“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”

Revelations 22:16
The Meekness and Lowliness of Christ

As the Christmas season approaches we stand in awe all over again at the love of God and the gift of His son, Jesus Christ. In Matthew 11:29 Jesus said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” There is something about the meekness and lowliness of Christ, not only at His birth but through His life and in His death on Calvary that draws souls to Him.

The babe of Bethlehem, who grew to become the man of Galilee, focused His life and efforts on doing His Father’s will and serving His fellow man - a life of love and service. So we, as we “take His yoke upon us”, will continue to “learn of Him”, we too must approach the world around us with the “meekness and lowliness” of Christ. May we in this season likewise show His love and compassion to our fellow man.

As we reflect upon the blessing given to mankind through the gift of God’s son let us complete the journey from His cradle to His grave for therein we find the promised “rest unto our souls”.

Wishing you all the blessings of Christ this Christmas,

Tom Stock, along with Rick Plattner, counseling elders

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Correspondence
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Serving Those Who Cannot Repay

“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest.”

The words of our Savior remind us how our lives should be: in service to others, patterned after the life of the Good Shepherd; who not only spoke the truth, but exemplified it by His life. He lived a life of self-denial, giving His life as a ransom for each one of us, who could not repay the debt of sin that we owed, so that we could live eternally with Him in Heaven. This “mark” helps us put into a perspective what it means to serve others who cannot repay.

The story of the Good Samaritan teaches us some critical aspects of serving others. “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.”

First, we read that the Samaritan was on a journey. It is a good reminder that each of us is also on a journey. Our purpose is not for ourselves or to seek our own will, but rather to serve others. This requires us to change our natural course, leave our normal path, and focus on the needs of others. We read in Matthew, “And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” Our lives cannot be so entangled with the affairs of this world that we would be oblivious to the gentle nudges of the Holy Spirit or blinded to those in need along the way. As we start each day, may our prayer be both “not my will but thine be done” and as the apostle Paul said, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”

With a desire to do God’s will, we must also be willing to put aside our own thoughts and biases, and be willing to help, with no respect of persons. Paul wrote in Corinthians, “to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” Our willingness to submit our own thoughts, desires, and earthly wisdom to the Lord—so that we can be easily entreated, quick to hear, and open to trusting in God’s wisdom—is a critical part of our ability to truly serve others.

Next, our ability to truly “come to others” is dependent upon our spiritual vision. The Good Samaritan saw the one in need. His vision was not to look at what was in it for himself, as we see often in the world. Jesus taught, “And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.” Rather, our hearts must be as the Savior, who always saw those in need, whether they were little children, the sick, the halt, those in sin, or those of a different nationality. He saw them as scattered sheep in need of a Shepherd.

Experience teaches that it takes time and effort to get to know someone, to understand their situation, and to truly know how to help them. Having patience, as Christ did with us, is often necessary. Our ability to have the mind and heart of Christ, unclouded by “earthly scales,” will allow us to see the true need in others, enabling us to help them by God’s grace.

Third, He had compassion on him and took care of him. We read in Romans, “Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink…..be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” It is clear throughout Scripture that God expects His people to help those in need. One aspect of compassion is to alleviate the suffering of
Greetings, all, in the Lord. We’re thankful to be here. I come up here on the pulpit, and this microphone remotely adjusts. It was a little bit of a surprise for me when it started to move. Is there going to be a surprise in our heart? Are we going to find something new in His Word that’s going to make us take a second look? Or are we here today because that’s what we did when we were children, and we went to Sunday School. We learned about the manger. We learned about Jesus. We learned all these things of the wise men. Now we’ve come to be young adults, maybe some teenagers here, some middle aged, older, all different varieties of age. We gather around God’s Word, and is our microphone going to adjust automatically for us to set us in the place that we’re at or is it going to be just something that we come to do because it’s what we do?

I’m thankful for God’s Word because that’s where we turn first. This morning I took some time in prayer just to consider what the Lord would have for us. Forgive me for the vernacular, but I was sitting there thinking to myself how has the world changed from the time of Isaiah to the time of the Lord to the time where we are today? I’m thankful I get to work with young people every now and then and I have children of my own. We all have different generations that we go through, and the generation we’re in is that concept of ourselves being always in the picture.

For the young people, that’s considered a selfie. When you take a picture, you don’t take a picture of somebody else any more. You take it of yourself and someone else next to you. We’re always in the picture. It’s about me. That’s the driven force of our advertisement agencies that we have out there. It’s what can the world and what can we do for ourselves?

Today I hope that the Word comes forth and shows us that it’s not about us. Today, Christmas, if we can do one thing, let’s take ourselves out of it, and let’s look at how the Scripture points to One that was world-changing, revolutionary, salvation.

“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.” We could spend an hour in our closet if we needed to just to go over those words. “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” (Isaiah 9:6-7) As we consider the words we just read, I hope it’s personal. I hope it’s personal to all of us when we read these words that He’s our Counselor, He’s our Prince of Peace.

Let’s consider the wise men a little bit this morning. I don’t know why I have a fascination with the wise men, but I do a little bit. We know they came from the East. There’s not much that the Bible has about them in the Old Testament. There may be a few passages here and there that might allude to them, but it’s not much. If we think about the time in which Christ was born, all of the sudden there are these wise men from the East. Now we don’t know if the East was Mesopotamia or in the land where Iraq and Iran would be right now or if the East was maybe even further. Maybe it was China or India. We don’t know. We just know they came from the East, and they saw a star.

As we read this together, one question all of us, in our minds or notepads or whatever we have, should think about is what were the attributes of the wise men that allowed them to get to worship Jesus? Write down three things in your mind. They are maybe all different, but what allowed
these wise men, what about them, what about their character, their personality, who they were, what they spent their time doing?

Let’s consider for a moment the time that Jesus was born because another question we can ask is why was Jesus born here in this time? What about the circumstances of world that God above and the Lord and the Holy Spirit said now is the time to send the only begotten Son? Now is the time to reveal the perfect plan. What were the circumstances and what was the culture in which they lived?

I’m by no means a historian, not even close, but just reading a little bit about the times, let’s go back to the time when the children went into exile. We see that’s the time of the Medes and the Persians. We know of Nebuchadnezzar from Babylon and Darius and Artaxerxes and all these kings. The children of Israel are in exile, and they’re out there in the land of Mesopotamia. They’ve been carried away. Then we have the next period of time where the Grecians come in, and this is the Hellenistic period where all of the sudden out of Greece comes Alexander the Great. He carries this great army and comes through the Middle East, and he goes all the way over to China and India. He conquers this whole area including Judaea and down to Egypt. But before he comes, there’s a man that sends Ezra and Nehemiah back. He gives them a blessing - go back and build the temple. They go back and restore the temple, and we know that account well. That’s the first indication that we have this thing of the taxing. I think he said something about the taxing at that time. That’s the first time we get it, and we read in Luke that there was a taxing to be done to Caesar.

At that time, the one thing that happens is that while the rebuilding is during the Persian time, the Samaritans that are north of Israel and the Israelites down in Judah start to become more separated. There’s a division. In the North they start to mix some of the pagan worship with their Jewish worship. I happen to have the blessing of being in a synagogue that was restored next to the Sea of Tiberius or the Galilean Sea. The floor is a mosaic. Half the floor has all the sensors and the Ark and all the things of Jewish religion, and on the other half there’s the pagan circle with the Pegasus and all the different things that go around it - all on the floor of this synagogue. The confusion that time had was profound that there would be a mixture of religions. Keep that in our minds because I don’t think it’s much different today.

So Alexander the Great comes in and takes over, and basically the person that is in charge of Jerusalem is terrible. He desecrates the temple. I think Josephus writes about how they went into the temple and desecrated it. They would cause the Jews to not be circumcised. They would cause them to defile the holy days. It was a bad time. The Jewish people were in a very dark time, and out of that group come the Pharisees and the Sadducees. It the first time in history we get an understanding of them.

Then we have the Maccabees. Their father’s name was Mattathias. These Maccabees come up and revolt against this empire that’s ruling over them, and they establish independence from it. Even amongst this independence, there’s infighting amongst the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The Pharisees say there should be priests that run the religious part, and there should be the government out of the lineage of David that should run the secular part. The Sadducees thought it should be the same person. There’s infighting amongst them, and there’s not harmony. When the Roman Empire comes and destroys, it’s easy. They just basically walk into Jerusalem and take it over. There’s not much of a fight because God’s people couldn’t get along.

We read about in John 1, you can just see it. We think of all the different accounts of the beginning

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Child Sponsorship Fit with HarvestCall™

The mission of the Apostolic Christian Church Child Sponsorship program is very specific: “to provide a Christ-centered education to needy children.” In the mid-late 1990’s when Child Sponsorship was formed, it was placed under the World Relief organization due to its humanitarian thrust – providing a base education to some of the poorest children on Earth. However, the essence of Child Sponsorship always envisioned illuminating the gospel message so sponsored children would learn about the hope of eternal salvation through belief in our Lord and Savior.

Child Sponsorship’s mission was broader than World Relief (humanitarian focus) and it was broader than the Mission Committee (salvation focus).

However as World Relief and Mission integrate into HarvestCall, the new organization’s purpose of “proclaim & serve” is a perfect fit for what Child Sponsorship is all about. Proclaim is the delivery of the message of Christ to our sponsored children and in our schools. Serve is the humanitarian benefit that a base education provides to help those in poverty improve their lives as adults.

As we move into 2016, you will note that all former Child Sponsorship materials formerly associated with World Relief will be produced under the new HarvestCall organization. Our Committee is very pleased with this new structure and focus for our church’s integrated outreach programs.

A “Proclaim” example

Most of us remember Bible story time as toddlers or young children. At an early age, we recorded in our mind’s eye vivid visuals of Daniel in the lion’s den, Joseph and his coat of many colors, Noah and the ark, Jesus calming the storm or healing someone, Jesus on the cross and the stone rolled away from His grave. We were fortunate to hear these stories over and over and to visually see them presented to us in Sunday School or at home in our story books.

Several years ago, Child Sponsorship embarked on an ambitious program to provide Bible story books to all of our nearly 1,700 sponsored children in all five countries that we currently serve: Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Guatemala and Zambia. The goal of this initiative is to make sure all of our sponsored children have a Bible story book that helps bring the Gospel message to life, visually imprinting some of the most memorable stories in their mind’s eye forever.

Provided in their own language

The “25 Favorite Bible Stories” book was provided to all of the children in the schools where we sponsor children (for example, while we only sponsor 1,100 children and 100 schools in Haiti, approximately 15,000 children attend those schools). Each of the 25 Bible stories is illustrated with a large color picture on one page, with the text translated to Creole on the opposite page. Not only can the children enjoy the pictures, but the stories are presented in their language – what a treat it has been to see their eyes light up when they understand that this beautiful paperback Bible story book is their own to keep and treasure.

— Please turn to pg. 64
After twenty years of serving the Lord and the Ixlán church in Mexico, Bro. Marshall and Sis. Jan Heinold have returned home to Washington, IL. In addition to being closer to family, it has long been their conviction to step aside so more responsibility might be given to local brothers who understand, firsthand, the Mexican people and culture.

The history of their involvement with the Ixlán church can be traced back to the earthquake of 1985 in Mexico City. As work team members, Heinolds were able to visit an orphanage where they witnessed firsthand 60 boys with dull and lifeless eyes. The Lord laid on their hearts a desire to start a boy’s dairy ranch where animal chores would offer a platform for character formation and biblical teaching.

The Lord had prepared Bro. Marshall with gifts in financial stewardship prior to his calling to the mission field. He submitted his request to the Mission Committee to put the Biblical principles he taught and practiced in his work into practice for the Lord’s work in Mexico. Under their authority, the arduous process of securing property for a boy’s ranch began. One property seemed especially promising, but was not selected for financial reasons. Soon thereafter they received an invitation from Jose and Cathy Cervantes to live in an unfinished dwelling in Ixlán while they searched for properties in the area.

**A Change in Direction.**

In between property visits, the Heinolds began to teach the small flock at Ixlán. Beginning at Genesis, they began laying down a spiritual foundation. Jose’s mother (Carmen) and sister (Maria) had been baptized years before by elders from the Apostolic Christian (Nazarean) church and the next two baptisms were conducted by Nazarean elders. From that point forward, Bro. Marshall requested that our church assume responsibility for the spiritual care of the flock. Consequently, his vision for a boy’s ranch was relinquished and he accepted the Lord’s vision for a church.

**The Principle of Integration**

If they were going to grow a local congregation, it was imperative that they become integrated into the local community. While Sis. Jan was competent with the Spanish language, it did not come as quickly for Marshall. The small market owners were patient as he stumbled his way through the language barrier. In addition to commerce, the Lord opened many opportunities to serve the local people with transportation and acts of kindness. Bro. Marshall would walk the streets of Zamora gaining familiarity while waiting several hours for Sis. Carmen to complete her doctor visits.

A “porch ministry” was established where Sis. Jan kept a box of children’s storybooks. When curious children stopped by, they were treated to Bible stories and endeared with cookies from the freezer. Years later those young children, having grown tall, would wave warmly as they passed by that same porch. Trust was

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“...Cheer up, my brother, live in the sunshine,...”  
(Gospel Hymns, “Farther Along”, #779)  
When we think about Florida, thoughts of a sunny, warmer climate, beautiful beaches, palm trees and citrus fruits may come to mind. For the brothers and sisters who live in Ft. Myers, Sarasota and Ft. Lauderdale, they enjoy God’s beautiful handiwork and are also thrilled for all of the visitors and those who come to “winter” with them. All who worship in these congregations are “warmed” by the fellowship, friendships and the presence of God’s Holy Spirit.  
Lately, the brethren from these three churches have been making a concerted effort to reach out into the communities to “seek those who are lost.” Learn about each congregation and their outreaches:

**Ft. Myers**  
The Ft. Myers congregation is primarily involved in two local outreach ministries. These include New Beginnings, which ministers to single moms and their children and the Midwest Food Bank, which opened a facility in the last two years.  
Additionally, they have heightened communication efforts to invite people to come to church by providing business cards for the congregation to distribute. When visitors do come, they have welcome cards ready to hand out. The church has also updated the phone voice mail to include the days/times of worship services and refer folks to the Internet site for more information. A position called “Opportunity Coordinator” has also been created to assist those who are considering a move to the area.  
Services in Ft. Myers initially began in Port Charlotte, Florida, which is 30 miles north of Ft. Myers, in Dec. 1979. Over the years, as more and more brethren started spending winters in the Ft. Myers area, the need to build a church became evident. The original church, built in 1984 in North Ft. Myers, met the needs of the congregation for roughly thirty years. Last year, a new church was built on the southern edge of the city. The congregation brought with them two things—the outdoor covered dining area and the practice of “potluck” lunches—as well as lots of great memories. The new church is a beautiful, more spacious facility that allows for growth of the congregation, which usually has around 50 gathering in the summer and over 240, assembling in the winter. On average, 10-15 of those gathering each Sunday are young children that are picked up by members of the church family. Two ministers—Bro. Marvin Steffen and Bro. William Masters—share the pulpit.  
There are unlimited employment options for those that may consider moving to this rapidly growing area. In general, many people are retiring and moving to the area, which drives the need for
every type of service and industry to expand to meet the needs of the growing population. There are also many choices of good colleges and universities for those pursuing further education.

**Ft. Lauderdale**
The Ft. Lauderdale congregation is also a small and loving congregation. In the summer, there are 10-20 people that attend on Sundays, while 60-75 people gather from January through Easter. The winter residents add a wonderful dynamic to the fellowship. They are often the catalyst that brings additional visitors to the area, which provides great blessings of fellowship and networking. From a ministry perspective, Bro. Mike Hohulin preaches God’s word.

Services began in Ft. Lauderdale as early as 1950 in homes. As more and more people came to spend the winter months, land was purchased in 1962, and a church building was built and dedicated in February 1964. About 5 years ago, the church was remodeled, and the congregation is blest to worship in a beautiful facility.

Ft. Lauderdale also serves as a stopping point for many who are going on mission trips to Haiti and Jamaica. Located in the southeastern area of the State, both permanent residents and visitors enjoy Atlantic breezes, beautiful beaches, great restaurants and other activities.

**Sarasota**
The first gatherings of the Sarasota brethren began in the winter months of the late 1940’s in homes, in rented facilities and at times, outdoors under the clear, blue sky. Over the years, the winter gatherings grew in numbers, and brethren began to make Sarasota their permanent home. As the church grew, several church and fellowship hall building projects followed that the congregation enjoys today. The church is very blest to have the word of God preached through Elder Bro. Jeff Streitmatter III and ministering brothers Virgil Kaeb and Matthew Koehl.

To encourage fellowship and outreach within the church and community, many activities are held including monthly potlucks and singings, Bible studies, Vacation Bible School and several spiritually focused camping and getaway weekends throughout the year as well as other youth activities and mission trips. The winter residents promote and enjoy spiritual fellowship throughout their stay by actively participating in activities and supporting the Sunday school auction, which helps fund activities for the Sunday school, which engages the children to stay close to the church and in service for the Lord. Some friends and brethren also volunteer at local non-profits.

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Living a Life of Submission

A Look at Christ’s Example

“Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.” 1 Peter 2:17

Submission is a theme carried throughout Scripture and a concept which conflicts deeply with human nature and the western ideals of today. It is a delicate subject which can be misunderstood or misapplied in our relationships. Submission does not designate a lower value to the individual asked to submit. Rather, submission is an avenue which brings:
• Growth
• Peace
• Freedom

As a believer, our goal and desire is to become more like Christ through the renewing of our mind. This renewal should affect all aspects of conversation and behaviors and challenge us to be patterned after Him. Indeed, there is no concept in the New Testament God outlined for believers which Christ did not perfectly model during His time on earth. As we strive to better understand this topic, let’s explore the ways Christ modeled submission within the different relationships in His life.

1. Children to Parents “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.” Eph. 6:1

At an early age, Christ demonstrated a spirit of submission to His earthly parents. After being found in the temple by Mary and Joseph at the age of 12, Luke 2:51 states that “he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. . . .” Even though Jesus was going about His Heavenly Father’s business in the temple, He still saw fit to return with His earthly parents, subordinating Himself under their authority and thereby growing. This principle of honoring father and mother is carried throughout the Scripture, stating that this is “well pleasing unto the Lord.” (Col. 3:20)

Reflection: What are practical ways we can show honor to our earthly parents as well as our Heavenly Father? For parents, does your behavior make submission challenging? (Eph. 6:4, 1 Thes. 2:11-12)

2. Believers to Other Believers “. . . Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility.” 1 Pet. 5:5

Only through humility is it truly possible to submit one to another. Jesus demonstrated this in a special way by completing one of the lowliest tasks of His day; He washed the feet of the disciples. As He completed this task in John 13:14-16, Jesus stated “. . . The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.” Regardless of church position, financial status or intelligence, Jesus commissioned us to show love not only in word, but in deed. If we esteem our brother higher than ourselves, it becomes easier to serve that individual, not focusing on any perceived inadequacies or weaknesses but focusing instead on our desire to live more like Christ. This will lead to great peace as we grow in our submission and likeness to Christ.

Reflection: Is there a brother or sister in your church you need to humbly serve? Pray God would convict you as necessary to better follow His example in John 13.

3. Wives and Husbands “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” Eph. 5:22-25

While He never married, Christ perfectly demonstrated the intimacy He desires to see within a marriage through His relationship to the Church. He paid the ultimate sacrifice of laying down His life. The verses in Ephesians clearly call
ultimately controls the leaders He sets above us?  

**Reflection:** Do you do your best to respect and submit to the authorities placed over you? Does your conversation reflect this to others? Read and meditate on 1 Peter 2:3.

5. **To God** “He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” Matt. 26:42

The pinnacle of history was Christ’s death on the cross. In this act, Christ demonstrated that at times submission requires us to lay down our lives without knowing the final outcome. It requires humbling ourselves to the point of obedience, where nothing else matters but our relationship with Him (Heb. 5:8-9). There is great freedom when we submit our decisions and our desires to our God and His authority. When we humbly reach this point, God promises to provide. “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. . . .” Jas. 4:6-7  

**Reflection:** Am I willing to lay down my rights, my desires and my all, to humbly say to the Lord, “Thy will be done”?

Christ beautifully modeled submission and by doing so, He redeemed the term. Christ’s example throws off the stereotypes that submission implies inferiority, control and insignificance. He restores our understanding that submission has great use and brings about growth, peace, and freedom. By His practice of submission, He not only teaches us its value, but models for us it can be done.

ACCFS continues to develop resources to help women in their walk with the Lord. These resources can be found on our website at www.accounseling.org/women. If you would like more information, please contact ACCFS at (309)263-5536.
Apostolic Christian Home for the Handicapped
www.achh.org

CARES is an acronym we use at ACHH to remind us of how to we can best fulfill our mission to Serve According to God’s Purpose. We strive to do this by serving with Compassion, acting as Advocates, and by our commitment to Respect, Excellence and Safety.

Recently the work of several committees came together in a CARES Open House for all of our staff to attend. Held next door to Timber Ridge at the Fellowship Hall, each committee had a display to deepen our understanding of each aspect of CARES.

At the Compassion table we learned of a father who worked diligently to be able to take his son in a triathlon, fulfilling his son’s desire to participate in a triathlon despite his disabilities. With Advocacy, we experienced through Pictionary or charades the importance of speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves. It was thought-provoking to have the opportunity to write on a banner what Respect means to us. The Excellence display gave examples from the residents’ point of view of excellent care. We were also invited to award Excellence certificates to co-workers for instances where we saw them acting with excellence.

Safety was also addressed in a big way with examples of its importance and a game to test our knowledge about safety practices in our agency. Last, but not least, we were able to watch a video put together of different parents expressing their perspectives of how we demonstrate CARES in the work we do. Being reminded of our mission, the purpose behind our mission and the impact it has on those we care for was a motivating experience. We hope that our residents can always feel loved and valued by the way we treat them, and that we can always be thankful for the honor of serving them.

Gateway Woods Apostolic Christian Children’s Home

Christmas at Gateway Woods can be an interesting time. Many of us have wonderful memories of Christmas that include snow, Christmas trees, presents, (too much) food, hot cocoa and crackling fires. But most of us probably also have memories of caroling, nativities, stories of the birth of Jesus, and prayers of thanks for a promise fulfilled. This time of year is always a reminder that many of the children that we serve do not share these memories.

Years ago a houseparent told a story about how their house was working to setup the Christmas nativity display that we have near our campus entrance. While getting the display pieces down from the attic, one of the residents asked what the nativity meant. The houseparent asked if he had heard the story of the birth of Jesus before, and he had not! How mind-blowing, that someone who grew up in Indiana could reach teenage years and never hear the story behind the Christmas holiday. We are so thankful for the opportunity to share that story with children and families that do not know its importance!

As Christmas draws near, we would ask you to be prayerful for many of the children that we serve. Please pray that this could be a time of healing with their families, and an eye-opening season for all. We will likely only have one Christmas with most of the residents on campus, and we hope that it can be part of a lasting change. Our hope is that in the future, when Christmas time approaches, these residents will remember that this time is not about presents, big dinners and Christmas trees. But instead this is the time where we thank God for doing the unthinkable, coming to earth to fulfill a promise, making Himself of no reputation and blessing all of mankind.

