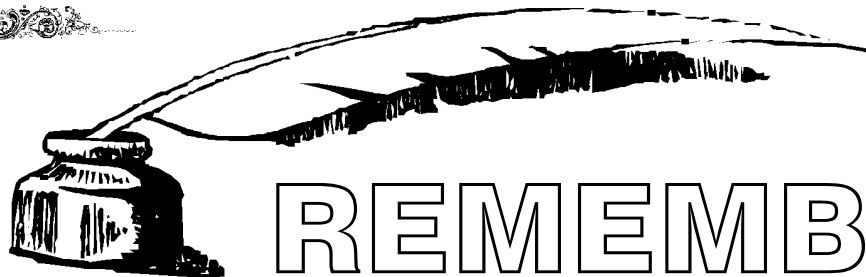
As the Lord opens the hearts, we are searching for a Director of Operations who will be acting as the Chief Operating officer for Hospital Lumiere at Bonne Fin, Haiti. Under the direction of the hospital board, the director is to enable the hospital to provide, in a Godly way, the best care possible within the Haiti environment.

Some responsibilities will include overseeing: staffing, training, recordkeeping, hospital team building, efficient operations and maintenance of facilities, monitor community needs, excellent communication through all facets of the hospital operations and management, and chair various hospital committees.

As the Lord lays this opportunity to serve on your heart, please contact:

Bro. Tom Hitz
tchitz@sbcglobal.net
734-454-9229





REMEMBERING

Our Spiritual Heritage

The autobiography of Elder Ernest Graf of Akron, Ohio continues. He served as Elder at Akron from 1922-1948, and was active as a national Elder during that era.

Coming to America

During the summer of 1882, a cloud gathered above our family and home. In one way or another my father had become indebted to such an extent that evidently he saw no other way but to let all his property be sold. When this was done, there was nothing left for us but to seek our fortune elsewhere.

Then autumn came, father bid us farewell, and left for America. Soon after that his sister Elizabeth Baumann was also determined to cross the ocean, and with her went my sister Margaret and brother John. They came to Marshallville, Ohio, while my father first stopped in New Jersey to visit his brother Adam who had married and settled there and raised a family. After a few weeks, Father also came to Ohio.

This was either in October or November. Having procured a loan from his brother and some other relatives in Ohio, he sent for the rest of the family early in the year 1883. But since my brother Herman had not yet completed his studies for teaching, he was determined to remain in Switzerland for a time. The college he attended was in Zurich.

My sister, Salome, who had been working in the city of Basel for many years, declared she would not leave Herman alone, so she also stayed behind. I will mention here that she never married, and after an illness of considerable length, died in the home of brother Herman in 1916. I have a copy of her last will making disposition of her personal effects. As for brother Herman, after having taught elemen-

tary school for several years he married and settled down in the city of Zurich.

March, 1883

It was about the first of March, 1883, that my sisters Elizabeth, Rosa, Louise, and my brother Adam and I left our paternal home in company with our cousin Gottfried Baumann for America. We embarked March 3, at Antwerp on the ship *Switzerland*, the smallest and oldest vessel of the Red Star Line. As I remember, it was a rather rough and stormy voyage and all became seasick except my sister Elizabeth and me. I was too young to be effected as children rarely become seasick. Rosa was sick from first to last, but Louise, Adam, and Godfrey got over it in a few days and the young men had a good time after that.

We arrived in America on March 13, and landed at Castle Garden, now the Fish Aquarium. Here we passed inspection and then were quartered in a hotel managed by a Swiss proprietor. The second evening we were taken to the Pennsylvania Railroad station and put on an emigrant train. After a ride of about 24 hours, we reached our destination which was Orrville, Ohio. Here my father and brother John met us — father with a team of horses and a spring wagon, and John also with a spring wagon drawn by a span of mules. The latter belonged to John Meyer, a relative. It was to his home John took my sisters Elizabeth, Rosa, Louise, and me while father took brother Adam and Godfrey Baumann to Christ Graber's, a farmer for whom father was working.

Getting Settled

Now began the task of finding a place for each one of us. The necessity of each earning his own living was ap-

parent so we scattered out without any real home to go to until the following autumn. As I cannot here follow the others on their various ways, I will confine myself to describing my experiences. For a few weeks I stayed with my Aunt Elizabeth Baumann. Then a more permanent home was offered me by the Peter Hilty family who lived about three and one-half miles from Smithville, Ohio. They had two children of their own, a boy Joseph, 2 and a girl Sarah, who was six months old.