We hope that you have a wonderful Christmas holiday.
News:

• We have been working to finish major upgrades to the Oak and Hickory House. These renovations are meant to improve visibility for the houseparents when in various parts of the house, and create a more open and welcoming feel for the residents. We have completed the Hickory House renovation and are nearly finished with the Oak House renovation.

• Once the Oak House renovation is finished, we will have an increased need for Houseparent couples. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to serve!

• There are three different career positions available currently at Gateway Woods, including: several openings for Alternate Houseparents, one opening for a Communications Coordinator, and one opening for a Development Coordinator. For more information, please see the notices in this edition or visit the Career Opportunities page on our website at www.gatewaywoods.org/careers. We trust that God will provide qualified, mature brothers and sisters who will serve Him in a ministry that is ‘Turning Lives Around’.

Alabama, Athens Apostolic Christian Preschool
Kalla Knobloch

We would like to thank the Preschool Board and the Athens Church for all their help around the board meeting weekend. The preschool is thankful for wisdom and guidance, but most of all we are thankful for the love and support always shared.

The themes for November were fall, space, and the color black. We studied the letters J and L. We spent one week on Thanksgiving. The students have been practicing for our Thanksgiving Program and Feast on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. The children sang songs about giving thanks to God for our blessings, what we can be thankful for, and some silly turkey songs.

The children have been collecting all sorts of canned and boxed food. They are learning about the principle of giving with a good attitude. The nonperishable food will be donated to a local food pantry. Although the students may not fully understand how giving some cans to a food bank can help feed hungry children in Athens, it has been so neat to see them willingly put their cans and boxes in our “Help Feed our Very Hungry Caterpillar” box.

“Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ, His Son!”

We are thankful for all the support, love, guidance, and prayers that we know are shared with us.

Volunteer Information:

Contact me at 309.231.1755 or acpreschool2015@gmail.com. Visit our website at www.acpreschool.org. The About Us tab will offer information on volunteering at the preschool. Talk to other volunteers to see what their experience was like.

Alabama, Athens
Monica Price

We were blessed this month to have many visitors and visiting ministers. We enjoyed having Bro. Steve and (Sis. Irene Frauhiger) from Bluffton North, IN minister to us. We got a double blessing since they stopped in to be with us before and after their trip to FL. It was good to have Bro. Roger, Sis. Becky Roberts (Goodfield, IL) and their family back for a quick visit too, as they used to live here and worship with us. Also we had our preschool board meeting this past month and we are very privileged to have many ministers on the board, so it was an added bonus for our church. We want to thank brothers Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Sue, Peach Tree City, GA), Ted...
The origins of Christmas are found in a pagan holiday, Saturnalia. It was adopted by the church and adapted over the centuries, and is now well-known as a Christian holiday. Each year, it seems, it actually reflects less and less of any attribute of Jesus Christ. It’s been hijacked by retailers and revelers, and is often more the object of contention than of celebration. Do they say “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Holidays”? Do they play songs about reindeer or Jesus? Do they utilize the religious symbolism, or is it a North Pole theme? Red cup, anyone?

There is much information about the first coming of our Lord. It is good to reflect on the unspeakable gift given by a merciful God to His sinful children, to re-establish relationship. It is good to ponder the appearance of a host of heavenly beings to shepherds on a hillside, and the sign of a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. And how the Eastern kings knew to follow the star to Bethlehem, and the appearance of a messenger angel to a young girl, and her response.

It is very good to raise our voices praising and glorifying God. We should do this every day, including December 25. We can do this in community, with our close friends and family, and/or whatever place we meet with our Savior alone. We can give gifts in honor of Jesus and according to His instructions, to those less fortunate. Again, this

Arizona, Phoenix
Marge Lindenbaum

“...how silently, how silently, The wondrous Gift is giv’n! So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven. No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.”*

From Genesis 3:15, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” through Revelation, God promises a remedy to our fallen state. In Luke 2:11, we are told of the fulfillment of the promise, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” In Gal 4:4, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law”, we are told when this promise was fulfilled in all the detail our wise Father wanted to reveal.

Christ’s birth was certainly not a major event as far as the general public was concerned, and went unnoticed, for the most part. Those who were aware of it were not instructed to announce it or respond in any way but to go and see and worship. To this day, there is no confirmed record of the date this earth-changing event took place. It is fairly certain, however, that it was not in December, and not on December 25.

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Sunday School plans to distribute Thanksgiving meals to 60 families, and packed 150 shoeboxes for the same purpose. God is blessing us as we bless others, and we wish all of our brothers and sisters continued blessings throughout the Holiday Season and the New Year!

*“O Little Town of Bethlehem” by Lewis H. Redner, Phillips Brooks, Cam Mullins.

**Arizona, Prescott**

*Autumn Rokey*

Greetings from Prescott! I am new to writing in the Silver Lining, as well as to Prescott. I just married and moved to this lovely church. I am excited to share news from our church and the gracious work God does in our daily lives, drawing us closer to Him. With the busy holiday season approaching, Paul’s reminder to the Colossians about being thankful everyday convicts me to remember to be thankful for salvation most of all!

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful. 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. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” Col. 3:15-17

This past month we enjoyed having Bro. Jesse Bedolla (Sis. Bonnie) from Detroit, MI, and Bro. Keith (Sis. Tammy) Hinrichsen and Elder Bro. Jon (Sis. Nancy) Kokanovich from Phoenix, AZ as visiting ministers. It is always a joy for our small church to welcome visitors from near and far.

It was also a joy to come together in our local World Relief project this month to make blankets and soup packets for the Navajos in New Mexico.

**Arizona, Tucson**

*Dean and Jackie Knobloch*

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand with us for the weekend of October 24 and 25. It is always a blessing to have visitors and to hear the Word preached in truth and sincerity. Bro. Arlan Miller and his wife, Sis. Katie, (AC counseling services) were also here that weekend to help our church work on a Mission Statement. We appreciate the time and effort that were expended on our behalf. Our small congregation is a “work in progress” as is our spiritual journey in life. We continue to seek God’s direction and guidance in serving the church body and those who attend from our shelters.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Sylvia (Grace/Promise house board member) who faithfully attended here. We know she will be missed.

Our prayers continue for Bro. Bob Haas (Sis. Carol) and Rob Wilson. Both have experienced health setbacks and so we continue to encourage them with prayers and deeds of kindness.
We want to welcome Sis. Joan Schmidgall from the Morris congregation who is working as a temporary visiting nurse.

We will be looking forward to the return of some of our regular winter visitors.

As the holidays draw near, we wish all many blessings as families gather together.

California, Altadena/Los Angeles
Kali Sauder

How fitting that the celebration of giving thanks leads right into the celebration of Jesus’ first advent, His coming as a helpless baby to grow up into the Helper of the Helpless. May the practice of gratitude lead us into what is typically a very busy season with grateful hearts and a joyful perspective!

Sis. Stephanie Moser, on furlough for several months here in the U.S., graciously shared with our church family one afternoon. Her presentation about her life and work for the Lord in China included introducing us to her team of teachers and evangelists and the students God has brought into her classroom and life, that they might seek the Truth and find Him. Please join us in lifting her up in prayer over the next weeks as she rests and prepares to return to China, specifically for the necessary logistics to fall into place in God’s timing.

Our church family was also blessed to host quite a few of the Witzig family for a weekend of remembering and celebrating Sis. Mary Witzig (dec. Bro. Bill Witzig) as she was laid to rest after a full and God-glorying life. She had been living in Wolcott, IN for several years, and passed into glory surrounded by beloved family. Many of her loved ones gathered to mourn and celebrate her together here in CA. We were blessed to be reunited with so many of them! Bro. Fred Witzig (Washington, IL) shared the Word with us that weekend.

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.” Psalm 100:4,5

California, San Diego
Janelle Brewer

“O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.” Psalm 95:1-3

Visiting ministers this past month included our Elder Bro. John Wiegand (Silverton, OR), Bro. Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS), and Bro. Keith Hinrichsen (Phoenix, AZ). We appreciate them assembling with us. May the Lord continue to bless them with His Spirit to speak forth words of truth.

On October 24-25, we had a full church of young believers from across the land that spent the weekend with us. The singing in church was beautiful and it was a true blessing to be able to fellowship with all, some we knew before and some we had never met.

That same weekend we said farewell to our dear Sis. Pearl Bozzay who relocated from San Diego to Sarasota, FL. We miss her and wish her God’s peace as she settles into her new home.

Bro. Perry Klopfenstein recently spent a weekend with us and spoke on the topic “Our Apostolic Christian Heritage of Faith and Its Meaning For Today”. We appreciate his efforts.

May we always be thankful for what good things God has bestowed on us. As the Christmas season approaches, we should take time among the busyness to reflect on the true reason for the season and the great Gift that was given many years ago.

“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.” Luke 2:7

If anyone is vacationing in the Palm Springs/Palm Desert area this winter please feel free to contact Bro. Doug and Sis. Janelle Brewer at djbrewer2003@gmail.com or 309-256-9606. We plan to have midweek services starting in January until the end of March. Also, if you know of anyone with church connections living in the area, we would also like to know about them so we can reach out to them.
Colorado, Denver
Naomi Wiegand, Tess Leman
A big hello from Colorado!

With great joy we announce that Aaron Braun (Richard & Debbie Reynolds) has decided to follow Jesus and start his journey on the straight and narrow. We know that high school, as well as the world in general, are fraught with many temptations and much deception, so our prayers and accountability are extended to Aaron!

"Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Hab. 3:18

We also rejoice that Joshua Knobloch (Bro. Daryl & Sis. Debbie of Bradford, IL) has announced his engagement to Abigail Nielsen (Brad Nielsen of Spring Valley, IL & Donna Huebner of Sleepy Hollow, IL). A three-fold cord is not easily broken and we pray that they will find the Lord an ever constant source of joy and strength.

Our thanks go to Bro. Mitch Fehr (Morris, MN) for sharing God’s Word this past month. Thank you for letting God encourage and challenge our church through you!

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Is. 55:11

Connecticut, Rockville
Lauren Gottier, Sheila Gerber

The wedding of Bro. Sam (Bro. John and Sis. Maureen) and Sis. Amanda (Bro. Phil and Sis. Michelle Bahler) Virkler was held on November 8. We wish them the Lord’s blessings as they begin a life together.

Bro. Jordan Sinn is moving back home to Silverton, OR. We have enjoyed having him with us while he worked in our area.

We wish to extend our sympathy to Bro. Sam and Sis. Laura Greenbank in the passing of his young brother, Bro. Arthur Greenbank (Akron, OH). We also remember Jameson, Jennifer (Bro. Eddie and Sis. Terry Mangold), Mackenzie and Aubrie Lloyd at the passing of Jameson’s mother, Kathy Lloyd. Pam (Mangold) and Gary Trinque and their family mourn the passing of Gary’s mother, Alice Trinque. We trust that the Lord will comfort these grieving families.

We appreciated having Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Sis. Deb, Peoria, IL) with us for reading of the Memorandum. We were reminded that we need to keep Christ as the center of our life and maintain our focus on living for Him.

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; 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.” Hebrews 12:2

District of Columbia, Washington
Henrietta Meyer

Again in October and November we did not have caretakers. Special thanks to our trustees and especially Bro. Barry and Sis. Doreen Steffen for all yard work done with all the leaves. If you feel led to support one of our small churches, being caretakers here would be a wonderful way to do so. If you are interested and are free to spend 3-4 weeks in the DC area, please contact Sis. Doreen Steffen at dkgsteen@gmail.com or 302-540-6574.

Our ministers this month were Bro. Chuck Kellenberger (Sis. Debbie, Elgin, IL), Bro. Jerry Bauman (Sis. Martha, Rittman, OH), Bro. Neil Ramseyer (Sis. Sharon, Bay City, MI), Elder Bro. John Wiegand (Sis. Jane, Silverton, OR) and Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN). Other visitors this month were from Philadelphia, PA, Rockville, CT and Kansas City, MO.

Spring and fall are great times to visit DC with cooler weather and smaller crowds. There are many free attractions in Washington, DC, things for all the family. If you are planning to visit Washington, D.C. area, please contact Bro. Joe and Sis. Holly Bohart at jbohart@gmail.com or Sis. Henrietta Meyer at 703 904-8301 for assistance. Let us know how many to expect for Sunday services.

Florida, Ft. Lauderdale
Renee Mangold

We were blessed to have several visiting ministers this past month. Sharing God’s word and enjoying fellowship were: Bro. Fred Witzig (Sis. Nancy) Washington, IL; Bro. Dennis Kaufmann (Sis. Bonnie)
Bloomington, IL; Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tammi) Congerville, IL and Bro. Tim Hohulin (Sis. Cathy) Roanoke, IL. We pray that the Lord will bless them for their efforts.

We are looking forward to the winter season when our numbers grow. We can meet new visitors and see our returning winter residents.

**Florida, Ft. Myers**

**Victor Beer**

During this Thanksgiving Holiday season, we have been strongly reminded that to be “Thankful for all our blessings” brings real blessing to each of us.

Special blessings were ours this last month as these visiting brothers shared with us. They were Bro. Tim Ramsier (Sis. Jonell, Rittman, OH, Bro. Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton, IL.

A special fellowship is planned for Thanksgiving Day for a carry in dinner, especially for those that are without family in our area.

If you are considering a move to the Naples/Fort Myers area and would like to talk to someone about it, please call Bro. Marvin Steffen at 239-353-0508. He will help you gather information on anything from serving in a small church to job opportunities and housing in the area.

**The New Beginnings:**

“But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7

This past month has been filled with great fellowshipping opportunities! To begin with, we had a tremendous weekend at the annual Lakewood Retreat with the other Florida churches. This weekend is full of teaching, family time, fun time and great food and it’s a privilege to be able to introduce the women at ‘The New Beginnings’ to things like it. To set the scene, the weekend is held in a remote campground in the middle of God’s creation. There are no TV’s, no Wi-Fi and barely a cell signal. With everyone “off the grid”, it makes for a fantastic relationship building weekend!

Second, a group of sisters from the Sarasota congregation came down and blessed us with an applesauce making day! The time and energy they spent to bless us was nothing short of amazing. We are always so overwhelmed with gratitude when others take the time to give to us.

If you would like to stop by this winter and see what’s going on, feel free to call and let us know! We love having guests and giving the mothers here more opportunities to meet the loving and caring people who support us!

**Florida, Sarasota**

**Mary & Vera Martin**

The Christmas Season is here and we again count our blessings of the joy and happiness that it brings as we plan our events of celebration. We must remember the true meaning for the season and plan our time wisely.

“This Is The Savior”

*All the world has heard the story of the little Christ Child’s birth, But too few have felt the meaning of His mission here on earth. Some regard the Christmas story as something beautiful to hear, A lovely Christmas custom that we celebrate each year, But is it more than just a story told to make our hearts rejoice -- It’s our Father up in heaven speaking through the Christ Child’s voice, Telling us of heavenly kingdoms that He has prepared above For all who trust His mercy and live only for His love, For only through the Christ Child can we be born again, For God sent the Baby Jesus as the Savior of all men.” H.S. Rice

Our annual weekend at Lakewood Retreat was once again a wonderful weekend of fellowship. We want to thank Bro. Dave Marquart (Sis. Lori, Taylor, MO) for sharing his time and talent in leading our Bible studies on the topics of Treasuring our Treasures.

We are thankful that our sisters Erika Furj who had a hip replacement and Jean Earley who broke her ankle are recovering and wish them God’s nearness as they return to good health.

We are rejoicing with Gabe Streitmatter (Elder Bro. Jeff & Sis. Lynne) as he begins the journey of faith in our Lord and wish him God’s guidance as he endeavors to walk a new life with Christ and as he meets his challenges in college.

Our annual Sunday School Chili Lunch and Auction is planned for February 13, 2016.
Georgia, Peachtree City/Atlanta

Lexi Knapp, Elise Waldbeser

We were extremely blessed this weekend to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of Sis. Ashlyn Waldbeser (Bro. Tom and Sis. Sue), Bro. Seth Knapp (Bro. Matt and Sis. Dana), and Bro. Joel Lindberg (Bro. Rich and Sis. Julie). It was a blessing to hear how God has worked in each of their lives and to witness their commitments to Christ. It was a wonderful weekend where Christ was glorified and His work in the lives of His children was evident. We appreciated all the people that came and enjoyed having a full church.

Also, we were thankful for the visiting ministers who served us this past month. Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam) assisted with the baptisms and Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tami) was with us on a Wednesday evening. We appreciate their willingness to serve our congregation.

If anyone is coming to the area, we would love to have you worship with us! Our address is: 202 Robinson Road, Peachtree City, GA 30269. However, please all ahead! (Tom Waldbeser 770.463.4788 or Richard Aberle 678.364.0507). For photos and additional information, visit our website at www.ptcacchurch.org.

Haiti, Bonne Fin - Hospital Lumiere

Rick and Komari Aberle

There have been several teams and individuals visiting the hospital in the past weeks. The mission has been the recipient of the time and talents of professionals in orthopedics and nursing. The prayers for safety in traveling to and from Bonne Fin have been appreciated.

In the coming month, we are expecting a dental team from Rockville to offer needed dental services to those in the surrounding area. A part of this team is planning to focus on some further renovation in our surgery facilities. We trust that God will give the increase to their efforts.

During this past month, two missionary families were able to travel to the United States. We welcome back to Bonne Fin both the Zimmerman and Aberle families.

We also want to extend a word of thanksgiving for the recent benefit auction held in Washington, IL, on behalf of the mission. It is overwhelming to experience the love, support and generosity of the brotherhood in their support of the work that God set before our church body.

In the past several weeks, the hospital has been experiencing increased patient numbers. The hospital census recently reached over 100 patients. This is the first time during Apostolic Christian World Relief’s management of the hospital that we have provided medical care to this great of number simultaneously. God be praised for providing a place where the very needy can find health care.

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.” Ps.100:4

Haiti, Les Cayes

Mike & Susie Walder

This past month several construction teams brought the added blessing of visiting parents. Robenson-n and Renee Leger enjoyed the extended stay of Renee’s parents, Bro. Ray and Sis. Gladys Slagel from Fairbury, IL. Little Jayden-n enjoyed getting reacquainted with his grandparents too! Bro. Scott and Sis. Mandy Yordy and daughters enjoyed the visits of Scott’s parents, Larry and Edie Yordy from Eureka, IL.

Work teams and other groups of visitors stay at guesthouses either in Bonne Fin or in Les Cayes. Comfortable accommodations, good fellowship, and three hearty meals consisting of local fare are a highlight each day. May God bless all the efforts, physical and spiritual, that each work team undertakes!

We are looking forward to our annual American Thanksgiving celebration in South Haiti. Since most people here are spending Thanksgiving Day without their extended families, well over one hundred of us gather together to share a huge traditional Thanksgiving meal and enjoy time together.

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.” Ps.100:4
Illinois, Belvidere
Krista Anliker, Shayla Steffen

The precious season of CHRISTmas will be upon us when we read the next Silver Lining. The prayer is that we can keep the reason for family gatherings, CHRISTmas caroling and traveling in the forefront of our minds. Although we celebrate the birth of CHRIST at this special time, we can always be thankful for His birth and crucifixion throughout the whole year.

CHRIST was preached by visiting Bro. Nate Wiegand (Sis. Laura, Goodfield, IL) and Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Sis. Bonnie, Minneapolis, MN) recently when they were visiting. We can be thankful that we have this bond in CHRIST and can travel freely without fear of persecution.

Recently on our World Relief Wednesday we had our annual quilt-a-thon. We are thankful we are able to do these works of service and pray that CHRIST can be glorified through them.

May we remember to keep CHRIST in CHRISTmas.

Illinois, Bloomington-Normal
Megan Kaeb, Sarah Maurer

Although it is hard to say goodbye to warmer weather, we rejoice in the creation of our Lord with the coming of winter. This season also gives our congregation an opportunity to interact with the community through the organizing of food baskets for Thanksgiving and Adopt-a-Family for Christmas. It is a joy to watch the hands of Christ move to serve and interact within the community He has placed us.

Our annual Harvest Party this year was a great time of fun and games with our church family as we celebrated the fall season. Children enjoyed making fun memories together as adults continued to grow in relationships through food and fellowship.

This past month, our church was blessed with a benefit dinner hosted by ISU young group members to raise funds for a mission trip to Magdalena, Mexico over their coming Spring Break. Proceeds also fund an outreach ministry on campus called Free Bible Now. FBN is a great resource for those seeking truth as it gives a free Bible to any person in the language of their choice.

“For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.” Acts 22:15

Testimonies and baptisms are always a time of rejoicing with those at the beginning of their new life with Christ and remembering the miracles and works He has done in our own lives as well. The Bloomington congregation celebrates with Bro. Hisato and Sis. Rika Inoue, Bro. Nathan Stock, and Sis. Rebekah Martin as they experienced baptism this past month. Our special thanks and appreciation goes to Elder Bro. Tom Stock (Sis. Karol) from Cissna Park and Bro. Willis (Sis. Lois) Ehnle from Peoria who both preached the Word of God on baptism Sunday.

Illinois, Bradford
Roseann Stahl, Sandi Joos

“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;” Eph. 3:16

We received the strengthening of the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word and fellowship with the saints.

Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Sis. Jeannine, Mansfield, OH) assisted our Elder Bro. Bruce in bringing the letter of the memorandum to us. Bro. Zach Anderson (Sis. Karla, Congerville, IL) also brought the Word to us this month.

On November 1, the Washington, IL congregation was with us for an evening of singing praises to our Lord. We appreciate all who were able to be with us.

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;” Ephesians 6:18

Our prayers have been with Sis. Renee Endress in the loss of her father, retired Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Sis. Dona, Taylor, MO). We are grateful for the hours of love Bro. Roy has given in service to our national church. Sis. Renee has also been in our prayers as she went through radiation. We are thankful that this has been completed.

Sis. Ev Endress (Bro. Gary) has spent time in the hospital this month for a double knee replacement. We pray for a speedy recovery and that she can once again be back in church with us.
Recently Sis. Esther Streitmatter moved into Peoria Skylines. We miss her and enjoy having her with us when she is able to assemble for church.

We pray for God’s continued blessings on the following couples as they begin their life together: Josh Knobloch (Bro. Daryl and Sis. Deb) and Abby Nielsen announced their engagement and will be united in marriage. Jolene Kieser (Joe and Geri) and Victor Abney were recently united in marriage.

Illinois, Champaign
Dona Fehr

Greetings from Champaign! The Champaign church, with the U of I and Parkland young group, enjoyed hosting college weekend this fall. The theme of the weekend was “Persecution in Perspective”, and the topics included the History of Persecution, How Do We Respond, and Treasuring Christ Together. Many in this world live in constant fear of persecution. We are blessed to live in a country where persecution is not as prominent. May we remember to pray for those persecuted for their faith, and may we always trust God to provide the strength for the moment, whatever the moment brings.

We rejoice with our new Sis. Sarah Peoples and her family as we were privileged to both hear her testimony of God’s work in her life and witness her baptism.

Visiting ministers this month included Elder Bro. Tom Stock (Cissna Park, IL), Bro. Matt Knapp (Peachtree City, GA), Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Bill Schick (Magdalena, MX), Bro. Trent Meiss (Eureka, IL), and Bro. Bruce Frank (Cissna Park, IL). We appreciate their willingness to serve!

Illinois, Chicago
Diana Eisenmann

We extend thanks to our visiting ministers this past month, Bro. Randy Mogler (Sis. Evie, Washington, IL) and Bro. Art Mueller (Sis. Marlene, Belvidere).

We once again enjoyed our October tradition of an all-church wiener roast hosted by Bro. Jim and Sis. Kathy Schlatter. We also had a topical Bible study on “Our Rock,” presented by Bro. Virg Metzger.

In November we held an “Inspiring Hope in Haiti” benefit sale for Centre Lumiere. We appreciate the coordination efforts of the volunteers involved in this project.

November was a busy month for the Sunday School students. The Bible Class hosted Elgin, IL and Belvidere, IL for a day of worship, fellowship, and building friendships. The following weekend, the junior high and Bible Class worked together on their Fall Mission Project, making meals for some of the families in our congregation.

We wish you peace and joy as we enter the season of celebrating our Savior’s birth!

Illinois, Cissna Park
Janie Waldbeser, Sandy Rudin

We hosted our Fall Invite-a-Guest on November 1. We are so thankful for all who came and shared the day with us. We were especially grateful for God’s servants, Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart (Champaign), Bro. David Obergfel (Peoria) and Bro. Kevin Fehr (West Bend, IA) who were present with us.

The Young Group had their invite the following weekend. We had greetings extended from across the land! We appreciate and thank Bro. Don Sinn (Silverton, OR) for sharing God’s Word. These invites are so uplifting and we look forward to them from time to time.

After a brief hospital stay, Bro. Ben Rudin has moved from his apartment at Fairview Haven into the nursing home there. We pray he can feel God’s nearness during this time. Our prayers also continue for all our loved ones who reside in homes of the aged, or are having difficulties and trials that burden us down. God is faithful!

With all the hustle and bustle about us, our thoughts go to one of the most beautiful holidays of the year!

“God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is love; the radiance of Christmas, which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; the all of Christmas, which is Christ.” -Wilda English

We wish all a blessed Christmas Season!
Illinois, Congerville
Erica 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, v. 1

Aubrey Walder, daughter of Bro. Brad and Sis. Carla Walder, has sought her soul’s salvation and began her walk with the Lord! Our prayer for all of our converts that they can be completely emptied of sin and self, allowing the Lord to convert their hearts to His blessed ways!

Bro. Harvey Kaeb (Sis. Judy, Gridley) and Bro. Ron Palitto (Sis. Lynell, Akron) graciously served our church this month. Visitors are always a blessing to our church. We appreciated these brothers for being willing to stand and bring the Word to our hearts and minds.

We were reminded in a sermon this month of the safety we have in staying close to our Heavenly Father and the path that He lays before us. In this holiday season, it can be so easy to get lost in the spectacle the world would put before us—blinding us to the real reason for the season. May we not be as fools who would ride the line between the world and the way of the Cross, but be fully committed to His ways. That being said, we do have a wonderful opportunity to fellowship and connect with friends, family and brethren during the holiday season. While celebrating the joy we have here on earth, may we also look forward the fulfillment of our hope and joy in Heaven!

Illinois, Elgin
Amy Gasser

On Wednesday, October 21, Bro. Arlan Miller (Gridley, IL) from the Apostolic Christian Counseling Service conducted an all-church topical presentation at the Fellowship Center entitled “Safe Use of Technology for the Family.”

Bro. BJ and Sis. Mollie Schambach welcomed a baby girl, Hazel Kay, on October 31. Her siblings are Sophie, Oliver, and Theo. Her grandparents are Bro. Earl and Sis. Susie Beery (Rittman, OH) and Sis. Leann (the late Bro. Don) Schambach.

Bro. Tom Rhodes passed away suddenly on November 7. His funeral was on November 11. We extend sympathy to his wife, Sis. Gail, and his children and grandchildren.

We thank Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Denver, CO), who came to assist our Elder Bro. Brad Eisenmann in reading the Memorandum on Saturday evening, November 14. On Sunday, Bro. Dale Frank (Oakville-Mediapolis, IA), Bro. Dean Steffen (Belvidere, IL) and Bro. Todd Stoller (Latty, OH) joined them on the pulpit. We appreciate all of their labors in the ministry.

Sis. Delores Kellenberger, Bro. Bill (Sis. Sandy) Kinsinger, and Sis. Gert Sauder recently had surgery. We are thankful that all are recovering.

Illinois, Eureka
Debra Blunier, Linda Rocke

“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.” Phil. 1:3

Those words still ring so true today, as we are blest by those God has sent into our lives. Thanksgiving is a special time to remind ourselves of why we should be so thankful to our heavenly Father.

We were blest to have Elder Bro. Victor Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville) share the Memorandum with us, supporting our Elder Bro. Trent. Other visiting ministers this month included Bro. Ed Fritz (Washington, IL), Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI), Bro. Gary Sinn, (Sis. Paulette, Latty, OH), Bro. Ted Herstein (Sis. Joyce, Morton), Bro. Glen Steiner (Sis. Rachel, Winthrop) and Bro. Ron Isch (Sis. Jane, Lamont-Gridley, KS). Bro. Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction) and Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) brought the Word to us on Thanksgiving. It is a special blessing to have ministers who return to serve us, sharing fellowship and friendships that have grown over many years.

Our Bible Class hosted three visiting Bible Classes from Oakville-Mediapolis, IA; Fairbury, IL; and LaCrosse, IN. Our young people are a precious blessing to our church. We hope they can enjoy meeting
and getting to know those from other congregations, too. As Bro. Steve Baner reminded them, God is preparing each of them for a special place in life. Bro. Glenn Dill (Sis. Marilyn, Tremont) also ministered to the teens.

Every baby is a special blessing. Elizabeth Renee was born November 17 to Bro. David and Sis. Ashley Knecht, and is welcomed home by Nolan. Grandparents are Bro. Ervin and Sis. Sandy Knecht, and Herb Shoufler of Mason, OH and Shawn Tracey of Dewitt, IA. Also, Bro. Lowell and Sis. Molly Stoller were also blest with their first daughter the same week, on November 20. Cassie Jane is welcomed home by Isaac, Warren, Grant, and Aaron. Grandparents are Jim and Sharon Stoller (Sis. Jane, dec.) and Paul and Kris Schmidgall.

Recently in the hospital: we rejoice with Bro. Trent Meiss, Sis. Lucy, and their family that he is recovering well from surgery. Sis. Lois (Bro. Lyle, dec.) Stoller is also doing well after surgery, and Sis. Caroll (Bro. Gene) Zobrist was hospitalized, but has been able to return home.

We are so blest with the older “soldiers of the Cross” who have led the church faithfully for many decades. It’s hard to let them go. Our special sympathy goes to Sis. Ethel Schmidgall and her family on the death of Bro. Harold. He was the brother of Bro. Marvin (Sis. Dorothy) Schmidgall, and father of Bro. Ron Schmidgall, Sis. Linda Krug, and Sis. Barbara (Bro. Ron) Harris, all of Gridley, IL, as well as Mary (Roger) Hudson of Hanna City, Bill (Carol) Schmidgall of Morton, and Jim (Carol) Schmidgall of El Paso. Also, we sympathize with Bro. Brad (Sis. Amanda) Stoller on the loss of his grandfather, Bro. Roy (Sis. Dona) Grimm of Taylor, MO.

Note of Thanks:
The family of Bro. Harold Schmidgall wishes to thank everyone for their love and kindness during the passing of our loved one. May God bless each one of you. Sis. Ethel Schmidgall and family.

Illinois, Fairbury
Angela Herr, Janelle Stoller
On October 25 our Bible Class hosted Bible Classes from Bradford and Congerville. We were thankful to have Bro. Gary Maibach (Smithville, OH) and Bro. Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI) in our midst and then with our Bible Class for this occasion.

We were also blessed to have Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Oakville-Mediapolis, IA), Bro. Ed Fritz (Washington, IL), and Bro. Arlen Leman (Forrest, IL) with us this past month. We pray that God will bless them for ministering God’s Word to us.

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord…” Psalm 127:3

Ryker Paul Kilgus was born on October 26 to first-time parents Trent and Kayla. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Paul and Sis. Carmen Kilgus and Paul and Lucy Slagel. Ryker was born early and spent extra time in the hospital, but is home now and doing well.

Bro. Joel and Sis. Amber Plattner welcomed Brynna Rae into their family circle on November 16. Micah, Leigha, Landon, and Kennan are her loving siblings. Her grandparents are Elder Bro. Rick and Sis. Mary Plattner and Bro. Kevin and Sis. Denise Kilgus (Forrest, IL). Brynna also spent extra time in the hospital after birth.

Our thoughts and prayers have been with these little babies and their families and also with Bro. Martin Steidinger (Sis. Trish) and Ruth Hartman (Bro. Ryan and Sis. Lori) who recently spent time in the hospital.

We extend our sympathy to LaVerne Bittner in the loss of her brother-in-law, Merle Bittner, who passed away on November 5.

“Love, of all gifts, is the greatest which the Spirit does bestow. Though I had a voice like angels, lacking love, I truly know that I’d be a tinkling cymbal or a wretched sounding brass; for although the sound were present, lifeless through this world I’d pass.” Love, Zion’s Harp #37, verse 1

The engagement of Bro. Timothy Hartman (Bro. Mark and Sis. Judy) and Sis. Jenna Kaeb (late Bro. Eldon and late Sis. Stephanie, Forrest, IL) was made known on November 8. We rejoice with them and wish them God’s blessings as they take this step in faith.
Illinois, Forrest

Carissa Knapp, Shannon Brown

As we reflect on this past month, we have so much to be thankful for. We are thankful for the many visiting ministers that came and were willing to share God’s Word. They were Bros. Bill Schick (Magdalena, MX), Rustin Meister (West Lafayette, IN), Todd Stoller (Latty, OH), Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), and Jeff Leman (Bluffton North, IN). We would also like to thank Elder Bros. Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley, KS) and Rick Plattner (Fairbury) who were with us to assist in the reading of the Memorandum. May God richly bless them for their time in sharing with us.

We are rejoicing with those who have recently answered the call to repentance. Our prayers are with Waylon and Ashton Knapp. Their parents are Bro. Harlan and Sis. Jean Knapp and Bro. Troy and Sis. Kathleen Lanz. We are also prayerful for Brooke Stork (Isaiah), Jacob Leman (Bro. Arlen and Sis. Denise), and Chad Steidinger (Bro. Ray and Sis. Shelly) as they each begin their walk with the Lord.

We also rejoice with Sis. Jenna Kaeb (late Bro. Eldon and late Sis. Stephanie) as she is engaged to Bro. Timothy Hartman (Bro. Mark and Sis. Judy) from Fairbury. May the Lord bless them.

A new baby boy, Wynn Jeffrey, was born to Bro. Ben and Sis. Susan Mueller. Excited big brothers are Bentlee and Clay. Grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Loida Mueller of our church and Sis. Cindy Herr of Fairbury.

Also, little Avery Lynn has come to bless the home of Bro. Troy and Sis. Leann Brown and siblings Carter and Ellie. Her grandparents are Bro. Martin and Sis. Trish Steidinger of Fairbury and Gary and Jane Brown.

“With friends on earth we meet in gladness, While swift the moments fly, Yet ever comes the tho’t of sadness, That we must say, Good-by.” We’ll Never Say Good-By, Hymns of Zion #122 vs. 1

We extend our sympathy to the family of Sis. Wilma Knapp, age 96, who passed away on November 8. Our prayers are with her children: MaryEtta (Dan) Mullen, Fairbury; Bro. Charles (Sis. Paula), Bloomington; Dale (Barbara), Seneca; Bro. Harlan (Sis. Jean), Chenoa; Arthur (Valerie), Pontiac; Alvin (Suzanne), Fairbury; and Marjorie Yoder, Fairbury. Prayers are also with her sister, Marjorie Stephens and her brother Nelson (Billie) Nussbaum. She will also be missed by her 32 grandchildren and 41 great grandchildren. We want to thank Bro. Matt Knapp (Peachtree City/Atlanta, GA) as he was willing to assist in the funeral service.

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We continue to pray for Molly Brown (Bro. Brad and Sis. Shannon) who is still recovering from her recent heart surgery. May God continue to grant healing. Our thoughts and prayers are also with Bro. Earl Gerber (Sis. Esther) who has recently spent time in the hospital and Bro. Mark Aberle (Sis. Laverne) who continues treatment for cancer. We also remember our Bro. Alan Gerber (Sis. Marcia) in our prayers as he is back in the hospital in Chicago at this time.

Illinois, Goodfield

Kayla Wiegand, Melissa Rokey

We welcome with love two new babies into our church family this month.

Lochlan Robert was born October 23 to Bro. Derek and Sis. Joy Roth. His older sisters are Naomi, Valerie, Lainey, and Summer. His grandparents are Bro. Roy and the late Sis. Corrine Roth, and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Rosemary Wiegand.

Brett and Ellie Gramm welcomed little Beckett Charles into their lives on November 3. His grandparents are Bro. Greg and Sis. Jill Wagner, and Ron and Angelia Gramm.

We witnessed the testimonies and baptisms for Ambria Herrmann (Bro. Ross and Sis. Kitty), Tori Taufner (Bro. Ted and Sis. Kenda) and Claire Hohulin (Bro. Ross and Sis. Heather) on the weekend of November 14. We feel blessed to welcome these three sisters into our family of God.

The Choir Soup Supper was held at the Fellowship Hall. It was a very nice evening of song and fellowship. Thanks to all who helped with the evening and especially thanks to the Young Group for serving the meal and helping with clean up.

Bro. Don Ott has recently undergone some heart procedures at St. Joseph in Bloomington. He
is doing better and is resting at home. Please continue to pray for Bro. Don and Sis. Carolyn.

Our church family mourns the passing of our Bro. Gary Allen (Sis. Connie) on November 10. We pray for comfort for Sis. Connie and his children, Jeremy Zach (Sis. Joni) and Chanel Heuer (Greg).

We want to express our support and continued prayers for our missionary families serving in Jamaica, Haiti, and Zambia.

We wish to thank the ministering brothers who have visited our congregation, including Bros. Nick Waibel (Sis. Sandra, Francesville, IN), Art Mueller (Sis. Marlene, Belvidere, IL), Eric Strassheim (Sis. Jodi, Indianapolis, IN), and Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL).

Illinois, Gridley
Perry Klopfenstein

It seems as though the entire world is in a sense of turmoil and unrest. There are wars and rumors of wars. Many persons have a sense of deep concern and wonder what the future holds. National and international turmoil are nothing new, and nations have risen against each other since the beginning of time. Yet, there is a consolation to know that an unchanging and eternal God rules over heaven and earth. In His great love for mankind, He has sent His son, the Lord Jesus, to reconcile men and women to Him. The Plan of Salvation is before the world, and tensions would surely ease if persons of all nations would embrace the infallible word of God, and repent for their sins, and live anew in Christ Jesus!

Kevin and Hailey (Ringger) Martin gave their testimonies on Sunday, November 22, and were taken into the fold. May God bless them in their new life.

Bro. Bob Hock had surgery and is in a state of rehabilitation. Sis. Maria Gonzalez is dealing with issues concerning pulmonary fibrosis. Gary Schifferer is recovering from a second surgery on his wrist. Carter Schieler broke his ankle and is wearing a brace. Bro. Orlan Miller and Sis. Mary Ringger are dealing with cancer issues. Bro. Bob Griener is suffering from weakness, but is able to remain at home.

Sis. Marilyn Schieler, 81, passed away, after a prolonged stay at the Meadows Home. Mercifully, she died in her sleep. She is survived by her niece, Charwin (Ted) Parker, and her nephew, Bro. Glenn (Sis. Charity) Schieler, both of Gridley. Sis. Marilyn was like a mother to them. Also surviving are nine great nephews and nieces, who called her, “Grandma”: Bro. Ashton, Caleb, Carter, Ellie, and Anderson Schieler; and Alyssa, Kyle, Julia, and Emma Parker, all of Gridley. Sis. Marilyn was of a cheerful countenance, and loved to be with people. She was preceded in death by her parents, Walter and Sis. Julia (Schifferer) Schieler, and a brother, Don Schieler.

We offer our sympathies to Sis. Linda Krug, Bro. Ron Schmidtgal and Sis. Barb Harris (Bro. Ron), over the passing of their father, retired ministering Bro. Harold Schmidtgal, 96. Bro. Harold labored as a minister in Gridley for many years.

We appreciated the preaching of visiting ministers: Bro. Chris Laukhuf, Latty, OH, and Bro. Brett Lanz, Rittman, OH.

Illinois, Morton
Annette Tanner, Julie Bahr

We greatly appreciated ministers Brothers Mark Steffen (Phoenix) and Brad Metz (Sis. Karen, Bloomington) for bringing the Gospel message to us. Bro. Brad gave our Family Worship message: The Armor of God—“Peace on Your Feet” with Romans 10:15. He shared that taking the Gospel “The Good News of Peace” and sharing it with others, is described as “One Beggar telling another Beggar where to find Bread.” We were instructed to “Go tell the Good News” and to remember the scripture verse John 3:16 as a reference!

“Why He Ever Loved Us So?” was the Theme chosen for The Morton Bible Class Benefit Dinner and Musical Program. We give praise and thanks to God for the “Ministry of Song” that was provided the weekend of November 14 & 15, which many came together in support of the Bible Class Missions trips and local missions as well.

On November 8 the exciting news of the engagement of Sis.
Holly Funk to Bro. Caleb Moser was shared! Sis. Holly is the daughter of Bro. Fred and Sis. Diane Funk, Morton. Bro. Caleb is the son of Bro. Wes and Sis. Esther Moser, Lester.

Illinois, Peoria
Pam Fritzenmeier

We extend a warm welcome to Bro. Denny and Sis. Gerty Esslinger and their son, Bro. Austin. They have moved here from Bloomfield, IA.

Both our visiting ministers this month grew up in Peoria. We are always happy to welcome them “home.” On November 1, Bro. Rick Kaisner (Sis. Michelle, Chicago) and Bro. Ryan Hoerr (Sis. Joy, Princeville) blessed us with their ministry.

We are thankful to report that Bro. Zach and Sis. Daniela Knobloch and family are finally all safely here from Magdalena. The girls: Belem in 10th grade, Belinda in 8th grade, and Darilis in Kindergarten, are in school and little Angus is at home. Please do pray for them as they adjust to a new country, school, and family situation. Belem and Belinda are Sis. Daniela’s sisters. Also keep her brother, Fede, in your prayers.

Those remaining in Magdalena desire our prayer support also. These include Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Bere Aupperle, Bro. Jason Grassi, and Sis. Laura Ricketts (Forrest), Bro. Gary and Sis. Marie Ricketts Unsicker’s daughter.

Illinois, Princeville
Gloria White, Renee Herrmann

We are always thankful for those who are willing to be used of God. Blessings to Elder Bro. Greg Lehman (Wolcott, IN), Elder Bro. Trent Meiss (Eureka, IL), Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Tim Hohulin (Roanoke, IL), Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr (Morton, IL), Bro. Craig Stickling (Peoria, IL), Bro. Brad Gudeman (Bradford, IL), Bro. Brad Metz (Bloomington-Normal, IL) and Bro. Ed Sauder (Roanoke, IL).

Bro. Devon and Sis. Leah Knobloch are new parents to Tatum Laine born November 9. She was welcomed home by big sister, Paisley. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Keith and Sis. Lisa Knobloch and Bro. Craig and Sis. Jacki Stickling of Peoria, IL. Bro. Dick and Sis. Jeanette Graham are grandparents again.

Cutler Benjamin was born to Bro. Ben and Sis. Suzanne Graham of Indianapolis, IN.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Verle Streitmatter, the sister of Benola (Henry) Bowdoin. May we always be mindful and considerate of those who have lost dear ones to them.

Illinois, Roanoke
Barb Schwind, Judy Sauder

Luke 2:7 “And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” May we all make room in our hearts for Jesus at Christmas and throughout the year!

The young people in our church have been busy serving our congregation. On October 31, the young group hosted a harvest party for Sunday School children at the fellowship hall. On November 7, ACTIVE boys raked leaves for the elderly in our church. On November 14, Bible Class students worked at a harvest dinner at the fellowship hall to raise funds the Junior-Senior Bible Class work trip to Magdalena in March.

We pray for those with health challenges: Elly Sauder (Bro.
Brad and Sis. Jill), Bro. Glen (Sis. Christa) Moser, Sis. Emma Hoerr, Bro. Dennis (Sis. Rita) Schwind, and Sawyer Kaufman.

On October 25, Roanoke hosted the Illinois potluck for a supper and singing at the fellowship hall.

We thank visiting ministers: Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Denver), Bro. Tom Schambach (Elgin), Bro. Jeff Leman (Bluffton North), Bro. Jason Dotterer (Forrest), Bro. Dana Nieman (Remington), and Bro. James Fehr (Tremont) for sharing God’s Word. Bro. Dick Meister (W. Lafayette) presented a topical Bible Study on “Our Christian Heritage” November 4 and 5. Bro. Jeff Grimm helped Bro. Tom Hoffman with reading the Memorandum on November 18. We appreciate the service of all these brothers.

On November 16 at Technology Night at the fellowship hall, brothers explained ways to keep our children safe when using the internet.

We extend our love and sympathy to Sis. Jeanne (Bro. Bill) Leman. Her father, Retired Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor) went to be with the Lord on October 23.

Sis. Marilyn Weyeneth passed away November 19. She will be missed by her sister, Sis. Dot (Bro. John) Hoerr (Peoria), her Arizona Roth family, and her Weyeneth nieces and nephews. At her funeral, Sis. Marilyn was remembered for her contentment and her role as a relationship builder. I will always remember the kindness Sis. Marilyn showed me when I moved to Roanoke as a young teacher. She was a dear and creative friend.

Justin Fehr (Bro. Jon and Sis. Jill) was united in marriage to Kerri Zimmerman of Peoria. Her parents are Jill Levine and Gary Zimmerman. God’s blessings to this young couple!

We rejoice with Bro. Walt and Sis. Arlette Fehr, who celebrated 69 years of marriage and Bro. Jim and Sis. Helen Martin, who celebrated 65 years of marriage! It’s a blessing to have couples in our church setting an example of faithful commitment to the Lord and to each other.

A Thanksgiving singing was held at our fellowship hall on November 22.

The fall church Bible study has been Four Great Loves - loving God, loving God’s Word, loving God’s people, and loving God’s purposes. It’s been a blessing to be able to study and share God’s Word with brothers and sisters in Christ.

Illinois, Tremont
Teresa Rowell, Janice Sauder

We have enjoyed many guests who came recently for two weddings and a Family-Invite weekend. Visiting ministers this past month include: Elder Bros. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN), Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA), Bruce Endress (Bradford, IL), and Tom Stock (Cisna Park, IL); and Bros. DeWayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN), Brent Walder (Rockville, CT), Ed Fritz (Washington, IL), Nathan Rassi (St. Louis, MO), and Ryan Hoerr (Princeville, IL). May God bless each one!