Grandmother Zeller, Mrs. Hilty's Mother, also made her home here. All were kind to me, especially the mother and grandmother. I was not yet 10 years old. Nevertheless, I was impressed by their piousness and godly life. Mr. Hilty was very quiet and seldom spoke, yet I felt no home-sickness, although I did not see my father but 2 or 3 times all summer and my sisters not at all as they were far away. But I saw Adam and John every Sunday since their employers belonged to the same church as the Hilty's. It was the old frame church two and one-half miles south of Rittman which has long since given place to a larger one built of brick. It was here that I met my brothers every Sunday which added considerably to my peace of mind.

Edited by

Bro. Perry Klopfenstein, Gridley, IL

Next Issue:

The autobiography will continue with stories of young Ernest Graf working on the farm in Ohio; and later moving to live with his father and sisters on their own farm.

The Light Of Hope

“The Other Person's Feelings”

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

I don't exactly know why, but I got the idea that I should write an article about people's feelings. It may be that I am not careful enough about hurting someone else's feelings. We tend to say and do what we feel like, without paying enough attention to how our words or deeds might make someone else feel.

The word “feeling” is used only twice in the King James Bible, according to my concordance; in Ephesians 4:19 and in Hebrews 4:15. The former verse speaks of being past feeling, which in this case means someone who is no longer convicted about anything. That is a sad situation.

The verse in Hebrews speaks of Christ being touched with the feeling of our infirmities. The verse reads as follows: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” I believe this means that Christ understands some of the struggles we have and that he doesn't condemn us but He consoles us, if we are humble. I Peter 5:5 “For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”

Now getting back to our hurting each other's feelings unnecessarily. In this new year of 2012, can we do better in avoiding hurting each other's feelings? What is the Scriptural basis for trying not to hurt the other person's feelings?

The first thing I think of is the Golden Rule found in Matthew 7:12, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye

even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” We don't like for others to speak to us in an unkind manner or without respect, so we should be careful about what we speak and how we speak, to others.

In some cases you may not be able to avoid hurting the other person's feelings. If you have an employee who is not measuring up and you must let him go because he lacks the qualifications for the job, you must let him go even if it hurts his feelings. However, I think that it should be done as kindly and gently as possible. We are dealing with precious human beings for whom Christ died.

In a fellowship like a church, it seems to me that we should take into consideration the feelings of others and not just do what we feel like doing. The Apostle Paul wrote, “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” I Corinthians 9:22. He related to different kinds of people in different ways in the hope of winning them to Christ. There is also the matter of having a strong church which is obedient to the Word and which overflows with love for Christ and for one another. That kind of love and obedience also helps win people to Christ.

The place where hurting one another's feelings is probably the most devastating is in the family. We simply can't be too careful about this and if there are ever hurt feelings within the family, an immediate apology is probably in order. Surely there is a way to share concerns about each other's shortcomings without putting

yourself above the other person, as if you are better or smarter than the other person. We must cultivate more love and respect for one another. Philippians 2:3, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”

Is it true that we human beings are more concerned about our own feelings being hurt than about us hurting someone else's feelings? If so, we need to be more careful.

In Isaiah 11:9 we read, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” This teaches us that we shall not hurt nor destroy each other during Christ's millennial reign. Wouldn't it be a good thing for us to be like that right now without waiting for the millennium?

Some of you may say that the problem is that you hurt people's feelings by following the teachings of the Bible and the teachings which are beneficial for living a holy, obedient life. As far as I can tell, no one should ever have to neglect obeying the Bible in order to avoid hurting someone else's feelings. That's different than hurting someone's feelings by being critical or looking down on someone. We should all be longing to obey the Bible.

Anyway, please forgive me if I have ever hurt your feelings unnecessarily. Life is too short and too precious for us to be hurting each other by being rough and inconsiderate in our speech or conduct. Let's be careful about the other person's feelings.

希望の光

THE SILVER LINING
1389 County Road 1600 N
Roanoke, IL 61561

*Consider, man, that heart of thine,
Thy life and deeds beholding.
Do thorns there grow, or fruits divine?
Are weeds therein residing?
The fruits will truly manifest
What seeds have in thy heart been cast,
Of God's or the destroyer's.*

*Is now thy heart an open way
Of wide and broad dimensions
From which those evil birds of prey
Can rob all good intentions?
O, be sincere! It is no jest;
Of thorns and weeds thy heart infest,
Then sad is thy condition!*

Zions Harp #108 vs.1,2