We are so pleased for our newly-engaged couples. Best wishes to Bro. Gabriel Koch (Bro. Nate and Sis. Sandi) and Sis. Mary Wagenbach (Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz) as they are planning a January, 2016 wedding. Also to be congratulated are Kendall Fehr and Elayna Falcon, with their wedding date of August, 2016. Parents are Bro. James and Sis. Brenda Fehr, and Carlos Falcon and Joanie Falcon of Tremont. May God bless their love, as it grows for each other.

We also are praying God’s blessings on our two newlywed couples. On October 25, Bro. Eric and Sis. Leann (Sauder) Rocke exchanged wedding vows. We rejoice with their children: Lexi, Wesley, Whitley and Lainey; and parents, Sis. Kathy Rocke (late Bro. Nelson) and Stan and Lola Stoller (Eureka, IL). The next Sunday afternoon (November 1), Bro. Levi and Sis. Echo (Sauder) Kaiser were married. Parents are Bro. Tim and Sis. Ruth Kaiser and Bro. John and Sis. Misty Sauder. May God bless them as they enter a new season of life.

“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.”
Psalm 116:15

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Doris Baer (Bro. Bob), Sis. Phyllis Holmes (Bro. Marshall), and Sis. Barb Reinbeck (Bro. Larry) at the death of their sister,
Sis. Ruth Finley (Phoenix, AZ). May God comfort their hearts in this time of loss.

Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kathy Zuercher rejoice at the birth of a new grandson, Eli David. He joined his parents, Dave and Tammy Callan, and siblings, Zoe and Zachary, during their year-long assignment at Fort Irwin, CA. Bro. Roger and Sis. JoAnn Beutel welcome another granddaughter, Aubrey Jo. She is Paul and Carrie Wildermuth’s first child. God has also blessed Bro. Brad and Sis. Sarah Huette and Bro. Doug and Sis. Cheri Frank. Blessings on each little one!

We in Tremont extend a welcome to Bro. Sam and Sis. Rosemary Wegman, as they moved to central Illinois after many years being a part of the Mediapolis/Oakville, IA congregation. May they continue to experience God’s presence in this new season of life!

**Illinois, Bluffton**

**Suzie Fiechter, Kim Meyer**

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” Psalm 19:7

We rejoice with Bro. Ed Fritz and Sis. Barb Banwart upon their engagement, and pray God’s blessings be with them and their families.

Several in our church family have lost loved ones to their heavenly homes we pray they feel God’s nearness and comfort. Sis. Natalie Baker (Bro. Luke) in the loss of her grandfather retired Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO), Bro. Fred Witzig (Sis. Nancy) and Sis. Shirley Cox (Bro. John) in the loss of their mother, Sis. Mary Witzig (Wolcott, IN) formerly of Altadena CA.

We thank each of the willing servants visiting us this month, Bro. Matt Kaufmann (Sis. Rebekah, Bloomington, IL), Bro. Glen Steiner (Sis. Rachel, Winthrop, MN) Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS), Bro. Klint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Sabetha, KS) and Bro. John Baumgartner (Sis. Lori, Bern, KS).

Our love and prayers are with our loved ones battling health issues, including Sis. Jean (Bro. Craig) Steffen and Bro. Earl (Sis. Pat) Gerber, who had joint replacements, and Sis. Eunice Steffen, who had gall bladder surgery.

into their hearts and home. Her grandparents are Bro. Dean and Sis. Julie Tonner. May God bless all these families with His Spirit of wisdom that these precious little souls will come to know and serve Him!

Sis. Alyssa Meyer has relocated to Indianapolis due to a job change. We will miss her, but know that she will be a blessing to our Indianapolis church.

Our high school Sunday School classes had a busy month as they traveled to Goodfield for a weekend, and then served a pancake and sausage breakfast to us. We pray they have grown in their friendships with each other as well as with our Goodfield congregation!

The young group hosted their semiannual Minister Appreciation dinner and singing.

As we consider the current events of the world, we often wonder how they relate to the prophesies of the Bible and specifically those related to the Lord’s return. Bro. Vince Pfister recently asked us – what if we did know prophecy? What if we knew that Jesus would come back in 3 months? Would we live differently? Why? We should be living like that every day – He could return today!

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
1 Thess. 4:16-18

Indiana, Bluffton North
Corinne Stettner, Amy Moser

“Bitterness is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.”

Sis. Eunice Steffen had gall bladder surgery on November 9. We pray for a full recovery for her.

We rejoice with Ivory Isch (Sis. Brittany) as she has made a beginning in repentance this month and looks forward to growing in her walk with the Lord. Let’s keep her in our prayers.

Testimonies and baptisms were held on November 7 and 8 for JaNon Isch (Sis. Brittany) and Breann Frauhiger (Bro. Jeremy & Sis. Sally). We rejoice with these two young ladies and their families as they continue their walk with the Lord.

Bro. Daniel Shorb had a successful surgery this month to remove a malignant tumor from his jaw. We keep him and his family in our prayers as they await further treatment.

Steve and Amanda Emerick have been attending our church for some time and have begun their repentance. We offer our prayers as they begin their walk with the Lord.

Indiana, Francesville
Jacki Huber, Mildred Clauss

At the annual Thanksgiving Program held on Wednesday, November 18, one thought that was expressed (paraphrased) is that while Thanksgiving is not a “religious” holiday, as Easter and Christmas are, yet it is such a wonderful and uplifting holiday, because it encourages us to be thankful, which is vital in our walk of life as Christians.

“In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1 Thess. 5:18.

Brother Nick Waibel shared a topical with us on a recent Wednesday evening, entitled “Obedient Sacrifice”. We were blessed by the study, and thank him for the preparation he did to share with us.

Bro. Brent and Sis. Alisha Wagenbach have returned to Haiti where they are serving the Lord. On the Sunday evening before they left, they shared a presentation of the work they are a part of in Haiti, at the Fellowship Center.

The Bible Class (high school aged students), recently served a pancake breakfast for the community, to raise money for their upcoming mission trip to Atlanta, GA. May the Lord bless all efforts to serve and glorify Him.

Our prayers have been with Brother Andre Neihouser, and Bro. Lester and Sis. Glendoris Huber, who have been hospital patients this past month.

Indiana, Indianapolis
Nancy Pfeifer, Sandy Lichtle

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”
Matt. 18:20
When we were planning the expansion of our church building, we developed a mission statement with five goals that fall under three categories of “In Reach, Out Reach, and Up Reach” to help plan the usage of the new space. The addition was finished five years ago, and we have found the three categories continue to be helpful in planning our activities. An example of In Reach was our Vision Day when the Indianapolis body of believers gathered together to hear two speakers, Elder Bro. Nick Gutwein (Sis. Suzanne, West Lafayette, IN) and Bro. Ed Bahler (Sis. Annette, West Lafayette, IN) who inspired us to think about our response to how God wants to use this body we call the Indy church. We have to be right with God, then, we reach out to others. And think of all the wonderful things we have that other people are searching for. We actually listed a white board full of them. Aren’t we blessed? I challenge you to make your own list after supper some evening.

Out Reach occurred October 31 when we hosted a large group of young people to show God’s love in action: playing games with children at a homeless shelter, visiting a prison, raking leaves, and other like activities. The discussion and fellowship following were sweet.

Another Out Reach experience happened when Bro. Marcus and Sis. Jena Schwab spoke to us about Loving Shepherd Ministries work in Haiti. A few weeks after that, they gave us a reason to rejoice by delivering a baby girl. Brielle Harper arrived November 4. Her grandparents are Wendy Runion (Indianapolis, IN), Rich and Chris Runion (Ann Arbor, MI), Mark Schwab (Wolcott, IN) and Shari Schwab (Wolcott, IN). We also celebrate the birth of Cutler Benjamin Graham on November 6 to Bro. Ben and Sis. Suzanne. Grandparents are Bro. Dick and Sis. Jeanette Graham (Princeville, IL) and Sis. Ginny (the late Bro. Eric) Zeller.

We also rejoiced with Sis. Brittaney Lintner when her engagement to Bro. Randy Lehman was announced November 1. Their parents are Marty and Tabitha Lintner (Rensselaer, IN) and Bro. John Lehman and the late Ruth Ann (Wolcott, IN).

The greatest rejoicing of all is when a child tells his or her parents that he or she is turning to the Lord. The Up Reach part happened when Ashton Standish gave that joy to her parents Bro. Ben and Sis. Stephanie. The rest of our church is celebrating too. We have had a lot of celebrating and rejoicing this autumn.

Blessing us with God’s Word this month was Bro. Tom Troxel (Sis. LuAnn, LaCrosse, IN). Thank you for your service in the Lord.

Our hearts were warmed by this beautiful verse in the concluding portion of the Memorandum. Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO) assisted Bro. Curt in reading this letter from Elder Body, exhorting us to return our Lord’s love by glorifying Him in a sanctified walk, letting our light shine brightly to those that walk in darkness. It is so humbling to contemplate the depth of God’s love. It inspires us to grow closer to Him each day, until that glorious moment when we see Love, in its purity and completeness, face to face. After the Memorandum, we enjoyed dessert and time for sweet fellowship with Bro. Kent and his wife, Sis. Jan. We thank them for their service!

Sis. Connie Knobloch spent some time in the hospital, but we are thankful to report she is now back in her home at Avalon Springs, where we enjoy singing each month. There are so many ways to share the joy of Christ with others if we simply choose to take them. A glance at the calendar confirms that the holidays are upon us, and we have many opportunities to reach out to those in need, draw closer to one another, and explore the breadth, length, depth, and height of His love for each of us.

Indiana, Lacrosse

Meagan Frank, Julie Rocke

“Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” Jeremiah 31:3

Indiana, Leo

Kirby Reutter

This month I just had to wonder: What made the Wise Men so wise anyway? Was it
because they did their shopping two years ahead of time? Was it because they probably let their wives pick out the gifts? Or was it because—even with their SPS (Stellar Positioning System)—they were still humble enough to stop and ask for directions? While I was pondering these rather profound questions (among others), the month happened.

First, we were blessed with our “Thanksgiving” Communion. Perhaps because we need it more than others, we actually celebrate the Lord’s Supper twice per year here in Leo. Both communion services were a gift to the church!

Second, we were blessed with another slew of visiting ministers: Bro. Ryan Hoerr (Princeville); Bro. Jim Plattner (Princeville); Bro. Gary Maibach (Smithville); Bro. Curt Walter (Mansfield); Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley); and Bro. Bill Waibel (Bay City). Each and every visiting minister was a gift to the church!

Third, Bro. John and Sis. Amy Klotzle were blessed with the safe arrival of precious Reese Everly (joining two older foster siblings). Each and every new baby is a gift to the church!

Fourth, we were blessed with another round of testimonies and baptisms for the following converts: Connor Beer, Hope Fischer, Luke Maibach, Abrey Plattner, and Bethany Young. Each and every new babe in Christ is a gift to the church!

I had to wonder: Did the Wise Men also consider each other a gift? Or were they too busy arguing about the color of their turbans?

Then we were blessed with an opportunity to share our resources locally: “Sis. Kristy and I have been working with a former resident who is hitting the restart button here in the Leo area. She is a single mom with new job, an apartment lined up but very little furniture or household items available. She has a bed, love seat and some kitchenware, but remains lacking in the rest. If you have items that you would be willing to donate, please let me know.”

I had to wonder: Were the Wise Men also aware of a young mother in need? Or were they too busy complaining about the politics of King Herod?

And then we were blessed with an opportunity to share our resources globally. (Apparently, some people just want a roof for Christmas.) “This year, God has put it on our hearts to start building proper roofs on our workers’ houses (single working mothers) before rainy season really gets going. We were talking about how they come every year trying to patch roofs with cardboard and plastic that really can’t be patched anymore. Sis. Carrie and I would like to provide a more permanent solution. I have a Chinese friend who provides roofing sheets and has agreed to help me by providing them at a discount. A few weeks ago, this young man came to church for the first time in his life and has since come back to hear more. I am excited about the partnership with him and the opportunity it provides to share the Gospel with him. I measured the house of one of our farm ladies and I estimated that we could completely replace her roof with new tin sheets for about $500. Since most of the houses are roughly the same size, I think we can do them all for this amount.”

I had to wonder: Would the Wise Men be willing to transport their abundance to distant lands? Or were they too busy amassing gold, frankincense, and myrrh to generate capital for their new company, Oriental Enterprises?

This month ranged from Communion to converts, from local needs to global needs, and from a hospital baby to the Manger Baby. None of these blessings required a fancy degree, a lucrative business, a position in the church, endless Swiss-German connections—or even some profound theological insight. In fact, the greatest act of wisdom I observed this month occurred when a farming brother from Illinois leveraged an acquaintance from China to furnish a tin roof on a shack in Africa—all while teaching the gospel!

And that (in my estimation) was the wisdom of the Wise Men. In the year to come, let us all seek the presence of the Master, lay our gifts at His feet, share our wealth—and invite others to the Manger!

The Wise Men were not wise for the presents they brought. Rather, the Wise Men were wise for the Presence they sought!
Indiana, Milford

Jodi Beer, Minnie Beer

We were privileged to have our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction) and our deacon, Bro. Randy, share the conference conclusions. May God continue to bless our servants and give us softened hearts to receive, obey, and submit. Visiting us this month was Bro. Dan Pfister (Sis. Sherry, Bluffton North). We thank him for his visit and his good instructions. God Bless.

Sis. Sue Cockburn (Bro. Bob) and Bro. Fred Beer (Sis. Pat) were surgery patients. They have both returned home. Adrian McDaniel, grand-daughter of Bro. Bill & Sis. Anne Troup, has had to start treatments again. These loved ones need our prayers.

We are rejoicing with Bro. Randy & Sis. Deb Beer as daughter, Amy, has started her repentance. As we approach the Christmas season and the dawning New Year, we wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Indiana, Remington

Jenni Honegger, Marcella Tyler

We are thankful for many visiting ministers this month. Bro. Nathan Walder (Sis. Denise) from Cisna Park, IL and Bro. Calvin Schneider (Sis. Jeannie) from LaCross, IN worshipped with us. Elder Bro. Greg Lehman (Sis. Mary Beth) from Wolcott helped our Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus read the Memorandum. Then we had our annual Invite-a-Guest weekend and Bro. Marvin Zollinger (Sis. Pamela) of Smithville, OH, Bro. Ryan Schock (Sis. Melanie) of Bloomfield, IA, and Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther) of Lester, IA each shared the Word with us. Many thanks to each one for their efforts and love!

Gunnar Lane Isabell arrived to grace the home of parents Gabe and Brandy Isabell and big sister Jazlyn! Gunnar’s thankful grandparents are Bro. Phil and Sis. Diane Isabell, Chris and Debbie Miller, and Bill and Tracy Perry. We welcome little Gunnar to our church and pray for Gabe and Brandy that they will bring their children up to know and serve the Lord.

We welcome two new young men to our congregation. Bro. Kaleb Steidinger recently relocated to our area and will be worshipping with us. He is the grandson of our Bro. Walt and Sis. Esther Bahler. And, Kenny Graf, nephew of our Bro. Greg and Sis. Heidi Schneider, also moved here recently. We wish Bro. Kaleb and Kenny both a warm welcome and look forward to the gifts and fellowship they bring to our congregation!

On October 25, Bro. Rob Parker of Gateway Woods shared with us the important mission and needs of the LARC (Learning to Achieve Responsibility and Community) program.

We continue to call upon our Lord on behalf of Sis. Sue Beebe (Bro. Bob) who has been unable to worship with us recently due to back problems. Our prayers also go out to Kirk and Celise Beckman (Bro. Tom and Sis. Carolyn Frank), who recently lost their home in a fire.

On November 2, Chip and Kasha Iacob welcomed baby Josiah Matthias into their home and hearts.

“My thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” Jer. 29:11-13

Indiana, Valparaiso

Sherry Meiss

May God bless you all with a thankful heart this Thanksgiving and every day forward.

Our dear Dave Kotzer fell and broke his hip, he has had surgery and recovering with rehabilitation. Sis. Claudia Thomas has been in much pain and immobile with sciatica. They have found a herniated disc and she is going through treatment. Sis. Leona Bucher will be having shoulder surgery she too has been in much
We ask that you please keep them all in your prayers.

We are so glad to hear that Sis. Marilyn Zeltwanger has received a good report that no cancer was found in her thyroid. The mass that was removed from my pelvis was not cancer either.

Sweet Jesus, victory in Jesus my Savior forever, Praise be to God!

Don’t forget to pray for each other. If you are ever in the area, please know you are welcome to come and worship with us. We are just south of US Hwy 30 on IN Hwy 49.

Indiana, West Lafayette
Kris Widmer, Libby Wahl

As we approach the Christmas season, sometimes our “lists” overwhelm us. May thanksgiving for THE GIFT of Christ rule and reign in our lives by our thanks living!

Adding to the “blessings list” this past month: Bro. Chad and Sis. Claudia Aeschliman, along with Violet and Levi, rejoice in the birth of their daughter, Ariadna Joy, born November 2.

Praise report for the many ways the Spirit smiled on us at the last World Relief Meeting, “Proclaim and Serve” held at our church on November 7. Many inspired talks motivated us to proclaim the gospel message, near or far! We were served and blessed Saturday and Sunday by Elder Bro. Kent (Sis. Jan) Heimer, Taylor, MO.

We are thankful for faithful ministers serving our mid-week services: Bro. Dan (Sis. Deb) Stoller, Remington and Bro. Scott (Sis. Gigi) Schafer, South Bend.

Praise report for health concerns for Lisa Pedigo and thankful that Bro. Sam Holliger (Laura) maintains peace and little pain amidst his battle with cancer.

Bro. Dave and Sis. Merri Schieler’s joy has increased with the birth of their granddaughter, Audrey Kate, born October 26 to Alex and Lisa Schieler; and the marriage of their son, Clint, to Casey Worth on November 14.

November 15 was great cause for blessings as the day began early with Marin Leman (Bro. Randy and Sis. Mara) giving her testimony to our new Elder Bro Nick (Sis. Suzanne) Gutwein, assisted by Elder Bro. Steve (Sis. Linda) Gutwein, Francesville. The day of worship closed after many witnessed the baptism of our new Sis. Marin!

Indiana, Wolcott
Beckie Lehman, Erica Blume

The year is quickly drawing to a close. In spite of the turmoil around us in the world, we trust that God is still in control and sits on His throne. We see His work here in our little church in Wolcott and give thanks for His provision.

We were blessed one Sunday to have Bro. Fred Witzig (Sis. Nancy, Washington, IL) share the Word with us. Bro. Gary Maibach (Sis. Mary Ann, Smithville, OH) joined us for a topical Bible Study, in which he related some of the lessons and experiences from his time as a converted brother serving in the Vietnam War. It was an encouragement to hear how God provides for those who faithfully follow His teachings, even in the hardest situations. We thank both of these brothers, their wives and their families for allowing God to use them.

Congratulations to Bro. Randy Lehman (Bro. John and Sis. Ruth Ann) and Sis. Brittany Lintner (Marty and Tabitha) on their engagement. We pray for God’s guidance and blessing as they make plans for a life together.

Our congregation joined the Remington congregation on a Saturday evening to hear the reading of the memorandum. Those who gathered were instructed from the Word and encouraged to continue in the unity of the Spirit.

Our hearts are saddened to say farewell to Sis. Mary Witzig (late Bro. Bill Witzig) who had made her home here for 5 years. She passed to her heavenly home on November 2. Our prayers are with the family through the coming days as they miss her loving presence.

Iowa, Bloomfield
Teresa Schock

We thank Bros. Todd Graf (Akron) and Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop) for ministering to us.

One of the Sundays we sang, “A Blessed Man”, Zions Harp #169. It was then mentioned that it is just difficult to be a blessed man if we are not pliable.
November 8 we heard of the engagement of Bro. Jacob Joos (Bro. Ron and Sis. Chris) to Sis. Sara Teubel (Bro. Paul and Sis. Charlotte). We rejoice with them.

We are happy for Justin Birkner (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Angie) who has professed to have peace with God and man. Can we also say we are still at peace with God and man?

X-mas refers to Christmas. We didn’t really like to see Christmas “spelled” this way, so I would write C-mas (for short). Then we learned that “Chi” (“x”) is the Greek letter beginning the word “Christ”. But it is still the nicest to see, MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Iowa, Garden Grove
Laura Funk

October News:
Greetings!

We thank each of the willing servants visiting us this month, Bro. Curt Rassi (Tremont,IL) and Bro. Paul Kilgus (Fairbury, IL). We enjoyed the fellowship of the many loved ones that accompanied these brothers.

We enjoyed an evening of sharing food, fellowship and singing with the Bloomfield, IA congregation. An annual event we look forward to.

Bro. Vern and Sis. Boni Hostetler and family hosted a wiener roast/fish fry potluck on Sunday evening. A hayride through the hills and valleys of southern Iowa found beautiful scenery and wildlife.

Iowa, Burlington
Ivy Steiner, Monica Eisenmann

“...how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” Psalm 133:1

We were thankful for wonderful weather at our annual Starr’s Cave wiener roast this Fall. We had really good attendance! We also were happy to host the quarterly potluck and monthly singing at the Oakville Fellowship Center for both the Mediapolis and Burlington congregations. It was an uplifting evening.

We always appreciate a visit from our Elder Bro. John Schmidgall (Medapolis, IA) and thank him for coming and thank God for the spiritual blessings that day.

As you close your eyes in slumber, do you think that God will say, “You have earned one more tomorrow by the work you did today”?
-John Hall

November News:

We are thankful for the visiting ministers this past month that came to share God’s Word. They were Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Bloomfield,IA), Bro. Barry Dietz (Bradford, IL), Bro. Mike Grimm (Goodfield, IL) and Bro. Tom Schambach (Elgin,IL). Several visitors accompanied these brothers which we truly appreciate.

The men’s group “Glorify Hymn” from Central Illinois visited us this month. We enjoyed a weekend of fellowship and singing praises to God. Thank you to this group of brothers for giving of your time and talents on our behalf. God bless you! The nursing home where you sang sends a hearty “thank you” also.

Giving Thanks

Giving thanks is something greater Than just mere words we can say, More than just grateful expressions Voiced on each Thanksgiving Day.

Giving thanks is something deeper Than perhaps we are aware, Even when each head is bowed And in every heart a prayer.

Giving thanks must hold true meaning Far beyond one day each year Not just recalling our blessings When Thanksgiving Day is near.

Giving thanks is living daily In such a fine, worthy way, That each new dawn brings the morning.
Of its own Thanksgiving Day.
-Virginia K. Oliver

How thankful am I each day?

Iowa, Iowa City
Diana Butikofer

We are thankful for each of our visitors, especially ministering Bro. Jon Pratt (Sis. Sharon, Valparaiso, IN) and Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Oakville-Mediapolis, IA). We trust the Lord will bless their service to us.

When I think of Christmas, I am reminded of many Christmas songs I enjoy. We have CD’s of a variety of songs – from “Jingle Bells” and “White Christmas” to spiritually insightful hymns such as “O Holy Night” and “Silent Night.” One of my favorite Christmas hymns is “The Babe of Bethlehem” because it takes us from the manger to the cross, without which the manger seems almost inconsequential. The birth of Christ was necessary, but the death and resurrection are the most essential to a Christian.

“The blessed story of the Christ,
The babe of Bethlehem,
Is worthy of our song and praise,
And stirs the hearts of men.
The fullness of God’s love divine,
Surrounds the Christ so mild
Alas how many only know
The Saviour as a child.
Our saving hope is all in vain,
If here our love should cease,
For in the man of Galilee,
We find the gift of peace.
’Tis not the babe, but Christ, the man
Who walked in Galilee;
’Tis not the manger, but the cross,
That sets the spirit free.
Be not content this babe to know,
Nor stay at Bethlehem,
But go with Christ to Calvary’s brow,
Beyond Jerusalem.
’Tis there men learn to know the Christ,
For there He bore man’s sin.
Then open wide the door of heart.
And let the Saviour in.”

Hymns of Zion #36

Iowa, Lester
Audrey Metzger, Joyce Moser

“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

An abundant harvest has been granted and we have been blessed with beautiful autumn weather. We look forward to the Thanksgiving holiday, knowing that God is in control, even when the climate of the world scene seems out of control. Let us remember to give Him thanks for all things.

Many guests came for precious fellowship during the “Invite-a-Guest” weekend of October 31-November 1. We are all richer for these shared times. We especially want to thank Bro. Lowell Moser (Sis. Karen) from Morris, MN, who lent himself to sharing God’s Word that weekend.

We rejoiced for our convert, Stuart Moser, when it was made known in October that he felt at peace with God and man. We rejoiced again several days later to hear that his wife, Karin, had also surrendered her heart to the Lord in repentance! God is truly good and merciful. We wish them both an abundant measure of God’s continuing grace.

Another young soul, Kaysha Blomgren (Bro. Jon and Sis. Tricia) also expressed that she believes God has granted peace to her heart. Having this news shared always brings us back to those early days in our own walk of faith, and renews us on our spiritual journey.

On November 8, the engagement of Bro. Caleb Moser (Bro. Wes and Sis. Esther) to Sis. Holly Funk (Bro. Fred and Sis. Diane) from Morton, IL, was announced. We rejoice with this dear young couple and pray God will bless and guide them as they plan for their March wedding, and for their lives together.

On November 20, a darling little girl, Madelyn Grace, was born into the family of Bro. Kent & Sis. Elyse Moser and her sisters, Evie and Meredith. Her grandparents, Bro. Donn & Sis. Joyce Moser and Bro. Denis and Sis. Jill Meyer, all from Lester, also welcome her! We wish them all God’s blessings as they help to raise this precious little one to bring honor to Him.

The reading of the memorandum reminds us of the letters lovingly penned to believers in the early church, carefully guiding and admonishing as directed by the Holy Spirit. We thank Elder Bro. Ted (Sis. Sandy) Steffen from Alto, MI, who
came to assist Bro. Rod with this important work on November 21, and then fed us from God’s Word the following day. We appreciate brothers—and their families—who are willing to be used in service to Him.

We are glad to see Melinda Popkes (Bro. Greg and Sis. Lori) able to be among us again after she spent time in the hospital. Bro. Myron Knobloch was also hospitalized this past month, and we hope for a rapid & full recovery! Good health is a blessing so easily taken for granted, until we are abruptly faced with any change in that state of wellness.

The celebration of Christmas, when we remember the birth of our Savior, will be imminent when this news is published, Lord willing. May each of us remember as we approach this holy time, “Tis not the manger, but the cross, that sets the spirit free.”

Iowa, Oakville-Mediapolis
Kelsey Banwart, Tami Lanz

We are so thankful for our many visiting ministers this past month: Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tammy, Congerville, IL), Bro. Phil Schulz (Sis. Kelli, Burlington, IA), Bro. Dallas Massner (Sis. Christy, Burlington, IA), Bro. Aaron Frank (Sis. Sharla, Elgin, IA), and Bro. Seth Hartter (Sis. Brenda, Burlington, IA). May God bless them for their willingness to serve.

Leslie Gray (Bro. Sean and Sis. Val) and David Rea have announced their engagement. They are planning a November 28 wedding. We wish them God’s blessings as they start their new life together.

Our single group hosted an Invite-a-Church weekend on October 31 and November 1. Our church was packed with all of the guests. The singing always sounds so beautiful when the church is full.

“Thankfulness is the seedbed of contentment.” As Thanksgiving comes and goes, may we always do our best to have an attitude of gratitude for God’s goodness to us. “For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” Philippians 4:11

Iowa, West Bend
Yvonne Bruegman, Becky Virkler

Our congregation has been blessed with a new baby boy. Bro. Kent and Sis. Joleen Fehr are the thankful parents of Bennett Silas. He is welcomed home by siblings: Monika, Carter, Micah, Otis, Lena and Bethany. Elder Bro. Wayne and Sis. Rose Grimm and James and Sharon Fehr are thankful grandparents.

“Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving.” Colossians 4:2.

May we be fervent in prayer as we make plans for the holidays. Where there are heavy hearts and sadness, we pray God’s arm of comfort will be felt. Where there is joy, let us be thankful and share that joy. And out of gratefulness to God for the precious gift of His son, may we “continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

Japan, Tokyo
Anna Inoue, Marie Inoue

At this Thanksgiving season we have many reasons to be thankful. Our wonderful faith in our Lord Jesus is surely foremost, and may we express this thankfulness to God each day of our lives.

Our news this month is being thankful for our many visitors. Our Elder Bro. Mark Bahr and Sis. Bev spent 10 days here in Japan with our two churches. They also traveled to the island of Kyushu to visit two of our church Sisters Iwama and Kido who reside there. We could also remember the Lord’s death and suffering as we partook of Holy Communion with them.

Bro. Mark blessed us with his ministry on Sunday given in clarity so all could understand. Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Melanie Wales of Indianapolis, IN were also present, on their way home from Korea, where they visited their dear one whom they hope to soon adopt. In the afternoon Bro. Jonathan told the adoption story thus far on their journey. Scriptures were given to support their desire to love and care for a child.

Also spending time with us was Bro. Hisato and Sis. Rika Inoue of Bloomington, IL. At our recent monthly ladies’ meeting, Sis. Rika, recently taken into the fold, shared her experience of faith, how she came from a belief of no knowledge of the true and living God to fully trust in His promises. Some of the ladies asked
questions, and we hope Sis. Rika’s experience can be of help to them to understand the life of faith in our Lord Jesus.

We thank all of our visitors for their encouragement and love. We also enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal together with them and loved ones who could attend from the Shioda church.

**Kansas, Bern**

**Jill Meyer, Rita Menold**

We are thankful to Bros. Aaron Luthi (Sis. Maria, Lamont) and Tim Lehman (Sis. Amber, Taylor) for bringing the Gospel message this month. Our prayers are with all those that have the responsibility of sharing God’s precious Word with us each week.

Bro. Jason and Sis. Kendra Rokey welcomed sweet Janessa Ranae to their family on October 29, delighting her older brothers, Jadon and Kirk. Thankful grandparents are Galen and Nancy Rokey (Sabatha) and Earl and Darlene Meyer (Bern).

Our thoughts and prayers have been with Sis. Marlene Edelman (Bro. Nathan), who underwent surgery this month. We pray the Lord will be ever near her as she deals with health issues, and bring healing as He sees best.

As we enter another season of remembering Christ’s birth, may we keep our focus on the magnitude of God’s love for us and Christ’s perfect example of meekness, beginning with His lowly birth. May it inspire us to live in obedience to Him every day of our lives!

“Out of the ivory palaces, into a world of woe, Only His great eternal love made my Savior go.”

_tabernacle Hymns, #107_

**Kansas, Ft. Scott**

**Karen Kellenberger**

Recent visiting minister was Bro. Dave Obergfel (Sis. Kathy, Peoria, IL). We appreciated the Bible study he presented on Saturday following a church potluck supper. We were blessed that he shared the Word on Sunday.

Christmas is a time for remembering Jesus coming to earth as an infant – God’s gift to man. The Sunday School spent an evening filling shoe boxes for Operation Shoebox to spread Christmas cheer, while enjoying pizza.

“He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy. He, the Word, without Whom all human eloquence is mute.” - Augustine

**Kansas, Kiowa**

**Millicent Frieden, Janice Bahr**

_Psalm 100:3 & 4 “Know ye that the Lord He is God: It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.”_

I recently read an anonymous statement that really made me think: “What if we woke up this morning with only the things we gave thanks for yesterday?” How grateful are we to God for His blessings every day of our lives? Do we thank Him every day for His care, His love, His patience, His peace, His precious Son and Holy Spirit? What about our freedoms, our homes, our families, and church families, our friends, the beauty God has shared with us? Let’s not wait for Thanksgiving Day to give Him thanks. Let’s do it every day and many times a day for we are a truly blessed people!

_Proverbs 22: 6 “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”_

This is our fervent prayer for Bro. Lee and Sis. Chelsie (Bahr) Jones, Silverton, OR who recently gave birth to a precious baby girl, Rylee Kathleen Jones. Grandparents are Bro. Jeff and Sis Janice Bahr of Kiowa, KS, and Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz Jones, Silverton, OR. Great Grandparents include: Bro. Joe and Sis. Mildred Frieden, Kiowa KS; Sis. Eileen Bahr, Gridley, KS; and Sis. Barbara Moser Silverton, OR. May God ever be the center of their home as they begin their new family!

We have had several loved ones with health issues this past month. So keep your hearts prayerful as we all need the prayers of those we love in our joys and in our trials.

As the Christmas Season approaches, may our hearts remember the real Reason for this beautiful Season:
C - is for the Christ Child born on this day.
H - Herald Angels in the night.
R - is for our Redeemer.
I - is Israel.
S - is for the Star that shone so bright.
T - is for the Wise Men, they who traveled far.
M - is for the Manger where He lay.
A - is for all He stands for.
S - means Shepherds came.

And that’s why there’s a Christmas Day!!

Kansas, Lamont-Gridley
Dorene Metzger

Bro. Albert & Sis. Jeannie Edelman have another great-granddaughter named Paisley Marie Edelman, born on October 15. Her parents are Caleb & Sarah Edelman from Wichita. Her grandparents are Trent & Janelle Edelman.

Sis. Eileen Bahr was a surgical patient.

On November 7, Bro. Paul (Sis. Jan) Messner, Winthrop, MN and Bro. Cory (Sis. Jodi) Metzger, Wichita, KS assisted our Bro. Jay Luthi with the reading of the memorandum. They were also with us on Sunday. We thank them for their presence and for ministering the Word.

Sympathy is extended to Tony & Sis. Dora Hines, Aleaha & Teagan in the loss of Tony’s grandmother, Inez Hines.

Thanksgiving will be past when this article is read, but this hymn is so expressive in giving thanks.

All Come And Thank the Lord!
“Now thank we all our God
With heart, and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done
In Whom the world rejoices.
Who from our mother’s arms
Has bled us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.
Oh, may this bounteous God
Tho’ all our lives be near us.
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us.
And keep us in His grace,
His full redemption send.
And free us from all ills,
Sustain us to the end.
All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given.
The Son and Holy Ghost,
Who dwell in highest heaven.
The one eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adores,
Who is and shall survive,
Now and forevermore.”

Zion’s Harp #236

Christmas 2015 is waiting in the wings as it follows Thanksgiving. By God’s mercy and grace, the precious, vibrant hope for eternal life is found in God’s gift of the Savior of mankind as we celebrate the Christmas Season. Both Thanksgiving and Christmas are holidays of wonder, praise, and thanksgiving. How can our hearts hold all this joy?

“All Come and Thank the Lord” for His mercies are new every day!

Kansas, Sabetha
Crystal Hartter, Dawn Strahm

We enjoyed a weekend of blessed fellowship and singing with guests from near and far as we had our Invite-a-Guest weekend October 24 & 25. Visiting ministers that encouraged us from the Word either on the pulpit or in Sunday School that weekend were: Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie), Bro. Dale Frank (Sis. Tina), Bro. Mark Schmidgall (Sis. Sally) all from Oakville-Mediapolis, IA; Bro. Kevin Fehr (Sis. Lonnie, West Bend, IA) and Bro. Michael Wagenbach (Sis. Erica, Wolcott).

Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Connie, Bern, KS) also ministered to us this past month. We thank him for his efforts.

We lift Bro. Elmer and Sis. Phyllis Strahm up in prayer during this time of sorrow. Their daughter Sonia Irwin (Dennis) passed away. May God comfort and provide as only He can.

We enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal together as a church family at our Fellowship Center. May we give thanks to our Father above for the many blessings we do have.

As the Christmas season approaches, may we all remember the real reason for this holiday season.

“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.”
St. Luke 2:10-11

Kansas, Wichita
Max and Judy Reimschisel

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.” 1 Chron. 16:34
We are thankful for the Lord’s goodness that Sis. Emma Miller has been able to return to her assisted living apartment. She was in the hospital for a short time.

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1 Thess. 5:18

We are also mindful that God was with Sis. Ann Warner while she was in the hospital for a time and still is as she continues dealing with health issues.

“Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.” 1 Chronicles 16:8

God’s healing hand has been on Sis. Rose Ann Reeves. She has finished chemo and has been coming to church regularly again. She was saying that she would like to start driving again!

“And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.” Acts 3:7-8

While Sis. Judy Reimischel’s ankles are getting stronger each day and her home therapy is going well at this time, she is not up to leaping yet. While the healed lame man instantaneously knew how to walk and leap, she has learned it is a process to learn to walk again without thinking about every step -- and to realize the importance of each step she takes.

“And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.” 1 Chronicles 16:35

We so appreciate being able to come together to hear God’s Word. We are grateful for our visiting ministers this past month: Bro. Jay Luthi (Lamont-Gridley), Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Kansas City), Bro. Matt Schupbach (Kiowa), and Bro. Brad Strahm (Bern).

“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.” 1 Chronicles 16:36

Our church was blessed one weekend with a visiting group from Bern/Kansas State. The LORD’s name was lifted up in praise.

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” Colossians 3:17

Mexico, Ixtlán
Ruth Gerber

“He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.” Rom. 14:6

This month brings several opportunities for believers in Ixtlán to regard or disregard the day. First there’s the Day of the Dead, a major holiday throughout Mexico. On this day families gather at gravesites to remember their loved ones (and for many unbelievers it would be common practice to build an “altar” with food to offer them). Then there’s Revolution Day– celebrating the overthrow of a dictatorship. Then, of course, there’s our American Thanksgiving (known here as the Day of the Turkey and obviously not associated with the Lord by most people). It can be hard to know how exactly to regard a day to the Lord; how to honor the memory of deceased loved ones, while avoiding any participation with idolatry; how to respect the higher powers, while advocating non-resistance and believing that the only Ruler that will bring justice is not of this world; how to join in a Day of Thanksgiving, while maintaining a distinction from the secular celebrations. As in any other culture, we need grace to be salt and light.

A couple more grandbabies have been added to our church families. Bro. Jose Roque’s daughter Jessica had a boy, Enrique, born on November 1. Sis. Berta de Gonzalez has a new granddaughter, Ariadna Joy, born on November 2 to Bro. Chad and Sis. Claudia Aeshleman of West Lafayette. We are happy Sis. Berta is able to go spend some time with her children and grandchildren, though we will miss her here in Ixtlán.

Michigan, Alto
Renee Steffen, Shelli Oesch

Greetings of love and thanksgiving to all from Alto.

As we approach Thanksgiving and Christmas, and life gets busier and more complicated, I’m
reminded over and over in my daily ‘moments of reflection with God,’ sermons of Truth spoken, and sage advice from loved ones...

BE THANKFUL IN ALL THINGS, Not just when life is going our way, or when everything seems good, but AT ALL TIMES, IN ALL THINGS. This is quite a challenge, but I'm determined to do this by the grace that our loving Father grants us.

“We hear of new born babies, engagements, baptisms and gain. Then we also hear of terrible wars, catastrophe, illness and pain. There’s joy, deep sorrow, children starving to death, there’s warmth of laughter and smiles. How do we find thanks in everything, whether temptations, victories or trials? No matter our situation, or where our path may lead, no matter how bad you think it is, there’s always others with a greater need. Someone’s pain is more intense, others have no family to love. Desperation, anxiety, or disease, could be worse, when push comes to shove. Our needs will all be cared for. Our Master has a plan. So take a moment to thank Him, even for something you don’t understand. ibG.res”

After writing a bit about thanksgiving, and the challenge it is for us, this past month has brought about reasons to give thanks, but in some cases, we’ve had to look pretty hard. Three dear brothers have been very sick, hospitalized, under treatment, awaiting results, in therapy, and much more. We are thankful for these dear brothers and are praying for them. These brothers include: Bro. Wally Gerst (Donna), Bro. Wes Daniels (Sis. Sue), and Bro. Tom Schrenk (Sis. Joan) who was just diagnosed with leukemia. We love each of you and will continue to uphold you in prayer. May each of you know healing as according to our Father’s will.

Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Myron Knobloch from Lester, IA. We’d like to express our appreciation to Bro. Myron for the message of Truth shared through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. It is always a special time to have him come visit because we know how happy and thankful his dear daughter, Sis. Laura Kaeb is when her dad is here. Bro. Myron’s time spent here became a very joyous occasion as he became a grandpa for the very first time. Bro. Aaron and Sis. Laura Kaeb welcomed home their first little miracle, Kellan Lee. His appearance is likely to cause quite a stir as many were awaiting his arrival. Grandparents Bro. Curt and Sis. Luanne Kaeb, along with aunts, uncles and cousins, share in welcoming him into the world.

**Note of Thanks:**

Verbal thank-you’s were expressed to the church from Bro. Lyman and Sis. Vivian Feldman for all who helped with leaf raking at their home and from those in charge of shoe box packing to all who helped pack boxes for those in need.

**Michigan, Bay City**

**Sarah Knochel**

Our prayers are with Sis. Cindy Sochacki (Jim) and Sis. Laura Wieland who have both spent time in the hospital recently. We are thankful for God’s healing power in each of their lives.

Prayers of sympathy and comfort have been extended to the family of Sis. Emma Waibel who passed away recently. Sis. Emma was 99 years old and is remembered by many nieces and nephews from our congregation. We especially want to remember Bob Stange who she raised as her own son.

We also want to remember the Ramseyer family as they mourn the loss of their sister-in-law, Joan Ramseyer (Hack).

We were blessed to have Bro. Jeff Waibel (Sis. Margo, Leo, IN) in Bay City for a recent Sunday.

The Christmas season will soon be here. We trust that we will remember the true reason why we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May our hearts be filled with joy and praise for the wondrous gift we have been given.

It is so hard to believe we are in the final weeks of 2015. We are thankful for God’s provision and blessing in our lives. We pray that His peace and blessing will be with each one in the coming year.

**Michigan, Detroit**

**Manuela Denes**

This past week, our world was turned upside down again. Violence and fear have spread like wildfire. For many it is hard not to
get swept up in certain sentiment and thinking. We as Christians need to focus only on one point, especially during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons—Jesus Christ and what His life and death mean to us and have taught us. There are a number of scriptures that we can turn to in times like these. I found this one particularly relevant: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Eph. 4:31-32

A few weeks ago, a very special weekend was shared by our choir and the church family in Kitchener, Ontario. Members of the choir and their families drove up on Saturday where a dinner and evening song service were shared. Over one hundred people gathered together and experienced several forms of song worship that included mixed choral, men’s and women’s ensembles and congregational singing. The Holy Spirit was certainly present and a blessing must surely have been felt by all who were present!

We’re very thankful for speedy recoveries after surgery and/or illness. Bro. Hartzell (Sis. Mary) Kaisner and Sis. Linda Shaw have both returned home after spending time at Woodhaven getting rehabilitation.

We’re grateful to Bro. Ned Stoller who made the trip from Alto, MI to share the Word for a Tuesday night service at Woodhaven.

For the past twenty-nine years, the churches of Alto, Bay City and Detroit, MI along with Toledo, OH have sponsored a continuing care retirement community in the centrally located Detroit area. Last year, the Woodhaven Board approved the development of new construction for a multi-level satellite retirement community very near the Bay City, MI church. Construction began on this facility last summer and it is projected to open in the spring. This facility is called Woodhaven at Bay City and will be remotely managed out of the central office in Detroit. Please pray that the project can be completed in a timely fashion and that it can be both useful and a blessing to the Bay City congregation.

As we head into the holiday season, there may still be turmoil in the world but, it is good to remember these words that Jesus shared with His disciples:

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”
John 16:33

Minnesota, Morris
Amy Ekren, Heidi Pfaffmann

We were blessed to have the following ministers visit our Morris congregation, Bros. Harvey Kaeb (Sis. Judy, Gridley, IL) and Darin Massner (Sis. Twila, West Bend, IA). We are always thankful for all who visit!

“And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Eph. 4:11,12

Minnesota, Morris North
Lois Schmidgall, Wanda Gramm

Greeting from Morris North!

We have so much to be thankful for!! God is Great, and we have been blessed above and beyond all measure. The harvest is done, and the crops are in,... But, our work is not done! Let’s look around and work harder to bring to this hurting world, and all those around us, the message
of Salvation, the Love of God, and the message of Peace. We have so much work to do before God calls us home. Let’s be up and doing.

We are thankful for: Those brothers who have come and shared the Word this past month. Bro. Jeff (Sis. Carole) Gerber, Rockville, CT; Bro. Nate (Sis. Yvonne) Lehman, Denver, CO; Bro. Dewayne (Sis. Larae) Dill, Minneapolis, MN; and Our Elder Bro. Bill (Sis. Emily) Schlatter, Junction, OH. Thank you for giving of yourself…it is greatly appreciated.

We are thankful for: Our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter was able to visit and share the memorandum with us. We are thankful that God has restored health to him, and pray he can continue to become stronger.

We are thankful for: Our Sis. Dorothy Schmidgall is able to assemble with us after being hospitalized.

We are thankful for: Our little church body and the activities that we can share together. We assembled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. It is so fun to see the excitement of our kids as they write and color a letter to a child who doesn’t have what we do, then to see them fill the box. Thank you Lord for all blessings.

And in that day shall ye say, “Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.” Is. 12:4&5

**Minnesota, Winthrop**  
*Lindsay Schmidt, Becky Braulick*

“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you” Phil. 1:3

On October 31 our church held its Fall Festival potluck supper. The children and parents played games, had a hayride and roasted hotdogs over a bonfire. It was a blessing to have an evening to interact with the children and make fond memories.

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Psalms 119:11

The Sunday school children and teachers served our annual 55 & Over Supper on November 8. The adults and Sunday school children were asked to share their favorite Bible verse. It was nice to hear the Word that was hidden in their hearts to help uplift and carry us through trying times.

“The Lord is my strength and my shield: my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.” Psalms 28:7

We pray for healing following surgery for Darlene Schmidt (Bro. Darrel) and Sis. Marilyn Messner (Bro. Bill). We are thankful their surgeries went well. Our thoughts have been with Brayden and Kent Rubendal (Vanessa Isaacson’s son and fiancé) since their bad car accident. Brayden suffered minor injuries while Kent was airlifted to the Minneapolis with multiple injuries. He is currently still hospitalized and in critical condition. We continue to keep him, Vanessa, and their children in our prayers during this difficult time. We also pray for God’s comfort and presence with those battling cancer and any other health concerns.

**Missouri, Kansas City**  
*Julie Webel*

We thank all of the visitors who came through Kansas City and blessed us with their presence this last month. November 7 & 8 we hosted an invite a guest weekend with a supper and singing on Saturday night. We were privileged to have four visiting ministers that weekend including: Bro. Clint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Sabetha, KS), Bro. Virgil Metzger (Sis. Mary, Chicago, IL), and Bro. Dale Frank (Sis. Christine, Oakville-Mediapolis, IA) and Bro. Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cissna Park, IL). May God richly bless them for their labors. This past few weeks we have been blessed to have Sis. Verda Brue llman, West Bend, IA, sister of Bro. Randy Kellenberger, with us while getting medical attention here in Kansas City. May God be with her and bless her richly. We are thankful to have her with us during this time.

Our Sunday school students recently collected and assembled Christmas shoeboxes for needy children. This project was uplifting to all involved. We want to thank the Sunday school teachers who took time to shop with the students and organize this event. It is a wonderful way to teach our children how to give and
show Christ’s love to those who have great needs.

We wish God’s blessings on the recent marriage of Willie Hofstetter (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Karen from Peoria, IL) and Kirsten Steiner. They will be living in Holden, MO.

Missouri, Lamar

**Venetta Banwart**

Our visiting ministers this month were: Bro. Paul Zimmerman, Forrest, IL (Sis. Loretta), Bro. Mark Wettstein, LaCrosse, IN (Sis. Karen); Bro. Dale Moore, Elgin, IA (Sis. Cheryl); Bro. Tom Bolliger, Tremont, IL, (Sis. Jane); Bro. Kevin Wulf, Morris, MN, (Sis. Annie). Many thanks and may God bless each one for being willing to feed us from God’s Word that we might grow in faith and walk a closer walk with our Lord.

Our hospital patient this month was Sis. Carolyn Banwart (Bro. Alfred). May God grant her the continued healing that only comes from Him.

Missouri, St. Louis

**Kary Mangers**

As we sat at breakfast this morning and prayed over our food, we stopped in the middle of the prayer and named 20 things we were thankful for silently. Now as the day progresses, my prayer is that our actions reflect what we said earlier to the Lord. For what does God really “hear”? What comes from our mouth or what we do? Our actions follow what is in our heart. “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Matt. 6:21 May each of us be truly thankful for what Christ has done for us not only in words, but in deeds.

Our desire as a church family is that everyone who walks in our doors to fellowship with us feels welcome and feels Christ’s love. So hopefully this is not only in words that we thank those who came to be with us this last month. A special thanks to our visiting ministers and wives. They were Bro. Fred and Sis. Diane Funk (Morton), Bro. David and Sis. Jackie Eisenmann (Champaign), Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla Rassi (Chicago), Bro. Chris and Sis. Carla Wuethrich (Chicago), Bro. Kim and Sis. Vonette Sutter (Taylor), and Bro. Ned and Sis. Anna Bahler (Fairbury).

Missouri, Taylor

**Eleanor Yackley**

As we have just passed Veterans Day honoring our soldiers and thanking them for all the services they have done to keep our country safe, may we appreciate the freedom Christ has bought for us with His blood. May we thank Him each day for the gift of salvation. And let us remember to continue to pray for our church, our country, our leaders, and for those who are serving our country so we can continue to enjoy our freedoms.

As we pray for blessings, let us also give thanks to God for the many blessings He has given us!

We would like to thank Sis. Lydia Lindberg for helping at His Ranch the last few months. May God bless her as she resumes her place with the Peachtree City (Atlanta) congregation.

Our church was touched with sorrow as a soldier of the cross went to his reward. Retired Elder Bro. Roy Grimm passed away October 23, 2015. He leaves behind his dear wife, Sis. Dona; one son: Bro. Don (Tricia) Grimm of Quincy; five daughters: Sis. Jeanne (Bill) Leman of Roanoke, Sherry (Lloyd) Stoller of El Paso, Wendy (Jeff) Gutwein of Forrest, Sis. Renee (Bill) Endress of Henry, and Sis. Tami (Keith) Pflum of Quincy; and three sisters, Judy (Don) Feller of Morton, Sis. Kathy (Paul) Haab of Quincy, and Sis. Mardell (Kenny) Dietz of Bradford.

The funeral service for Bro. Roy was conducted by our church ministers on Tuesday, October 27. Burial in the Taylor Apostolic Christian Church Cemetery followed.

We appreciated having Bro. Mark and Sis. Sally Schmidgall (Oakville-Mediapolis) visit us on a Wednesday evening. Bro. Mark shared a Bible study entitled “In the world, but not of the world.” We were reminded to be “the salt of the earth.”

God has blessed Cory & Melissa Meyers with another son. Carsten Meyers was born November 12, 2015. Grandparents are Danny & Jody Meyers of Taylor. Sis. Charlene (late Bro. Dick) Sutter is his great-grandmother.
We have had many opportunities to intercede in prayer for those who have suffered infirmities. Sis. Marcia Sutter is currently at the Camp Point, IL, Nursing Home getting therapy to recover from surgery. Sis. Emma Hoerr will be at the Eureka Hospital for a few weeks for therapy after surgery. Sis. Barbara Plank is now residing at Maple Lawn Nursing Home in Palmyra. Others have been in and out of the hospital for various reasons. All need our prayers.

**Note of Thanks:**

God bless all of you who sent cards and memorials after Roy passed away. We also thank each of you who came for the funeral and/or the visitation. Your presence meant so much and was very comforting! God bless you!

In Christian love,

Dona Grimm and family: Jeanne (Bill) Leman, Sherry (Lloyd) Stoller, Wendy (Jeff) Gutwein, Don (Tricia) Grimm, Renee (Bill) Endress, Tami (Keith) Pflum.

**New York, Croghan/Naumburg**

**Hope Graves**

**September News:**

We were blessed to have Retired Elder Bro. Gene Pamer and his wife, Sis. Eleanor, from Akron, OH on the weekend of August 23. We enjoyed the company and fellowship with a potluck and singing together.

We were able to listen to the conference recordings over the past few weeks and were richly blessed with God’s encouragement and direction for our Christian walk. May we remember daily to walk carefully, cheerfully, prayerfully and hopefully.

**October News:**

It was a blessing to have ministering Bro. Ronald Palitto and Sis. Lynell on the weekend of October 10-11. On Saturday evening we enjoyed a potluck dinner together followed by a presentation by Bro. Ron on the work of HarvestCall (formerly ACWR) around the world. How great is God’s faithfulness to each one!

We rejoice with Ian and Rebecca Gilbert in the birth of their daughter, Tirzah Jane, on October 14. Tirzah is welcomed home by big sisters Shae and Rhoda.

Our prayers extended out to Sis. Bernice Hirschey and Sis. Doris Steiner who were both hospitalized last month. We are thankful they are again able to assemble with us.

Out thanks extend to the brethren from Rockville, CT for again coming to fellowship with us and provide for our Sunday lunch on October 18. It was an extra special blessing for us to have Retired Elder Bro. Andrew Stoller, Smithville, OH, in our midst. We appreciate the many who have traveled here to worship with us this fall as we enjoy God’s handiwork displayed all around us. This year the trees have been especially colorful and a reminder that God is always with us.

“How can we behold the great work of creation and not feel moved His name to praise? From whom are these wonders? O give Him the glory! Our voice in honor to Him raise.”

*Hymns of Zion #49, vs.4*

**November News:**

Our prayers go out for Sis. Linda Graves who has been hospitalized this month.

I have been reminded of the unreliability of technology lately as three of my last four articles have failed to successfully appear in the *Silver Lining*. It becomes easy to get frustrated and discouraged when we work on something that doesn’t come to fruition. Then, I was reminded that God is always reliable, will never fail us, always gets our “messages” and is never beyond our reach! May we bring forth fruit for Him and may He bless the many hands that go into putting these issues together each month.

**Ohio, Akron**

**Carla Miller**

We appreciated Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Sis. Sue, Lester, IA) assisting our Elder Bro. Dave Graf in the reading of the Memorandum. We were also thankful for Bro. Rod’s willingness to serve in the ministry the following day.

Bro. Trent, Sis. Molly, and Oliver Gasser welcomed Amelia Anne, born November 1. Grandparents are Bro. Roger and Sis. Sue Gasser (Junction, OH) and Tim and Sis. Kim Hanzie (Rittman, OH).
Many prayers have been extended for several in our congregation: Sis. Sarah Henico (Bro. Greg) in the passing of her sister, Kathy Demiter; Sis. Joanne Henico (Bro. Ben) in the passing of her grandmother, Sis. Helen Maibach (Rittman, OH); Mike Carder (Sis. Sheila) in the passing of his father, Duane Carder (Bonnie); and Sis. Carla Miller (Bro. Joe) in the passing of her mother, Sis. Joyce Stoller (Bro. Fred, Rittman, OH).

Ohio, Columbus

Julie Grimm

It is a blessing to see our small church grow with the addition of babies. Vienne Marie was welcomed by Bro. Todd, Sis. Lauren and big sister Tressa Rufener on October 28. Kanin Lee was born October 30 to thankful first time parents, Lane and Lanae Hartzler. May these young couples seek the Lord’s wisdom as they “train up” their children.

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
Rom. 5:16

We rejoice as do the angels in Heaven over one sinner that turns to the Lord. We wish Lexi Grimm (Joshua) God’s grace as she seeks Him in repentance.

We express our sincere sympathy to Bro. Nate and Sis. Becca Steiner in the passing of Bro. Nate’s grandmother, Sis. Helen Maibach (Rittman). We trust God to comfort those that mourn.

God is faithful to provide through His Holy Spirit and willing servants. Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Sis. Jeannine, Mansfield), Bro. Tim Wiegand (Sis. Christa, Leo), Bro. Tim Ramsier (Sis. Jonnell, Rittman), and Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron) brought us the Word. May God richly bless each one for their labors.

Ohio, Junction

Elizabeth Manz

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Psalms 52:1-2;10

It is such a joy to see God at work in the lives of man, revealing the need of a Savior to cleanse and purify our sinful and wretched heart. We rejoice that Kelly Schlatter (Bro. Ed and Sis. Cheryl) and Ashton Manz (Bro. Chris and Sis. Erica) have surrendered their lives to God! We pray that they will seek after God with all their heart!

Bro. Klint and Sis. Kallie Manz have been blessed with another little girl, Kasha Kathryn. Kasha is welcomed home by her siblings, Allison and Alex. Grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Kathy Manz and Bro. Keith and Sis. JoAnne Klopfenstein (Latty, OH). Calla Grace was born to Bro. Chad and Sis. Loral Manz and joins her siblings: Carter, Clayton, Camdyn and Chase. Her grandparents are Bro. Ray and Sis. Corrine Schlatter and Bro. Les and Sis. Karen Manz. Bro. Roger and Sis. Sue Gasser are thankful for the safe arrival of 2 grandchildren born this month. Waylon Lane was born to Bro. Caleb and Sis. Mindy Stoller (Latty, OH) and Amelia Anne to Bro. Trent and Sis. Molly Gasser (Akron, OH). Children are a precious gift and we’re thankful for each one!

We had the opportunity to have the Memorandum read on October 31. A special thank-you to Elder Bro. Vic Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH) for being with us that weekend. We also want to thank Bro. Fred Domka (Sis. Connie, Mansfield, OH) for being with us this month and preaching the Word.

Our prayers go out to Sis. Annabelle Spangler and Sis. Catrina Wright as they have both spent time in the hospital. We pray that they will recover soon and be able to assemble with us again!

Ohio, Latty

Carmen Stoller, Mindy Stoller

We have been abundantly blessed with babies this month! It has been a joy to hear of the arrival of 5 new babies, all within a few weeks of each other! Bro. Keith and Sis. JoAnne Klopfenstein welcomed a granddaughter Kasha Kathryn on October 27, born to Bro. Klint and Sis. Kallie Manz (Junction, OH). She joins Allison and Alex at home. On October 28, Waylon Lane was born to Bro. Caleb and Sis.
Mindy Stoller. Excited siblings are Mailey and Wade. Grandparents include Bro. Bill and Sis. Barb Stoller and Bro. Roger and Sis. Sue Gasser (Junction, OH). November 3 was the birthday of Mason Craig, born to Bro. Blane and Sis. Mindy Stoller. He is welcomed by siblings: Natalie, Zachary, Brooke, and Austin. Grandparents include Bro. Bob and Sis. Joan Graf and Bro. Craig and Sis. Ruth Stoller. Madilyn Sherrill arrived on November 6, much to the happiness of parents Bro. Calvin and Sis. Bekah Sinn. Grandparents include Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz Jones (Silverton, OR) and Bro. Todd and Sis. Janet Sinn. Finally, Travis and Ann Stackhouse welcomed Cheyanne Lynn on Nov. 12. Grandparents include David and Julie Stackhouse and Bro. Leon and Sis. Deb Klopfenstein. We are so thankful for each child born and pray that the parents can lead their children in the ways of the Lord.

This month our church enjoyed a benefit meal and program afterward to help Hospital Lumiere. We thank the Psalm 100 quartet for visiting and singing for us, and also the Rod Stoller family, and some groups from our Latty Choir. What a blessing when we can gather together and honor the Lord!

We wish to thank Bro. Ron Kipfer (Sis. Linda, Bluffton, IN) for visiting this month and preaching the Word. Come back again soon!

Ohio, Mansfield

Elizabeth Walter

We were recently blessed to read the Memorandum letter. Thank you to our Elder Bros. Mark Masters and Kevin Ryan (Sis. Cheryl, Rockville, CT) for their willing service and encouragements throughout the weekend. May Bro. Kevin and Sis. Cheryl be richly blessed for their effort to be with us.

Our annual Fall Outing was enjoyed by all. A sincere thank you to the teachers for their efforts on behalf of the Sunday School class activities, and to those who helped provide the meal.

On October 31, we commemorated the 50th anniversary year of our current church building. We enjoyed a special evening of reunion that included a meal, shared memories, and a historical presentation. Thank you to each one who made the evening possible, and to those who came to be with us.

Our hearts go out to our loved ones needing hospitalization this month: Bro. Wilbur Gerber (Sis. Millie), and Shirley Roberts. May God provide healing and strength as He wills.

Ohio, Rittman

Julie Steiner, Maria Beery

“Wait on the Lord, and keep his way,” Psalm 37:34.

How often we worry, fret, and stew over how this will go, or what this person will do. We almost become paralyzed in our service to God, because fear overtakes us. God simply asks us to continue doing His work, and not try to figure out why everything happens. This past month in Rittman, we see some things that bring rejoicing, and others that we do not fully understand. Sometimes, we don’t even know why life goes the way it does. Yet, we rest knowing God will help each of us, as we submit to His way in our life. He just needs us to wait on Him, and keep doing His will.

We said “farewell” to three this past month. Sis. Helen Maibach, 92, passed away after a time of declining health. Her loved ones bring to a close, this chapter in their lives – Sis. Diane & Bro. Ernie Stetz, Sis. Lynn & Bro. Dave Steiner, Bro. Dean & Sis. Bonnie Maibach (Smithville), Bro. Bruce & Sis. Lois Maibach (Smithville), Bro. Alpha & Sis. Denise Maibach, Bro. Jay & Sis. Marsha Maibach (Smithville), Tim & Mary Maibach (Bloomfield, IA), and Bro. Glen & Sis. Lois Maibach. She is remembered by many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and siblings at Rittman: Bro. Orin (Sis. Anna) Rufener, Bro. Elton (Sis. Velma) Rufener, Bro. Glenn (Sis. Beverly) Rufener, Sis. Liz Gasser, and Sis. Carol (Bro. Everett) Beery. Also, Kathy (Rick) Garrison said goodbye to her mother, Virginia Craddock. On a Wednesday night, following midweek services, we heard of the sudden death of Sis. Joyce Stoller. How fast life goes, it seems so normal to see Sis. Joyce in the lobby at church! Her husband,
Bro. Fred, and children: Sis. Lois & Bro. Glen Maibach, Marty & Wendy Stoller, Sis. Carla & Bro. Joe Miller (Akron), and Sis. Sharon Stoller, and loving grandchildren are going to miss Grandma. As the older generation’s time here comes to a close, we take great comfort in the promise of God, “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting, to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children.” (Psalm 103:17)

God has helped five dear souls, to give up the last excuse Satan handed them, and come in repentance. We pray God’s very strong presence for: Angie (Dan) Manz, Bailey Stoller (Bro. Tony & Sis. Cherie), Kya Hartzler (Bro. Marvin & Sis. Sue), Abbey Hartzler (Bro. Wayne & Sis. Camille), and Elizabeth Ramsier (Bro. Joe & Sis. Kendra). Also, three young men have gone through their repentance, conversion, and now are baptized into Christ’s death. We pray for God to grant them sincerity of becoming a new man to: Bro. Mason Hartzler (Bro. Marvin & Sis. Sue), Bro. Daniel Gasser (Bro. Jim & Sis. Janice), and Bro. Jacob Steiner (Bro. Brent & Sis. Andrea). And yet, there is room.

It is easy to turn our “waiting on God” into “fretting for tomorrow”, especially when pain, unknowns, and questions fill our day. Several loved ones have struggled through the pain of uncertain health this past month, including Bro. Rod (Sis. Jill) Steiner, Bro. Reinhart (Sis. Betty) Keiper, Sis. Lori (Bro. Ken) Stoller, Sis. Cynthia (Bro. John) Nussbaum, Bro. Dan (Sis. Betty) Baltic, Bro. Glen (Sis. Lois) Maibach, Sis. Elverna Zollinger, and Sis. Clara Jenkins (Hospice Care Center). And yet, the love of the brethren, shown through fervent prayer, letters in the mail, or visits in the hospital, are beams of light, giving strength for each day.

The Lord has given us work to do. Here in Rittman and among our extended families, there are many young souls, coming into the world. God does have wisdom and strength available, so we pray each set of parent’s wisdom to ask of God, who has the tools we need to do His work.

Mallory Anne is welcomed by Bro. Shane & Sis. Suzanne Hartzler, Carla, Esther, Titus, and Mya.


We are thankful for visiting ministers this month: Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Lester, IA), and Bros. Gary Sinn (Latty, OH), Don Steidl (Akron, OH), and Todd Graf (Akron, OH).

Ohio, Sardis

Faith Beard, Joy Indermuhle

“Now it is accomplished, I’m no longer mine. Lord, I will forever and always be Thine. For Thou hast created and purchased me too, baptized with Thy Spirit, Thou makest me new.” Now It Is Done, Zion’s Harp #209

The weekend of November 7-8, we witnessed two loved ones make a life-long covenant with their Lord and Savior and arise anew from the waters of baptism. We welcome Sis. Baylee Figel (Bro. Andy and Sis. Cyndi) and Bro. Thad Indermuhle (Bro. Dana and Sis. Joy) into the brotherhood of Christ. It warmed our hearts that when asked “What are these people to you,” during their testimonies, they both answered “Family.” What a high calling to be family with Jesus.
Here to support and help with the baptisms was Elder Bro. Gerry (Sis. Ellen) Hertzel of Sabetha, KS and Bro. Jerry (Sis. Martha) Bauman of Rittman, OH. We thank them for making the time and effort to be with us as well as the many others that joined us for the weekend.

Angel Band
“Here is the babe of Bethlehem, the babe of Bethlehem, Is worthy of our song and praise, and stirs the hearts of men. The fullness of God’s love divine, surrounds the Christ so mild. Alas how many only know, the Saviour as a child.” The Babe of Bethlehem, Hymns of Zion #36

As we look forward to remembering our Savior’s birth, we should be careful to not be caught up in the materialistic frenzy we so often find during this time of year. Christ was born so He might die for us and Christmas is a time to remember His willingness to do so. How much more important it is to not forget the purpose of His coming and not be as those that would forget ‘tis not the manger, but the cross, that sets the spirit free.’

As we settle in for the winter months ahead, do we take time to appreciate the many facets of creation at this time of the year? The sun hangs low in the sky, the leaves have fallen from the trees, the deer are roaming the landscape, outdoor wood heaters are being lit and winter is setting in. Here in Sardis, we have the privilege of being able to look upon the wooded hillsides and see the beauty of fallen leaves covering the forest floor. When the snow begins to fall, we will have the pleasure of witnessing snow-covered hillsides and trees as far as the eye can see. It is easy to grumble when we are kept indoors by cold, inclement weather, but maybe we can find the beauty in cold weather as we do the warm and enjoy God’s handiwork in the coming months.

Ohio, Smithville
Kara Stoller, Millie Stoller

We extend sympathy to Bro. Bruce Maibach (Sis. Lois), Bro. Dean Maibach (Sis. Bonnie), and Bro. Jay Maibach (Sis. Marsha) upon the October 30 death of their mother, Sis. Helen Maibach (late Bro. Alpha, Rittman OH). “For surely there is an end; and your expectation shall not be cut off.” (Proverbs 23:18) The end of life is a certainty. But we are so thankful and humbled when we think of God’s offer to redeem all mankind through His son Jesus.

Thank you to all that have prayed for our recently hospitalized loved ones. We have looked to the healing hand of the great Physician for Bro. Dana Riggenbach and Sis. Kathy Ault (Bro. Dave.)

On November 7, Smithville hosted the Eastern Regional Elder Meeting and our local elders felt blessed to have these brothers for an all day meeting. In the evening, Elder Bro. Duane Farney (Sis. Karen, Croghan-Naumburg NY) and Elder Bro. Art Ingold (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman OH) assisted with the reading of the Memorandum.

Additional visiting ministers throughout the month were Bro. Lucas Frank (Sis. Crystal, Detroit MI), Elder Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest IL) and Bro. Justin Koch (Sis. Marcia,
Washington IL). Thank you for traveling to be with us.

Ohio, Toledo
Deanna Manz, Jenny Manz

It has been several years since we had a baptism in our church. What a blessing and encouragement it was to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of our new Brother-in-Christ Mike Whittaker. It was a wonderful reminder that the Holy Spirit is still calling the lost, both young and old! Special thanks to our Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter (Sis. Emily, Junction) for carrying out this work.

Also serving us on the pulpit this month was Bro. Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction). We are grateful for his service to us!

Hospitalized this month was Kurt Rager (Bro. Walt and Sis. Sharon). We are thankful he has returned home, and is back in good health.

Ontario, Kitchener
Johanna Fortenbacher

We wish cheery greetings to you all.

The day finally came and we were able to host the Detroit Choir early this November. It was spectacular for all of us, as well as the company we invited. Before their wonderful program, they hosted a dinner for us and also served lunch for our church the next day! It made the weekend such a blessing for us. We hope and pray to God that this choir will come to our church next year.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, using with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Colossians 3:16

Our wonderful visiting ministers (brothers) and their wives (sisters) are: Todd & Lydia Graf, Akron; John & Peggy Jackson, Bay City; Dale & Sandra Stoller, Fairbury; Randy & Sue Gasser as well as Lucas & Crystal Frank all of Detroit, and then Brian & Jacki Huber from Francesville. This is a huge blessing to us and we encourage you to come again. God bless you.

Oregon, Portland
Louisa Gallup

We are thankful for the visitors and song leader help we have enjoyed this past month. We are looking forward to the Thanksgiving and Christmas season, while listening to the Sunday School students practice their program.

We send our special thanks and appreciation for the visiting ministering brethren: Elder Bro. John (Sis. Jane) Wiegand, Bros. Chris (Sis. Mary) Kuenzi, Harvey (Sis. Jennifer) Kuenzi, Jim (Sis. Tresa) Zollinger and Don (Sis. Linda) Sinn, all from Silverton, OR. Thank you for blessing us with your support.

Oregon, Silverton
Kelsey Walder, Ann Kuenzi

Being injured and suffering a broken leg is no fun for a 4-year-old. Lydia Kuenzi (Bro. Adam and Sis. Lori) will be in a cast for a couple of months (with no weight bearing). Also dealing with an injury is Bro. Ben Bolliger (Sis. Carolyn), as he cut off one of his fingers in a table saw.

Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Mike Leman (Sis. Lisa) from Portland, OR. We continue to enjoy our Portland brethren on Wednesday evenings.

Silverton is enjoying a unique event this month as three of our brethren are celebrating their 80th birthdays: Bro. Ben Bolliger (Sis. Carolyn), Sis. Janet Kuenzi (Bro. Lee - dec.) and Bro. Jim Kuenzi (Sis. Barb). It is wonderful to see them all so active. We wish them many more healthy years in the service of the Lord.

The first Sunday evening of November was spent enjoying a singing and refreshments at the Fellowship Center. The single group hosted the evening and wanted it to be a time to reflect on God’s bountiful blessings and the importance of being thankful.

We are glad to have Bro. Jordan Sinn (Bro. Dean and Sis. Heidi) back home. He has been in Rockville, CT this past year.

We look forward to Thanksgiving with thankfulness and joy, as it is the one holiday we can truly focus on our blessings and not the commercialism that swirls around us. May God bless our day spent with Him, and our loved ones.

Our prayers are with Austin and Hannah Kraft and her father, Kenneth (Rebecca) Tschiegg, who was in a bad car accident recently.
Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
Laura Isch

November certainly has been a time of thanksgiving for the Philadelphia church! We appreciated Elder Bro. Steve Sauder and his wife, Sis. Mary (Tremont, IL), for being with us for the reading of the memorandum. We pray that Bro. Steve and his co-workers will be blessed for their efforts and sacrifices they put forth on our behalf.

We are also thankful to report the engagement of Sis. Emily Lanz (Bro. John and Sis. Kay) to Bro. Jordan Fritz (Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica) of Nashville. May God richly bless this couple as they prepare for their wedding and their lives together as husband and wife.

Tennessee, Nashville
Buck & Taunia Henry

HAVE YOU HEARD?
“Bethlehem, little town of Bethlehem;
Beth’lem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah;
Yet unto thee shall come forth unto me, that is to be--
That is to be the ruler of Israel.
Have you heard? Can you see that Messiah whom the prophets told is given unto thee?
Jacob, arise and shine, O Jacob;
For thy light is come and Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!
And Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings unto thy brightness;
For the star of Jacob will lead them to thy side.
Have you heard? Can you see that Messiah whom the prophets told is given unto thee?
David, hear O house of David;
For the Lord Himself shall give you a sign that you may believe:
Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son to be Immanuel for God has come to thee!
Have you heard? Can you see that Messiah whom the prophets told is given unto thee?
Israel, He has come!”

As Christmas draws near, how fitting that our nation has seen fit to set aside a day to stop and give thanks unto the Lord for all the mercies and blessings He has bestowed upon us. We Christians HAVE heard the Good News of Jesus Christ. May we go forth to shine the light of truth in this dark world!

In this season of Thanksgiving, we would like to offer a special thanks to all our ministering brothers and their families who take time out of their busy schedules to travel across the country to minister to us in Nashville throughout the year. This month we were blessed with: Bro. Marvin Hartzler (Sis. Sue, Rittman, OH), Bro. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN), Bro. Tim Wiegand (Sis. Christa, Leo, IN), Bro. John Laukhuf, (Latty, OH), Bro. Paul Hartman (Sis. Carmen, Fairbury, IL), Bro. Clark Stoller (Sis. Cindy, Gridley, IL).

We are also thankful to announce the engagement of Bro. Jordan Fritz to Sis. Emily Lanz from Philadelphia, PA. Bro. Jordan is the son of Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz. Sis. Emily is the daughter of Bro. John and Sis. Kay Lanz, Philadelphia, PA. We pray that the Lord will bless them in this time of planning as they look forward to their marriage in Him.

Some from our congregation were blessed to spend the weekend with our nearby brethren in Athens for their annual Homecoming weekend where many gathered to worship in song and fellowship.

If you are traveling to or through the Nashville area, please plan to worship with us. Often we gather on Saturday evenings for fellowship. All are heartily welcome. Please contact us to confirm the schedule. Also, we typically meet on Wednesday evenings at 7:15 p.m. for call-in services and would welcome any midweek visitors. Contacts: Bro. Buck Henry 615-920-9584 buck@forhisglorypublishing.com or Bro. Don Sauder 615-351-7734 don.sauder@juno.com.

The Nashville Guesthouse is available for free accommodations to all those traveling through; please contact Bro. Buck for reservations.

Texas, Austin
Candy Meiss

We send our Love and Greetings from Austin!

I am so thankful for the words from our Zion’s Harp song, Gratitude for Deliverance.

“If God within these evil days
His mercy were not sharing, No strength or grace could we obtain;
Our hearts would be despairing. A
remnant small, a handful we, by many haughty men to be despised and persecuted.

We appreciated so much the evening spent with Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart and Deacon Bro. Leland Plattner as they shared the memorandum. We are also thankful for the following visiting ministers: Bro. Ken Wuethrich (Sis. Lyn, Indianapolis) shared the story of David and Goliath so vividly as he encouraged us to have faith as David did when we meet the “giants” in our lives! Bro. David Eisenmann (Sis. Jackie from Champaign) spoke of a runner and encouraged us that we can all finish the course with the help of our Heavenly Father and our brotherhood. We are looking forward to visiting ministers in the following weeks from Chicago, Bloomington-Normal, and Kansas City.

We are thrilled this Thanksgiving as many plan to gather to help with world relief projects near our Bastrop church. We pray that we can be a blessing to those in need as we enjoy working together for His glory, spreading His love and His story.

Our church continues to be blessed with many children from the nearby community. We are preparing for a Christmas program and pray that their parents can attend and hear the wonderful story of Christmas. We continually pray for godly order, guidance, and wisdom as we teach these precious souls about Jesus and His saving grace. We are asking for all to pray and consider a move to Austin to help in this special endeavor to mentor/teach the many children that God has brought into our fellowship.

“We thank Thee, Lord, we are redeemed: Our soul they could not capture. For as a bird from nets released, We have escaped in rapture. The bonds are loosed, and we are free, and strength’ning grace we find in Thee, The God of earth and heaven, The God of earth and heaven.”

We are so thankful for our visitors and encourage everyone passing through to stop and worship with us!! Please refer to our minister’s directory for directions and contacts.

Texas, McAllen
Kristi Plattner

We are thankful for the visiting ministers who came to share God’s Word this past month. They were Bro. Matthew Feucht (Sis. Jennifer, Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Kole Meyer (Sis. Amy, Bluffton, IN). We have been richly blessed through their labors.

We welcome anyone coming to South Texas. If interested in housing on South Padre Island or in McAllen while visiting the McAllen area, please contact us for further details.

Occasionally there is a schedule change, so if you plan to be with us on Sunday, please verify the date by calling the Plattner’s at 956-607-8329 or you may access www.acmission.org and view the updated minister rotation schedule.

Sunday services are held at 10:30 and 12:30 at the Holiday Inn Express, 1921 South 10th St. Take the 10th Street Exit off I-83 and go 1½ blocks south. Please see the ministers’ directory for local contact information.

Texas, Zapata
Mary Plattner

Our winter residents are returning and it is uplifting to see new visitors each Sunday. We will have our Thanksgiving dinner at church following the services on Thanksgiving Day. We have so much to be thankful for and must take time to remember what a fortunate people we are.

Anyone planning to travel to South Texas this winter is most welcome to worship with us here in Zapata.

Vermont, Clarendon
Nathan and Miriam Reutter

Ephesians 5:20 “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ…”

What a convicting verse to me this Thanksgiving season! Being thankful to God for everything all of the time is difficult to take in. It is a level of existence I have not attained. It will take a miracle within me to get there. Yet, I trust God to take me to this place in His sense of appropriate timing.

Let me start by being thankful for the visiting ministers. Bro. Chris & Sis. Carla Wuethrich (Chicago, IL), Bro. Brad & Sis. Teresa Gudeman (Bradford, IL),
and Bro. Warren & Sis. Bonnie Zahner (Rockville, CT) were our visiting ministers this month. It was good for us to be taught out of the Word of God by these brothers. We thank their wives for visiting along with them and the brethren that came along. Meeting brethren from varying places always gives us a broad perspective from which to see faith being played out in sincere human lives. Thanks for sharing.

May God watch between us and keep us in His tender, loving care.

Thus Saith the Lord

It would no doubt take many pages to fully develop this thought because the phrase in the title, or a variation of it, appears hundreds of times in the Bible. The intent of this brief article is to encourage us to think about the Lord’s call to us. When the Lord speaks, He means what He says, and when He says something will happen, we know that it will happen.

The Lord speaks to His people in a variety of ways. He uses His written Word, He speaks through His servants, and He speaks directly to His people. Sometimes He calls very gently, through a “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:21) and sometimes He calls very loudly and perhaps harshly; “And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them and I will make of thee a great nation.” (Exodus 32:9-10).

In whatever manner He calls, we can be sure that He will call us personally: “I have called thee by thy name” (Isaiah 43:1). “Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hand;” (Isaiah 49:16). Examples of His call by name include Adam (Genesis 3:9), “Abraham, Abraham” (Genesis 22:11), “Samuel” (1 Samuel 3:4;6;8), “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” (Acts 9:5), Cornelius (Acts 10:3), Peter (Acts 10:13), and, no doubt, you. Many other examples could be cited.

Exactly how we are called is less important than how we answer. Adam answered out of fear because he had sinned; Abraham answered with complete faith in God; Samuel answered with a desire to learn to know the Lord; Saul answered out of fear and ignorance (“Who art thou, Lord?”); Cornelius answered out of a desire to have his prayers answered; and Peter answered in defense of what he believed to be in keeping with the Law. How have you answered?

As we can readily understand, some respond to God’s call fearfully, some with complete faith and comfort as one would respond to a good friend, some answer in ignorance, and some in defense, trying to justify their behavior.

We may wonder why God, who is so great would call us who are so insignificant. He calls us because He loves us: “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) “As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn form his evil way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Ezekiel 33:11).

The Lord will call each of us, and He will help us understand what He wants us to do. It is our responsibility to submit to Him and answer when He calls. -Anonymous
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**Teacher Needed – Athens Preschool**

There is currently a teaching position available at the Apostolic Christian Preschool in Athens, AL. We are looking for a preschool teacher who is willing to start as soon as possible. This is a wonderful opportunity to support one of our smaller congregations.

This is a paid position with medical benefits. Church housing is available. Applicants must be at least 19 years old and be a member of the Apostolic Christian Church. Basic computer skills are necessary.

If you have questions contact Sis. Kalla Knobloch at (309) 231-1755.
You may also e-mail your resume to acpreschool2015@gmail.com.
Thank you for your prayerful consideration!
Opportunities Available in St. Louis, MO and Austin, TX

St. Louis congregation seeks renters for home near church
The Apostolic Christian Church in St. Louis is seeking a family, couple or single(s) to relocate to the area with a heart to support a small congregation and further outreach efforts. A newly-renovated, 3-bedroom home that is located across the parking lot from the church is available to rent immediately to assist with the transition. The St. Louis congregation asks that anyone who is interested to prayerfully consider answering this call, becoming part of their close-knit church family and sharing their vision for outreach and church growth.

Sunday School Teacher Needed in Austin, Texas
Previously a need was communicated for someone (couple, family, single) to assist in the children’s ministry in the Austin Apostolic Christian Church as a Sunday School Teacher. As a result of Outreach efforts, the church has been blest to have many young people come to Sunday worship without their parents. While a family has responded to this request, there is still opportunity for a second family or singles to help fill the need. If you have a heart to sow the seeds of the gospel in young hearts, prayerfully consider answering this call and becoming part of the Austin church family.

Desired Qualifications
For both of these opportunities, the following qualifications are desired:
1. Servant Heart - willingness to serve as outlined above and support a smaller Apostolic Christian Church.
2. Integrity - demonstrate high spiritual standards and be a committed Christ-follower.
3. Support local church efforts - willingness to understand the current outreach efforts within the church and work with established brethren.
4. Receive support from your local elder. Additional qualifications may be discussed with interested parties.

Expressing Interest in these opportunities
St. Louis - Contact Ministering Bro. Loren Schrenk at 314.994.1944 or seeclear@swbell.net.
Austin - Send an e-mail to acscsc@comcast.net. Ministering Bro. Matthew Rassi will direct your request as appropriate.

If you are e-mailing, include your name, contact information and a brief description of why you are interested and feel that God is calling you into this work. Your response will be directed to local church leadership and brothers within the Church Establishment and Mission Committees as applicable.

Background
These requests for assistance to our national churches are the result of “pilots” currently being undertaken by the Church Establishment Committee in two of our smaller Apostolic Christian congregations – St. Louis, MO and Austin, TX. The Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Mission Committee (soon to be HarvestCall), is working to assess the needs of these smaller congregations and assist in providing resources, tools and services to help them become self-sustaining, thriving churches which exalt Christ through actively living our 4 Pillar Mission Statement. This includes:
1. Sharing the gospel with the lost.
2. Nurturing the believers.
3. Contending for the faith and preserving sound doctrine.
4. Meeting the needs of the community through acts of service.
Communications Coordinator Needed - Gateway Woods

Gateway Woods is seeking a brother or sister desiring to serve as the Communications Coordinator. This position is open to full-time applicants and offers the opportunity to use one’s creativity, organization and communications skills to further the ministry. If you are organized and able to meet deadlines, have strong communication skills, and are a motivated self-starter, please contact one of the brothers listed below for more information and a job description.

Development Coordinator Needed - Gateway Woods

Gateway Woods is seeking a brother or sister to tell supporters the story of helping broken children and reuniting families. The Development Coordinator position is open to full-time or part-time applicants. This position offers flexibility as applicants may work from Leo, IN or remotely from their Midwest home. If you have a passion for helping hurting children and families, strong communication and relationship building skills that can be used to develop financial partners and advocates, please contact one of the brothers listed below for more information and a job description.

Alternate Houseparent Needed - Gateway Woods

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.

Chad Kaeb
Development Director
PO Box 151, Leo, IN 46765
888.443.4283
chad.kaeb@gatewaywoods.org

Lynn Stieglitz
Counseling Elder
15417 Doty Rd., New Haven, IN 46774
Cell: 260.466.6712
lynnstieg@gmail.com

Clint Plattner
Residential Program Manager
PO Box 125, Leo, IN 46765
888.443.4283
clint.plattner@gatewaywoods.org

Lynn Stieglitz
Counseling Elder
15417 Doty Rd., New Haven, IN 46774
Cell: 260.466.6712
lynnstieg@gmail.com
## Mexico Work Teams

<table>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Year 2015</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Email/Phone</th>
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<tr>
<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>Nov 21 - 28</td>
<td>Rod Schmitt</td>
<td>303-716-1432</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>Jan 9 - 16</td>
<td>Bruce Frank</td>
<td>217-375-4346</td>
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<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>Feb 6 - 13</td>
<td>Tony Lanz</td>
<td>217-202-5959</td>
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<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>Mar 9 - 12</td>
<td>Gabe Meiss</td>
<td>309-222-7819</td>
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<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>Mar 19 - 26</td>
<td>Dean Sinn</td>
<td>Silverton Bible Class</td>
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<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>Mar 26 - Apr 2</td>
<td>Greg Mosier</td>
<td>Riverlife Jr/Sr Sunday School</td>
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<td>Apr 2 - 9</td>
<td>Joe Bear</td>
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<td>Reynosa</td>
<td>June 4 - 11</td>
<td>Chad Masser</td>
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<td>Jan 11 - 18</td>
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<td>Jul 2 - 9</td>
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<td>Ben Knoop</td>
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## Haiti Medical Work Teams

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<tr>
<td>Bonne Finn, Haiti</td>
<td>Nov 7 - 14</td>
<td>Lydia Bertschi</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Lumiere</td>
<td></td>
<td>309-253-0402</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rostro (Profections)</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:lydia@berty.com">lydia@berty.com</a></td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonne Finn, Haiti</td>
<td>Dec 12 - 19</td>
<td>Lydia Bertschi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>309-253-0402</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Medical</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lydia@berty.com">lydia@berty.com</a></td>
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## Haiti Work Teams - Bonne Fin

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<th>Capacity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Lumiere, Painting</td>
<td>Nov 28 - Dec 5</td>
<td>David Zimmerman</td>
<td>8-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance / Painting</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:dzimmerman4@hotmail.com">dzimmerman4@hotmail.com</a></td>
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## Haiti Lifeline Work Teams

<table>
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<th>Year 2016</th>
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<th>Capacity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dumay (Life)</td>
<td>Jan 12 - 19</td>
<td>Neil Bahler</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LifeLine</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-815-848-3861</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nbahler@gmail.com">nbahler@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumay</td>
<td>Jan 19 - 26</td>
<td>Darren Fehr</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LifeLine</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-815-674-9363</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dkfehr@maxwire.net">dkfehr@maxwire.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumay</td>
<td>Jan 26 - Feb 2</td>
<td>Paul Zimmerman</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>LifeLine</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-815-848-2173</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pzimmerman2@frontier.com">pzimmerman2@frontier.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumay</td>
<td>Feb 2 - 9</td>
<td>Reuben Stork</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>LifeLine</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-217-898-3436</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rstork_85@yahoo.com">rstork_85@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dumay</td>
<td>Feb 9 - 16</td>
<td>Matt Kinsinger</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LifeLine</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-847-774-4015</td>
<td><a href="mailto:steffen@comcast.net">steffen@comcast.net</a></td>
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### Haiti Work Teams - Les Cayes

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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<td>Maurice Schaefer</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>AWA</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:schaesfs2@gmail.com">schaesfs2@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Nov 13 - 20</td>
<td>Andy Getz</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti Trade Schools</td>
<td>Vocational School</td>
<td>574-870-5046</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEED</td>
<td>Nov 13 - 21</td>
<td>Art Mueller</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:art.marlene.mueller@gmail.com">art.marlene.mueller@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Nov 18 - 23</td>
<td>Jon Zeller</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEBSH</td>
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<td>ACWR-CC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti Support</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jceeller1972@gmail.com">jceeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Dec 4 - 11</td>
<td>Lane Gerber</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEBSH/Bluffton</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:lane.gerber@gmail.com">lane.gerber@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<td>Ron Palitto</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEBSH/Ohio</td>
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<td>330-336-5373</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:ronp@palittoconsulting.com">ronp@palittoconsulting.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Water Aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<td>Richard Kraft</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEBSH/Silverton</td>
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<td>503-364-3103</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:richard@kraftmasonryinc.com">richard@kraftmasonryinc.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<td>Larry Kaufmann</td>
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<td>815-716-6018</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ljkaufmann@juno.com">ljkaufmann@juno.com</a></td>
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<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Feb 26 - Mar 4</td>
<td>Rich Bertschi</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEBSH/Roanoke</td>
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<td>309-467-2351</td>
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<td>Construction</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:lemangm@mtco.com">lemangm@mtco.com</a></td>
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<td>Andy Getz</td>
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<td>Haiti Trade Schools</td>
<td>Vocational School</td>
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<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>April 1 - 8</td>
<td>Steve Leuthold</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEBSH/Peoria</td>
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<td>309-645-2208</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:sleuth@speerbank.com">sleuth@speerbank.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEBSH</td>
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<td>309-266-9009</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:jceeller1972@gmail.com">jceeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:jceeller1972@gmail.com">jceeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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### Haiti Volunteers Are Needed

#### Medical Teams
Physicians, surgeons, anesthesiologists, pharmacists, laboratory techs, radiology techs, ultrasound techs, occupational and physical therapists, nurses and other specialists who are willing to assist with general medical and surgical care are invited to participate on weeklong medical teams. See the current schedule (including dates for 2016).

#### Construction Teams
Electricians, cabinet makers, plumbers and carpenters are needed to continue the renovations. The work is great. This is an excellent opportunity to help in the work and become more familiar with the culture and Hospital Lumiere campus. See the current schedule.

#### Church Ministers
The work at Hospital Lumiere is more than material and the needs are more than physical. The Hospital staff and the team workers understand the true objective is that all may come to know and glorify God through a born again life, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and living in obedience to the Bible. Apostolic Christian Church ministers are needed to assist in this role as they accompany medical and construction teams to Hospital Lumiere. Team ministers coordinate daily devotions and provide spiritual support for the team members, hospital staff, patients and their families.

For more information contact Rich Bertschi at 309-467-2351 or lemangm@mtco.com

### Haiti Awareness Tours
If you’d like to see the ministry of Hospital Lumière and other Haiti projects in person, but do not have the time or desire to participate in a week-long work team, please consider our new Awareness Tours. These are quick trips that give interested parties the opportunity to meet our missionary families, learn more about the hospital, see the completed renovations and work in process, and visit some of the other World Relief projects in southern Haiti. These trips are scheduled, as needed, based upon demand, currently the next trip is scheduled for Mar. 4-9, 2016.

#### To learn more, contact:
Rich Bertschi at 309.467.2351 or lemangm@mtco.com or Rick Wuethrich at 219.863.4163 or rick@wuethrichfarms.com

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### Jamaica Work Teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Year 2016</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
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<tr>
<td>IDV</td>
<td>Jun 10-18</td>
<td>Mark Lindberg</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCCD</td>
<td></td>
<td>815-641-9065</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Mark.Lindberg@Hyatt.com">Mark.Lindberg@Hyatt.com</a></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

If you are interested in sponsoring a work team to Jamaica contact Loren Detwyler at lmdetwyler@gmail.com
House Parenting Opportunity at CVE in Mexico

CVE endeavors to provide *Life and Hope* to emotionally wounded Mexican children within the context of a Christ-centered family campus environment.

The ministry presently is seeking married couples or singles who are willing to answer the call and share their God-given spiritual gifts in the harvest as houseparents.

Houseparents have the opportunity to live with the children, share the gospel through daily nurturing, and endeavor to help break cycles of abuse or neglect from which many have come.

As one houseparent was quoted “To see the miracle that the Lord has done and is doing in the lives of hurting children has been one of the greatest blessings of our lives. It’s the fulfillment of our purpose here on earth, to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those that desperately need Him.”

The CVE campus is located on the edge of Magdalena, MX and offers a secured 50-acre ranch inclusive of seven homes, a school, a church, and an active agricultural operation.

Historically, many of the houseparents have been younger, but more experienced couples are also encouraged to seek direction to join the CVE ministry. Experienced parents often bring stability and a seasoned perspective.

While knowing the Spanish language would be very valuable, it is not essential. The most important is having a desire to learn, both the language and the culture of the people we serve. Language training is provided.

Please pray for CVE, their ministry to the children, and the community of Magdalena. Pray that God will raise up brothers and sisters to serve.

If you have questions or interest please contact: Bill Schick at: cvemexico@gmail.com or Kirk Plattner at: kirk@acmission.org

---

Bible Distribution: Sharing His Word in Love

*Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. Psalm 96:3*

Together we can provide Bibles for seeking people. This may be someone you attend school with, someone you work with, or someone God has shown you at a gas station. Bibles and approved Bible story Books are available. Carrying a New Testament to distribute can help you remember what our real task is. To order, contact:

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Phone: 309-965-2141
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Accommodations for Mayo Clinic outpatients and families:
Three bedrooms with private baths, laundry, kitchen and family room area.

Sunday Service:
(held monthly at guesthouse residence)
10:00 AM and 12:30 PM
For information and reservations, contact caretakers:
Bro. Mark and Sis. Sandy Stork
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(507) 288-0072

Mid-week Service:
(held on 3rd Wednesday in Rochester area)
For information, contact:
Bro. Jim and Sis. Deb Tilbury
(507) 281-2875

For church services schedule please visit
www.acmission.org/minister-rotation

Mature Mentors Needed – The New Beginnings of Southwest Florida

Mentoring at The New Beginnings is a way for those who feel called to share God’s unconditional love with hurting single mothers and their children. The New Beginnings is looking for mentor couples who are outreach-minded and called by God to come join us in building relationships with these mothers.

We currently are looking for a couple who are in their 50’s or 60’s to serve with us in Florida. We see a massive benefit to having mentors of all ages support the moms in our program, especially those who can fill a “Grandma and Grandpa” roll to these women who’ve never had grandparents.

Please prayerfully consider this mission and helping single mothers.
Contact us for more information concerning this opportunity.

The New Beginnings
4810 Marine Dr., Cape Coral FL, 33904
Phone: 239.541.4312  |  Email: thenewbeginningsofswfl@yahoo.com

Light from the Word

Now available by downloadable PDF from the Apostolic Christian Publication website: www.acpublications.org
After entering the website, click on the item located at the left hand frame entitled, “Light from the Word Reprints”. The entire set of editorials are available in a complete download (June 1987 to current).
Medical Director Needed at Hospital Lumiere

If you are a licensed physician with a God-inspired desire to provide medical care and leadership in an under-served part of Haiti, this may be the opportunity of a lifetime.

The Need
A licensed physician is needed to replace our Medical Director, Dr. Lee Klopfenstein, when his term is completed in 2016.

To fill this full-time position, one must have a U.S. medical license, be Board-Certified in some aspect of medicine or surgery, be a Believer in Jesus Christ, have experience in leadership and management, be capable of learning the Creole language, and be willing to reside with your family on the Hospital Lumiere campus for up to five years. The position involves leading a team of excellent Haitian physicians and surgeons, and oversight of the nursing, laboratory, radiology and pharmacy departments of this 120-bed full-service hospital and out-patient facility.

For more information contact:
Robert Beebe
Executive Director
robert.beebe1@gmail.com
574-276-6748

www.acworldrelief.org

Patient Care Manager Needed at Hospital Lumiere

Hospital Lumiere is seeking a qualified person to be assigned as Patient Care Manager of the hospital in Bonne Fin, Haiti. This is full-time position.

Description
The duties of Patient Care Manager include planning, supervising & training employees and coordinating & implementing programs of nursing care for all hospital patients.

Requirements
Applicants should hold an RN degree and have at least 3 years of nursing experience, some management capability, be able to learn the Creole language, be a member of the Apostolic Christian Church and be willing to relocate to Haiti for a term of up to 5 years.

For more information contact:
Robert Beebe
Executive Director
robert.beebe1@gmail.com
574-276-6748

www.acworldrelief.org
Give a Child Hope

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: $30.00/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

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

Surgeon and Medical Physician Needed at Hospital Lumiere

Hospital Lumiere in Bonne Fin, Haiti, a medical ministry operated by World Relief, is seeking the following:

Surgeon

A surgeon is needed immediately to provide professional and Christian oversight and management of the Surgery Department of Hospital Lumiere, and actively be involved in surgical cases in their specialty. The surgeon can be boarded in general, urologic, orthopedic or other surgical field.

Medical Physician

A medical physician with family practice, pediatrics, emergency, or other medical subspecialty experience is needed immediately to enhance the diagnostic and treatment capability of our Medical Department, provide education and mentoring of our Haitian medical providers, encourage patient-focused care and maintain our mission of quality care with Christian love.

Both of these positions are full-time, but can be adapted to accommodate a physician who is willing to reside on the campus part-time or for several weeks at a time.

Please prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to serve in Haiti.

For more information contact:
Robert Beebe
Executive Director
robert.beebe1@gmail.com
574-276-6748

Surgeon and Medical Physician Needed at Hospital Lumiere

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
World Relief
www.acworldrelief.org

December 2015 SILVER LINING 61
Openings at Cite Lumiere, Les Cayes, Haiti

Mechanic, Construction Department Assistant

The AC World Relief Caribbean Committee is seeking to fill several missionary positions based at the Cite Lumiere compound in Les Cayes, Haiti. The specific job description may vary depending on the applicant’s interests and skills. Help is specifically needed in the following areas:

**Equipment mechanic**
An equipment mechanic is needed in the Construction Department in Haiti to maintain the vehicles, generators, and construction equipment at Cite Lumiere and Bonne Finn, Haiti and order, purchase, and maintain inventory of parts to support the World Relief programs in southern Haiti. This position would also involve training and mentoring a Haitian assistant to provide future mechanical maintenance. The equipment mechanic would reside in the Cite Lumiere compound in Les Cayes and report to the ACWR Construction Operations Facilitator. The applicant should be experienced in mechanical maintenance.

**Construction Dept. Assistant**
An assistant is needed in the Construction Department at Cite Lumiere as the work has expanded for the program and related ministries. This applicant could be a single brother or couple. Skills that would be valuable in the ministry include:
- Carpenter
- Mechanical experience

All applicants must be a member in good standing of the Apostolic Christian Church, willing to learn Creole and relocate to Haiti for a minimum of 3 years, and have a heart to serve the Haitian people.

If you feel led to serve or have questions, contact:
Bro. Jon Zeller
309-208-0639
Jczeller1972@gmail.com

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**Study Content**

- Who is God?
- What is God’s View of Sin?
- The Ten Commandments
- Admit You Are a Sinner
- Express Repentance Towards God
- Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ
- Be Born Again (Converted)
- Receive the Free Gift (Eternal Life)
- Invest for Life in a Close Relationship with Christ and His Church

For additional information and ordering visit www.acpublications.org

Apostolic Christian Publications - 651 East Peoria St., Goodfield, IL 61742
Serving Those Who Cannot Repay

— Continued from pg. 3

the individual. As God reveals the needs of others, our feelings of compassion are translated into deeds of kindness, which are just reasonable service in light of what we have received.

As we serve others, we are reminded that we are being good stewards of the gifts God has given us. These are not our own, rather they have been given to us to occupy or use for His kingdom, until He comes again. Our measure is not as the world would take an accounting, e.g. the size of our “barns,” or other earthly fames that can come and go. Rather, the measure is “cups of cold water,” that will be reflective of a converted child of God. Since we realize that our reward is in heaven, we don’t focus on bringing focus to self, rather we “let not thy left hand know what thy right hand” is doing. At the same time, we don’t gossip about those individuals in need, but speak the truth in love.

Fourth, our service is to be ongoing. It is a part of our daily life, not just an item on a “bucket list” that is marked off and forgotten. We read that the Samaritan made ongoing provision for the man in need: “on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence… and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.”

Our lives should be patterned after the Savior—who was always about His Father’s business, willing to give all He had, even His life for those in need—just as He has done and is doing for each one of us.

As we daily serve Him, we will learn more about the love of Christ, our hearts will be filled with the fullness of His Spirit and we will become more like Him, one day to be with Him in Heaven.

(Footnotes)
1  Luke 6:35
3  Matt. 20:27-28
4  Luke 22:42
5  Acts 9:6
6  1 Cor. 9:22
7  Luke 6:34
8  Romans 12:20-21
9  Matt. 6:3
10  Luke 10:

Child Sponsorship cont.

— Continued from pg. 6

New Testaments and “101 Favorite Bible Stories”

After this initial step, the program was expanded to provide New Testament Bibles and the “101 Favorite Bible Stories” hard-bound book to all third and fifth graders in our program in every country. Plus, each teacher in our schools receives a New Testament and Bible story book for their personal benefit and as a teaching aid.

In most cases, the child’s family does not own a Bible, let alone an illustrated translated Bible story book. You can imagine the joy on every face when they realize the significance of this gift. Even more satisfying, imagine the joy in Heaven when one of these souls is eventually moved by reading the Word or visualizing the miracles in the Bible to surrender to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
As this program was introduced in Guatemala, the director of our child sponsorship program there shared an email with this encouraging message: “Thank you so much for all the Bible story books and New Testaments for the children! They will be so excited to receive their own books. In a country where many families struggle to feed and clothe their children, a beautiful book is a prized possession.”

Prayer request

Please pray for the CALL to go forth and the HARVEST to be great with our church’s wonderful Child Sponsorship opportunity. Not only are we preparing children to live better lives as adults (SERVE), we are proclaiming the Gospel message to them in their youth (PROCLAIM). We can truly make a difference, one child at a time.

Building for a Transition

“We hope we have paved the ways for others.” Building trust takes years, and the Ixtlán church has established a good name in the community. The gospel has been preached without compromise; and dozens of souls have been grounded in the Word of God. The Heinolds rejoice for each one who has remained true to the Word. It has been their conviction and prayer through the decades that God would raise up local brothers into leadership who understand the cultural pressures of the congregation much better than themselves. They have returned with a confidence that the Lord has answered that prayer. Please pray for new ministering brother, Eduardo (Lalo) Ugalde, who joins Bro. Matt (Sis. Ruth) Gerber as they seek to feed the flock of God and share the gospel in the communities surrounding the town of Ixtlán MX.

Matthew 1:18-25 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. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.
of Christ. We have Matthew and Luke which spend a lot of time on the birth of Jesus. Mark mentions nothing about it. What does John do? You can just see John pulling Jesus aside one day and saying, ‘Jesus, tell us about the beginning’, maybe thinking in his mind tell us about when You were born. Jesus said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God…” (St. John 1:1) and in verse 5 it says, “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

Jesus was born into a time of darkness. There had been four or five hundred years of turmoil that we just outlined where there was lack of peace, there was infighting, there was mixture of religions, there was lack of a direction, there was no shining light, there was nothing the Jewish people could grasp hold of, and here comes Jesus. He’s going to bring a message that’s revolutionary.

We think back to the time of Isaiah, right at the beginning of all this, and then we have these three wise men. For some reason those three wise men understood. Let’s go back to those things. Let’s go back to our list we made before we read it. What are some of the things on our list? If we were to poll everybody, there’d probably be a thousand different things we came up with. Since we don’t really know about what happened there, in our minds we can kind of play it out.

So first of all for the wise men to get up one day and decide to follow this star, I believe that they had to be men that were diligent. They were diligent. They studied the parchments. They studied the laws they were given. Who knows, maybe one of their great great, great, great, grandfathers was in the land of Babylon at the time of Nebuchadnezzar. Along came a man named Daniel, and Daniel sat down with this man’s great, great, great, great, grandfather and said there’s a God in heaven that can give you direction, can give you life. That great great, great, great, great, grandfather of one of these men in Babylon told his son and his son and his daughter and his children and his grandchildren until we get to this point where there’s a man that says remember that story about that man Daniel? Or those three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego went in the fiery furnace and how there was a fourth man in that furnace. They were diligent. They held onto what they were given. They didn’t let things slack. They said we’ve been given an account, and for some reason they held onto it for generation upon generation perhaps. Who knows?

Another word that comes to mind is that they had faith. They had faith. They had to get up off their backside and had to do something. They were doers. What good is faith if they just sat there? I believe there’s a Savior going to be born and there’s going to be a star, but I’m going to stay right here because it’s pretty comfortable. As we get the sense, they were wise men. Who knows? We do know! They brought gold and frankincense and myrrh. They had money. They probably sat in houses and castles of great wealth. They were comfortable, and they got up and went and followed the star. They were doers.

Then they come, and they found Jesus. They followed the star so they’re looking for something. They have something they’re looking for. When they find it, they stop. They stop! I don’t know about you, but the other thought I had this morning was about maybe for us brothers. I have a hard time going to Home Depot when I have nothing to go for. I walk up and down the aisles, and I picture all the things I’d like to buy. I don’t have any direction. There’s no focus. I waste a lot of time daydreaming. Maybe there’s another store you sisters go into. I don’t know, maybe you go into Home Depot. But, the point is that there’s a lack of direction.
when I do that, but if I say I need to get a box of nails, I go get the box of nails and I walk out. It’s a productive moment. When I find them, I’m done, and I go and purchase them and I’m done.

In the same way, these three wise men had direction. They had purpose. They were seeking for something, and when they found it they stopped. They didn’t look around and say wait a minute… He’s born in a manger. This isn’t a king! Herod’s the king! They could have rationalized, they could have thought about it - we’re wise men; we know better! No, they stopped at the manger, they got down on their knees, and they said we’ve found Him.

So today if you’re seeking for something, you’re not alone. There’s not one of us in the room that hasn’t sought peace. Peace is an amazing concept, isn’t it? Think about it. Everybody’s talking about peace. Peace among nations. Peace in family circles. When someone hurts your feelings and you feel a pain in your soul and it hurts, you want nothing more than peace. But, for some reason, the devil comes in there and says, ‘Well, you know, as opposed to seeking peace, why don’t you seek revenge because revenge feels better.’ Don’t be deceived. Don’t be deceived. If the good Lord thought revenge would feel better, He would have said vengeance is yours; go take it out on them, but He doesn’t. He says vengeance is mine; don’t you worry about that. You take peace and find it.

If you’re seeking for it today and today you feel a little lost in this world, you’re not alone because every single one of us here have the feeling every now and then. What am I doing here? Why did the Lord put me in Fairbury, Illinois, or in Philadelphia or Atlanta or wherever it might be that you live? He wants you to be His child. He doesn’t care about the location. He just wants to give you two things. He wants you to be His child. He doesn’t care about the location. He just wants to give you two things. He wants to give you His peace. Right? We read that today. How many times in those two verses in Isaiah - His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of what? The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace… Not just His government, but the increase of His peace. It’s finite it says; it’s only going to be measured for you a little bit; there’s a limit to it - no, no, it doesn’t say that! Let’s read it. It says there shall be no end. There shall be no end.

So if you’re redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ today or not, if there’s lack of peace in your hearts, it is the fondest prayer of that Babe in Bethlehem that you would come to Him and just release it. Just lay it at His cross. Lay it there at His feet because let’s be like the wise men. Let’s stop searching when we find it. If He’s not what we imagine Him to be, it’s because He’s far greater than what we ever thought.

One of the great writers, C.S. Lewis, said one time that in prayer the first thing he does is he gets rid of the thoughts of who God is because they’ll not even come close to what He actually is. He’s far beyond any expectation.

The message of Jesus the Babe of Bethlehem as He’s come to bring us peace - let’s for a moment while we think about that, think in Luke, chapter 1 about Mary. What a beautiful exposition of what welled up inside this woman when she realized she was carrying the Lord and Master! “…My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.” (v.46-48) This is Mary exploding with joy in her heart. She’s felt the peace of God, and she’s a handmaiden. The earth would consider her nothing of great oratorical value, if you will. Here she just explodes with joy in her heart, and she says “And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold,” — Please turn to pg. 68
In the last part of I Corinthians, let’s maybe read that and conclude with this as a thought. Put yourself in this account. Let’s read this together, and picture your own selves in regards to this and where do you fall? “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God…” Remember the time of Jesus when we arrived here on this earth? It wasn’t a pretty place. The world knew not God. It was devoid of peace.

Just for a second let’s consider Herod and what he did. In any sensible time in history, if a king or a president were to wake up one day and say let’s just kill everybody under the age of two, you can guarantee there would be picketing up and down the streets of Washington, whatever you want to call it. It wouldn’t happen. There had to be such a depravity and a lack of moral understanding at the time of Christ’s birth that the king could say we’re just going to kill everybody under the age of two. It was a dark time!

…”the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh…” (v.21-29)

Let’s go back to the beginning thought about the ‘me’ in life, the ‘I’ in life, the concept of the selfie picture. “That no flesh should glory in his presence.” Today it’s about Jesus. “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” (v.30-31) It’s about Jesus today. It’s about His peace. It’s about what He wants to do for you personally. It’s what He wants to do for us collectively as a body. It’s about the smile He wants to put on your face despite the circumstances of life. It’s about the tears He wants to wipe away because the hardness of life. Let’s go to that manger.
Florida Churches
— Continued from pg. 9

Extensive outdoor opportunities exist along the world-famous beaches of the Sarasota barrier islands. Additionally, the economy in Southwest Florida is rebounding from the recent recession and continues to be a place of growth and opportunity from a career perspective. Educational opportunities also abound in the area and include the State College of Florida and the University of South Florida, to name just a few.

Visit or Move to Florida
As you can see, “living in the sunshine” doesn’t just mean enjoying a warmer climate, but really means living in the light and warmth of God’s love – and sharing it with others. The invitation goes out to everyone to come and visit the Florida churches and consider moving to the area. Opportunities to serve include both short term assignments such as at the Midwest Food Bank and longer term, including church ministry opportunities. To visit, see contacts and worship times and directions in the Minister book.

If God directs your heart to move, contact one of the following Opportunity Coordinators – Ft. Lauderdale – Bro. Mike Hohulin (mike.hohulin@gmail.com or 561-479-6836) or Ft. Myers – Bro. Marvin Steffen (msteffen@northcollierfire.com or 239-353-0508). In Ft. Myers, they tell those who are invited to visit, “The people there (at the church) will welcome and love you, and you will always hear the truth.” We believe you’ll find this to be true in all three of our Florida churches.

Luke 1:26-38

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.
This is the second and final installment of a 1913 newspaper article appearing in the Black River Democrat at Louisville, New York. The article focuses on patterns of the church of our faith in America called Evangelical Baptist at that time. The data below is taken from “Marching To Zion.”

Ministers/Worship
In the meeting house, which had no adornment whatever either on the outer or inner side, the learner sat between two brothers who could also preach, on a slightly elevated platform, in front of which was a pedestal (no pulpit) to hold the Bible and hymn books. The platform was constructed not to elevate the learner, but that the congregation might hear to better advantage.

The meeting room was filled with wooden benches entirely bare, no cushions of any sort allowed. In the center running lengthwise with the room, was a partition which divided the brothers from the sisters. No man had a pew of his own, nor did he sit with his wife or daughters. The men sat at the right hand of the learner, facing him, and the women on the left.

The meeting opened with the singing of a hymn by the entire congregation. No music was allowed. The singing took on the tone of a chant, and as each of the members was thoroughly trained in vocal music the singing was usually fine and touching.

During prayer, the brothers and sisters would kneel on the floor with their eyes covered by their hands, and elbows resting on the benches. The meetings, whether in the home or meeting house, consisted of singing, prayer, and exhortation. It was social democracy pure and simple. No government was recognized, neither any church. These were of the world, in fact, held to be “the world,” and had no place in the brotherhood.

The Greeting
The salutation among the brothers involved considerable ceremony. When a brother met another brother the brothers clasped hands with the right hand. They then kissed each other on the lips, after which they said, “God greet thee brother.” It was then only that conversation took place. On parting, the brothers observed the same ceremony, saying, “God care for thee, brother.”

Our First Churches In America
The congregations at Croghan and Naumburg, New York were the first ones of our faith in the United States. A former member of one of the Froehlich churches in Switzerland recommended to a group of Mennonites (who had spiritual disagreements) to write to Samuel Froehlich to come and adjudicate their problems. Instead, Bro. Froehlich summoned a brother meeting in which young Benedict Weyeneth, age 28, was ordained to travel to America an speak to these Mennonites.

He was permitted to speak (in the assembly) to these souls. He informed them of two things: (1) They needed to experience a repentance and conversion. And, (2) They needed to be baptized by immersion. This led to about one-half of the membership following the teachings of the Froehlich brethren, and a church was established, the first one of our faith in America. This took place in 1847.

Continued Growth
After the New York beginning, a second church was formed at Sardis, Ohio. And from this start more and more immigrants came from Europe. They traveled down the Ohio River, then up Mississippi River-- and then went further up the Mississippi River, or onto the Illinois River. Settlements thence sprung up in central Illinois amid the rich farming areas in Tazewell, Woodford, and McLean counties (among others). Primitive travel conditions did not deter our foreparents from coming to America.

-By Perry Klopfenstein

Learning from our history
Search Diligently

The wise men came to Jerusalem looking for the King of the Jews because they had seen his star in the east. God must have informed them about the meaning of the star. King Herod, being a Roman, did not know where Christ was to be born, but he gathered together the chief priests and scribes and they told him that Christ was to be born in Bethlehem as it is written in the prophet Micah. King Herod told the wise men to search diligently for Christ, although for ulterior motives. (Matthew 2:8) Unbeknown to the king, he had given the wise men very good advice.

When the wise men set out for Bethlehem, “Lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.” (Matthew 2:9,10) This star appears to have been a special star which God had prepared for this purpose. It guided the wise men from Jerusalem to where the young child was. Christ was no longer a baby, but a young child, and He was no longer in the stable, but in a house.

The wise men opened their treasures and presented Christ with gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These gifts were probably very helpful to Mary and Joseph later, financially, when they needed to take Jesus to Egypt to escape King Herod.

All human beings should search diligently for Christ. If God sees we are earnest about it, He will grant us grace to repent and be converted. That is good reason to rejoice with exceeding great joy. It makes the difference between eternal joy or eternal sorrow and suffering. “But I shall forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell, yea, I say unto you, Fear him.” Luke 12:5.

The prophet, Jeremiah, also taught us to seek the Lord diligently. “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13. Again, in the New Testament, the Lord Jesus Himself taught us that we should search diligently for Him and His blessings. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” Matthew 7:7.

The Apostle Peter also writes about being diligent. “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” 2 Peter 1:10. What do you make of this verse? Certainly we are being exhorted to be diligent in serving the Lord.

It is appropriate that we give some recognition to the celebration of Christ’s birth, when God, in Christ, came to dwell among us. Also, it is through Christ that we can be reconciled to God. “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:19.

If the word of reconciliation has been committed unto us, we need to be careful, and diligent, about how we celebrate Christmas. The reason is that if others see we are not spiritual in our way of celebrating, it will not be a good testimony to them. Therefore, everyone who is able will go to church on Christmas Day, the story of the birth of Christ as written in the Bible will be read and discussed in our homes, perhaps after the meal, Christmas carols will be sung, and Christmas gifts will be something that are wholesome and in keeping with the lives of those who search diligently for Christ, serve Him diligently, and obey Him diligently. Search diligently for Christ and for His will.

May we all have a wonderful, spiritual Christmas, with a minimum of stress.

-By Willis Ehnle
Joy to the world the Lord has come!